Saffron and Šavu'ot: A Note on Jewish Memory and Pharmacology

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Abstract: Unlike the better-known Jewish holidays of Passover and Tabernacles, the holiday of Šavu'ot (Pentecost) had an absence of distinctive customs following the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. Three culinary customs for Šavu'ot developed in the medieval period, described in two related early fourteenth century Hebrew florilegia from Provence. The consumption of dairy products on the holiday remains the most popular of these three, surviving down to modern times. Another one of the three – eating unleavened bread together with saffron on Šavu'ot – is relatively unknown and remains particularly puzzling, especially as unleavened bread was the characteristic food of a different festival, Passover. Little explanation is given for the custom, which was forgotten in later generations and not included in the influential Jewish legal compilations of the sixteenth century. However, herbal and medical texts from the medieval period can illuminate the origin of this custom, its rationale, and the uses of saffron in religious ritual among both Jews and Christians.

The holidays of Pesah (Passover), Šavu'ot (Feast of Weeks or Pentecost), and Sukkot (Tabernacles or Booths) together comprise the three biblical pilgrimage festivals (*šaloš regalim*). Jews would ascend to the Temple in Jerusalem to offer sacrifices specific to each festival. On Šavu'ot the offering of the two bread loaves (*šetei ha-lehem*; Lev 23:17) and the first fruits (Num 28:16; mBikkurim 1:3) were brought. Unlike Passover and Tabernacles, though, the biblical Šavu'ot is not associated with practices outside of the Temple. On Passover, Jews recount the story of the Exodus and eat unleavened bread and bitter herbs to recall the Israelites' bondage in Egypt; on Tabernacles, Jews eat meals in the Sukkah (Lev 23:42) and accompany the prayer services by ceremonial use of the Four Species of plants mentioned in Lev 23:40.[1] Following the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E., with the Jews no longer able to bring the offerings specific to each holiday, Šavu'ot ceased to be marked by specific practices – only the general prescriptions to abstain from labour, to be merry with festive meals, and also to recite the same festival prayers found on Passover and Tabernacles.[2] In the Talmudic period, Šavu'ot came to be associated with the date of the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai, but it was only in the medieval period that unique Šavu'ot rituals developed. Several of these involve specific foods.

A Cryptic Culinary Custom

Kol Bo (lit. ‘Everything within’ or: ‘The Compendium’), an anonymous Provençal halakic work from the late thirteenth-early fourteenth century, mentions three such culinary customs unique to Šavu‘ot, each followed by its presumed rationale(s).[3] The author seemed sure of the reasons behind the first two, though he was less certain about the third, proffering two guesses.

הלשמנ הרותהש ינפמ ,תועובש גחב בלחו שבד לוכאל וגהנ םג
"דנושל תחת בלחו שבד" בותכש ומכ ,בלחו שבדל.

בלה חמשמש יפל םעטהו ,ןרפז הצמב םושל ןכ םג לארשי לכב וגהנו.

אצמנ יכ רמול הארנו .םישאר עברא ולו ,דורא םחל תועובשב תושעל םישנה וגהנ םג
ןויסב שמשמה םימואת לזמ ינפמ רשפא וא .תרצעב ברקה םחלה יתשל רכז גהנמה.[4]

> It was also customary to eat honey and milk on the holiday of Šavu‘ot because the Torah is compared to honey and milk, as it is stated (Cant 4:11): ‘Honey and milk are under your tongue’.
>
> And it was customary among all of Israel to also place in the *massah* [unleavened bread] saffron. And the reason is because it gladdens the heart.
>
> The women also had the custom to make on Šavu‘ot an elongated bread, with four heads. And it seems to be because the custom is in remembrance of the two bread loaves which were offered [in the Temple] on Šavu‘ot. Alternatively, it is possible that [the custom] is because the constellation [or: zodiac sign] of Gemini serves in the month of Sivan [within which Šavu‘ot falls].

Forms of the first and third of this series of culinary practices were still well-known in later centuries.[5] We will focus on the second one. At its face, the custom is rather cryptic. Massah, after all, is the prototypical symbolic food of Passover, not Šavu‘ot. And the Bible labels this unleavened bread, a bread of distress [or: affliction] (ינע םחל; Deut 16:3), not the sort of food one would expect to be linked to a custom intended to ‘gladden the heart’. And where does one get unleavened bread from for this holiday, six weeks after Passover has concluded? (Nothing like the lengthy legal discussions of massah baking pre-Passover, before leavened bread is prohibited, exists by Šavu‘ot.) And how is the saffron eaten with the massah? Is it baked in, used to season the dough, or perhaps applied afterwards in a glaze? Unlike the two other customs in the series, the author hints at the widespread geographical distribution of the custom of eating massah with saffron as ‘customary in all of Israel’. And yet the work of another Provençal scholar, Qalonymos b. Qalonymos of Arles (1286-c.1328), a nearby contemporary of the author of *Kol Bo*, makes not mention of it – while he does make note of those who gathered honey and milk and who baked uniquely shaped breads in advance of Šavu'ot.[6] Jacob b. Abba Mari Anatoli (thirteenth century) does not mention it either, though he describes the custom to eat honey and milk.[7]

Further details regarding this culinary custom can be found where the passage is repeated in the *Orhot Hayyim* (lit. 'Pathways of life') of R. Aaron ha-Kohen of Lunel (c.1260-1330), described by J.Galinsky as a Jewish *florilegium*.[8] As S.Z. Havlin has established, *Kol Bo* was likely an initial version of R. Aaron's *Orhot Hayyim*, the former likely composed before 1295, prior to R. Aaron's expulsion from France in 1306 with the rest of the Jewish community at the order of the French monarch King Philip IV (the Fair). In his revised version, *Orhot Hayyim*, finished after the author had resettled on the island of Marjorca, he includes the contemporary Catalan halakic opinions with which he had become familiar as he traveled through Spain.[9]

> הרותה הלשמנש ינפמ ,ןושאר םויב בלחו שבד לוכאל וגהנו
> ."דנושל תחת בלחו שבד" רמאנש ומכ ,בלחו שבדל
>
> אוהש הארנו [ ] הזכ םישאר העברא ולו ,םחל תושיל םישנה וגהנ םג
> .ןויסב שמשמש םימואת לזמש ינפמ וא ,םחלה יתשל רכז
>
> בלה תא חמשמש ןארפעזה ימב ותוא ןילבוטו ,חספ לש תוצממ ןיעינצמש וגהנ םג.[10]

> It was also customary to eat honey and milk on the first day [of the holiday of Šavu'ot] because the Torah is compared to honey and milk, as it is stated (Cant 4:11): 'Honey and milk are under your tongue'.
>
> The women also had the custom to kneed [for Šavu'ot] a bread with four heads, like so [ ]. And it seems to be in remembrance of the two bread loaves on Šavu'ot or because the constellation [or: zodiac sign] of Gemini serves in the month of Sivan [within which Šavu'ot falls].
>
> It was also the custom to hide [or: save] from the Passover *massot* [for Šavu'ot] and they would dip it in saffron waters, for it gladdens the heart.

In this revised version of the passage, R. Aaron ha-Kohen changed the order of the three customs, demoting the use of massah with saffron to the last place on his list of three.[11] He also removed mention of the custom's geographic spread. But he did clarify some aspects of the practice – the massah used was saved from those baked for Passover specifically for this Šavu'ot custom, and the saffron was not baked in the massah itself; the massah would be dipped in a liquid seasoned with saffron. In their commentaries on the Passover laws, contemporary Provençal scholars, R. Manoah of Narbonne (thirteenth-fourteenth century) and R. Menahem b. Solomon Me'iri of Perpignon (1249-1316) made offhand mention of the practice of seasoning Passover massah with saffron after it had been

been baked (as a matter of taste; most seasonings could be used to enhance the flavor of the massah once the baking had been completed, per R. Abraham b. David of Posquières [d.1198] whose view they were expanding upon), but the special dipping that R. Aaron ha-Kohen describes was clearly performed on Šavu'ot itself and the unique requirement for saffron was on Šavu'ot alone.[12]

At the close of the fourteenth century, R. Samuel b. Meshullam of Gerona (b.1335), who had limited access to his books when he composed his halakic code *'Ohel Mo'ed* (lit. 'Tent of meeting'; completed 1396) due to the recent anti-Jewish riots sweeping through Spain, made reference to the custom found in *Orhot Hayyim* using the a similar linguistic root to describe the *massot* saved from Passover that year used for Šavu'ot (ענצ), but in his work the custom has several new forms.[13] Perhaps some of the inaccuracies stem from difficulty accessing his books.

> רכז ,תועובשה גח דע חספ לש תוצמה ןמ עינצהל אוה גהנמ
> .ןמה דריש דע ןהמ ולכאש ,םירצממ ואיצוהש תוצמל
>
> ,חספ לש תרצע אוה תועובש יכ זומרל גהנמהש 'מוא שיו
> .תוכוסמ תרצע יוה גח לש ינימשש ומכ
>
> .םהיבהואל ןירגשמו ,ןילכואו ,שבדבו ןארפעז ימב תוצמה ןילבוטו
> הנתנש ינפמ שבדה םעטו ,חמשמש ינפמ [ןארפעז ל"צ] ןאפערזה םעטו
> ".ךנושל תחת בלחו שבד" 'אנש ,שבדל הלשמנש הרות וב[14]

> It is a custom to hide [or: save] from the Passover *massot* until the holiday of Šavu'ot, in remembrance of the *massot* that they took out of Egypt, which they ate until the manna fell.
>
> And some say that the custom is to hint that Šavu'ot is the *'aseret* [= closure-festival] of Passover, just as the eighth day of *Hag* [= eighth day of Sukkot, i.e. *Šemini 'aseret*] is the *'aseret* [= closure-festival] of Sukkot.
>
> And they would dip the it *massot* in saffron waters and honey and eat it, and send it to their loved ones.
>
> And the reason for the saffron is because it gladdens the heart.
>
> And the reason for the honey is because the Torah, which was given on it [the holiday of Šavu'ot] is compared to honey, as it is stated (Cant 4:11): 'Honey and milk are under your tongue'.

R. Samuel b. Meshullam made no mention of uniquely shaped breads and conflated two of the customs – the use of honey (leaving out milk) with the consumption of massah on Šavu‘ot. He understood the focus of the custom as the massah, not the saffron or honey, and explains that unleavened bread is eaten on Šavu‘ot to mark it as the concluding part of Passover, an idea found in the commentary of Nahmanides (1194-1270) to Lev 23:36. The gifting the massah so prepared to others is also novel.

Herbal Lore and Reading R. Aaron ha-Kohen

In attempting to determine the origin and rationale for the custom described by R. Aaron ha-Kohen it is necessary to turn back to his *Kol Bo* and *Orhot Hayyim*. His reasoning – which does not change between the two books – is not expressed in the subjunctive mood, as is one of the other food practices of Šavu‘ot; here he is not guessing. He is certain as to the foundation for this widespread custom: ‘it’ gladdens the heart. The subject of the verb here cannot be massah. As we noted, massah is termed bread of distress [or: affliction] already in the Bible. Massah is also discussed ad nauseum in countless other halakic works without any inkling of its consumption resulting in a such an effect. Nor is it likely that the subject is the combination of unleavened bread and saffron, which does not appear earlier in Jewish literature (nor elsewhere). The rationale explicitly given by R. Aaron is an effect driven by saffron only, so the focus in understanding this enigmatic Provençal custom must be aimed at this rare and costly spice. Saffron appears only once in the Bible, as a hapax legomenon in Cant 4:14, amongst a list of other fine spices. (‘Nard and saffron, fragrant reed and cinnamon, with all aromatic woods, myrrh and aloes – all the choice perfumes.’[NJPS]). The Hebrew root used here for joyfulness (שמח | SMH) is applied to the heart in numerous biblical verses, particularly within the Hagiographa, within the sapiential books (e.g., Ps 4:8, 19:9, 105:3; Prov 15:13, 15:30, 17:22, 23:15; cf. Ps 13:6 using the alternate root יגל לבי [YGL], ‘my heart will exult’, contrasted with Ps 13:3, יגון בלבבי, ‘grief in my heart’; cf. also I Sam 2:1 translating עלץ לבי [‘LS], ‘my heart exults’) but only one, Prov 27:9 relates to spices. (‘Oil and incense gladden the heart, and the sweetness of a friend is better than one’s own counsel.’ [NJPS] Saffron was one of the ingredients of the Temple incense as listed by the baraita in bKer 6a.) R. Aaron was not drawing upon Biblical antecedents in connecting saffron to the heart and to gladdening. From where then did he get this idea and what is meant by gladdening?

The passages in *Kol Bo* and *Orhot Hayyim* were likely understood by contemporaries, but misinterpreted by later readers because the term לפי שמשמח הלב was actually a *terminus technicus*; the phrase was not a borrowing from similar biblical phrases and originally did not simply mean a substance which induces happiness through its pleasant scent or taste alone. The root (שמח | SMH) was used by contemporary Hebrew scholars (some of whom were active in Provençe) in translating Arabic *mufrih*, an exhilarant and also general term for a cardiac remedy.[15] R. Aaron ha-Kohen was drawing upon medical terminology in describing use of saffron as a cardiac exhilarant, indicating that the rationale for the Šavu‘ot custom related to pharmacologic characteristics of saffron, known to physicians.

Classical Greek and Roman medical works did not mention this characteristic of *Crocus sativus*. While Pliny and Dioscorides both devoted sections of their respective works to saffron, suggesting numerous pharmacologic applications – with Dioscorides noting that it was anaphrodisiac and Pliny noting that saffron 'is extremely useful in medicine, and is generally kept in horn boxes' – neither directly connected the herb to the heart or to joyfulness.[16] Contrary to what one might expect, saffron is scarcely mentioned in the gargantuan Indian medical encyclopedias.[17] Among some of the earlier physicians writing in Arabic there was no mention of saffron in connection with the heart. In the brief treatment given in his *Simple Aromatic Substances*, the Syriac Christian physician Yuhannā Ibn Māsawayh (Mesue; d.857) listed saffron as 'good for the liver and stomach, similarly for all the humours' with no mention of cardiac effects.[18] In Qayrawānese Jewish physician and philosopher Isaac b. Solomon Israeli (ca.855-ca.955) followed Ibn Māsawayh in starting off his discussion of saffron in his *Liber dietarum particularum* with its usefulness in strengthening the stomach and opening obstructions [or: blockages] in the liver.[19] The heart is absent from his list too. However, one of their contemporaries had a different view. Rhazes (al-Rāzī; 854-c.925-935) in his *Comprehensive Book of Medicine* (*Kitāb al-Hāwi fi al-tibb*) quoted a ninth-century Christian physician originally from Ba'labakk (ancient Heliopolis), Qustā ibn Lūqā (d.912), that saffron gladdened the heart. Qustā ibn Lūqā worked in Abbasid Baghdad, a generation after the famed translator Hunayn b. Ishāq. Interestingly, while Dioscorides warned against a large amount of saffron drunk with water ('But they say that it is also poisonous when an amount of three drachmai is drunk with water') and Pliny (*Historia Naturalis* 21:81) noted the ability of saffron to mitigate the effects of the alcohol and prevent inebriation, Rhazes cited authorities warning that the mixture of saffron with wine could provoke excessive and dangerous laughter.[20] Pseudo-Serapion cited the comments of Rhazes as well as a translation of Constantine the African associating saffron with laughter and the warning of Dioscorides regarding overuse (still referring to Greek drachmae, rather than Arabic mithqal).[21]

Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā; d.1037) drew from the medical encyclopedia of Rhazes for his own *Canon of Medicine*. In his review of medicinal simples in Book 2, Avicenna discussed individual substances, their properties, and their uses as remedies. Regarding saffron: 'It is an exhilarant and a cardiac tonic.' Like Rhazes he warned that 'When taken with wine it enhances the intoxication rendering the person uncontrollable... Poisons: It is said that three mithqal (13.5 gm) of saffron makes a man so overjoyed that, as a result, he dies (of shock)'.[22]

The teachings of Rhazes and Avicenna on saffron were excerpted and copied in nearly all of the major medical and botanical works which drew upon the traditions of Arabic medicine over the succeeding centuries. The anonymous popular Regimen of Salerno (thirteenth century), upon which R. Aaron ha-Kohen's neighbour Arnold of Villanova wrote a commentary, linked the heart with happiness as well. As a result, medical works through the time of the Renaissance would refer to saffron as a treatment for melancholy.[23]

R. Aaron ha-Kohen then recorded a custom to consume massah with saffron on Šavu'ot with saffron being the focus of the practice due to its widely known ability as a pharmacologic stimulant to induce joyfulness on the holiday.

Kol Bo: A Medieval Miscellany, Its Sources, and Traditions

But why would a stimulant to treat melancholy be necessary specifically on Šavu'ot? After all, Jewish law prohibits fasting or eulogies and has an commandment to be happy and to make one's family happy on all festivals – not on Šavu'ot alone (Deut 16:14; bPes 109a; Maimonides, *Laws of Ševitat yom tov* 6:17).

The place of this custom in *Kol Bo* and *Orhot Hayyim* may provide some clue. Though R. Aaron ha-Kohen was active in Narbonne, and his books cite thirteenth century Provençal works (often without citation) – like Nathan b. Judah's *Sefer ha-Mahkim*, David b. Levi of Narbonne's *Sefer ha-Miktam*, Mešullam b. Moses of Beziers' Sefer ha-Hašlamah, and Asher b. Saul of Lunel's *Sefer ha-Minhagot* – his books are also replete with Northern European materials. The percentage of the latter is even higher in *Kol Bo* (where our custom already appears), as that work includes less of the materials from Spanish scholars (R. Solomon ibn Adret, R. Yom Yov b. Abraham of Seville) which R. Aaron ha-Kohen encountered after he was exiled from France. Indeed, the late thirteenth century German and Northern French scholars R. Meir of Rothenberg and R. Peres of Corbeil are among the most frequently cited authorities.[24] At the conclusion of the 'regular code, terminating with the laws of mourning (No. 115), there comes a miscellaneous collection', with legal decisions from some of the greatest Franco-German authorities of the preceding 300 years, including ordinances of Rabbenu Gershom and of Rabbenu Tam, decisions of R. Eliezer b. Nathan of Mainz; decisions of R. Samson b. Zadoq ("דינין מספר התשב"ץ"), decisions of R. Isaac of Corbeil, responsa and decisions of R. Perez ["דינין מה"ר פרץ דרד שאלות ותשובות"], decisions of R. Isaac of Ourville ("דיני רבי יצחק בעל המנהל ז"ל"), and decisions of R. Baruk b. Isaac, author of *Sefer ha-Terumah*.[25]

This food custom, as we have seen, occurs as one of a series of three culinary practices for Šavu'ot. While the combination of massah with saffron is not found in earlier texts, the first on the list is. Among the legal decisions of the R. Avigdor b. Elijah ha-Kohen (d. ca.1275) we already find reference to the consumption of dairy products (but not honey) on Šavu'ot. E. Kanarfogel has observed that his 'commentaries often reflect the exegetical methods of the German pietists, and there are specific parallels in interpretation and doctrine'. As prooftext for the use milk on Šavu'ot, R. Avigdor cited an acrostic made from the first letter of three adjacent words in the verse Num 29:26, a verse referring to the holiday of Šavu'ot, signaling the Hebrew word for milk (not quoting Cant 4:11 as did R. Aaron ha-Kohen). From R. Avigdor's reports it seems that the custom was already widespread; many people were asking regarding its source ("העולם מקשים").[26] Even prior to R. Avigdor, we find mention of dairy products (again, without honey) on Šavu'ot in a comment of R. Ele'azar b. Judah of Worms (d.1238) in the name his uncle (or great-uncle), R. Menahem b. Jacob of Worms (d.1203).[27] (I suspect it likely that honey is omitted solely because the halakic question surrounds the use of milk only, with the problem being dairy products eaten in proximity to meat. Honey was irrelevant from that perspective as it could be eaten with either dairy or meat. These texts may not indicate that honey was not used in the Šavu'ot foods.) The earliest witnesses here to the consumption of dairy on Šavu'ot date from a century prior to R. Aaron ha-Kohen and stem from the traditions of Ashkenaz (German Jewry). And there is further proof for this origin.

Šavu'ot, commemorating the giving of the Torah to the people of Israel, was also the the traditional date for the initiation of elementary education in Ashkenaz. R. Ele'azar b. Judah of Worms recorded this practice: 'It is the custom of our ancestors (*minhag avoteinu*) to sit the children down to study (the Torah for the first time) on Shavuot because that is when the Torah was given.'[28] As part of this initiation rite, the children would begin study with the book of Leviticus and would be fed cakes, kneaded with honey and milk.[29] As G. Oberlander has noted, the custom for all – adults too – to eat foods containing milk and honey on Šavu'ot mimics the educational rite for children, and marks the holiday as a time of renewal of Torah study for all Jews, young and old.[30] Versions of these Ashkenazic educational rituals were transmitted in *Kol Bo* and *Orhot Hayyim* too.[31]

It would be reasonable, then, to consider that the other two culinary customs listed in the series in *Kol Bo* and *Orhot Hayyim* are likely of Ashkenazic origin as well.

Memory of Šavu'ot in the Middle Ages

If the use of saffron on Šavu'ot to induce happiness stems from Ashkenaz, then its use on this festival alone becomes more understandable. Specifically in Ashkenaz the Jewish community would be expected to be prone to melancholy around the time of this holiday. Without the addition of a pharmacological stimulant, they would be unable to fulfil the obligation to be joyous at the time of the holiday. The massacres of the Rhineland Jewish communities during the First Crusade in 1096 had occurred around the time of Šavu'ot. In the histories and liturgies memorialising the martyrs, the proximity to the festival was pointed out, with the chroniclers focusing upon reversal of the normally celebratory atmosphere of the holiday and the joy of the Israelites at receiving the Torah at Sinai to one of mourning.

> In Worms: Seven days later, on the New Moon of Sivan – the very day on which the Children of Israel arrived at Mount Sinai to receive the Torah – those Jews who were still in the court of the bishop were subjected to great anguish. The enemy...put them to the sword.[32]
>
> In Mainz: On the new moon of Sivan, Count Emicho, the oppressor of all the Jews...arrived outside the city with a mighty horde of errant ones and

> peasants…On the third day of Sivan, a day of sanctification and abstinence for Israel in preparation for receiving the Torah, the very day on which our Master Moses, may he rest in peace, said: 'Be ready against the third day' – on that very day the community of Mainz, saints of the Most High, withdrew from each other in sanctity and purity and sanctified themselves to ascend to God all together.[33]
>
> In Cologne: I will now recount how the community of Cologne conducted themselves, and how they sanctified His One and Sublime Name. It was on the fifth of Sivan, the Eve of Pentecost, when the news came to Cologne…The enemy began to slay them from Pentecost until the eighth of Tammuz…[34]

The receipt of the Torah at Sinai was contrasted with the desecration of the Torah scrolls and Jewish sancta at the hands the marauding Crusaders and the Christian populace. In Cologne, R. Eliezer b. Nathan recounted that

> The foe destroyed the synagogue and removed the Torah Scrolls, desecrating them and casting them into the streets to be trodden underfoot. On the very day that the Torah was given, when the earth trembled and its pillars quivered, they now tore, burned and trod upon it – those wicked evildoers regarding whom it is said: 'Robbers have entered and profaned it.'[35]

The preparation of the Israelites for the giving of the Torah at Sinai was transferred to the preparedness of the Rhineland Jews to lay down their lives to avoid the baptismal font. R. Solomon b. Samson, commenting on the murder of R. Qalonymos the Pious draws this and similar comparisons.

> On the very day that the Lord had said to his people, 'Be prepared for the third day,' on that day they prepared themselves, extended their throats, and offered up their sacrifice, a sweet savor unto the Lord. On that day eleven hundred holy souls were slain for the sake of the Great Name of Him Who is One in the world, besides Whom there is no god.[36]

On the Sabbath preceding Šavu'ot it became the custom in each community to read a list of the names of the many martyrs. When later massacres occurred, more names were recorded in the communal *Memorbucher* and then added to the public recitation.[37] R. Abraham Klausner (d. 1407/08), his student R. Jacob Moellin (d.1427), and R. Zalman Yent of Treviso recorded that the Rhineland Jews would recite the prayer *'Av ha-Rahamim* ('Father of Compassion') on the Sabbath before Šavu'ot alone. The prayer laments 'the holy congregations who gave their lives for the Sanctification of the Name' and prays that God 'exact retribution for the spilled blood of his servants'. Moellin recorded that the Jews of Mainz in the early fifteenth century were still fasting on the third of Sivan in commemoration of the destruction of that city's Jewish community on that day in 1096.[38]

Interestingly, an anonymous eighteenth century compendium, *Hemdat Yamim* (*The Choicest* [or: *Best*] *of Days*), written under Ottoman rule, cites his unnamed 'teacher' in describing a number of other customs for Šavu'ot all related to persecution of the Jews under Christianity, such as reading the book of Obadiah (which deals with the Edomites and the figure of Esau, later understood to refer to the Roman Empire and to Christian Europe) and certain chapters from the book of Psalms (Ps 17 and 109). The centuries-old Ashkenazic practice of children beginning their study during Šavu'ot with passages on sacrificial order from the book of Leviticus was transmuted to a study by adults of these same passages, perhaps to memorialize the countless human sacrifices through Jewish martyrdom that had taken place during the month of Sivan. *Hemdat Yamim* relates the time of Šavu'ot to the constellation of Gemini and interprets the twins as referring not to the Castor and Pollux of Greek mythology but to the battling biblical twins, Jacob (Israel) and Esau (Christianity) – a sign that conflict between the two religions would be ever-present during Sivan under this sign of the zodiac.[39]

No wonder then that thirteenth century Jews may have needed a pharmacological assist to fulfil the biblical mandate to be joyful during the holiday of Šavu'ot.

Saffron and Other Stimulants in Religious Practice

This use of saffron by medieval Jews for its psychoactive properties is not as unusual as it might seem at first. Piero Camporesi famously described some of the advertent and inadvertent effects of the use of hallucinogenic herbs and grains in pre-Modern Europe.[40] And in an oft-cited article, the late Elliot Horowitz claimed that the introduction of coffee with its caffeinated-kick enabled the spread and popularization of the midnight devotional practice of Tiqqun Hassot, which began among the coterie of R. Isaac Luria in sixteenth century Safed.[41] The direct evidence for this link in Horowitz's presentation is actually rather sparse (and relatively later, compared to the diffusion of the ritual) – a comment of R. Moses Zacuto in a responsum from 1673 on the use of coffee in midnight vigils and the account of Gedalyah of Siemiatycze, a member of Judah he- Hasid's entourage in the eighteenth century.

Similar conjectures regarding saffron in a religious context have been made. Volker Schier noted the astonishingly large amounts of saffron donated to the South German Birgittine monastery of Maria Mai in Maihingen. This was recorded in the early sixteenth century by the Nuremberg widow Katerina Lemmel, whose cousin was Hans V. Imhoff, a top executive in the family's Nuremberg trading company, Imhoff Handelsgesellschaft. While the bulk of the saffron ended up in the kitchen and was used for flavouring soups, some was handed out to the individual nuns; Schier suggests that the stimulant characteristics of saffron were useful to the nuns in enabling the long days of singing during Lent,[42] but concedes that the suggestion is speculative.[43] Other spices mentioned in the letters, like grains of paradise and pepper, seem equally prominent and were also used in bulk. And in a rare 1520 allegorical work on the foods of Lent – outside of a monastic context – saffron figures prominently, referencing its ability to induce joy.[44] The book, *Le Quadragesimal Spirituel*, frequently listed in catalogues and bibliographic descriptions accompanied by adjectives like 'curious' and 'bizarre', was better known through the lengthy extracts from it in which were included Henri Estienne's *Apology for Herodotus*, published numerous times from the sixteenth centuries onwards.[45]

> By Saffron which is put into all broths, sawces, and Lent meates, I vnderstand the ioyes of heauen, which we must thinke vpon, yea (as it were) smell, rellish and ruminate of in all our actions; for without Saffron we shall neuer haue good iuyce of pease, good strayned pease, nor yet good sawce. Neither can we without thinking vpon the ioyes of heauen, haue good spirituall broths.[46]

Saffron then was characteristically used in Lenten meals by the early sixteenth century whether one was singing for hours or not. And use of saffron by women both outside and inside the monasteries to dye (or: scent) head coverings such as veils and wimples was common already by the mid-thirteenth century in Northern Europe, irrespective of its pharmacologic uses. Fabliaux unconnected to nuns remarked on saffron as a colorant for head garments.[47] It was a practice criticized by the moralists, including Eudes Rigaud, Archbishop of Rouen (d.1275) visiting the nuns at the Northern French priory of Villarceaux, and by William of Wadington.[48] The latter's warnings were repeated by Robert Mannyng (d. after 1338) and such criticism continued until at least the late fourteenth century.[49]

The use of saffron on Šavu'ot, as found in R. Aaron ha-Kohen's early fourteenth-century compendia, *Kol Bo* and *Orhot Hayyim*, seems then to be unique in reflecting the use of saffron as a pharmacologic stimulant for use in religious practice. And it likely reflects an Ashkenazic antecedent which suggested the use of an herbal supplement to enable the celebration of the festival shortly after memorializing the horrors of the First Crusade in the Rhineland communities.

Notes

1. Interestingly, the *midrešei halakah* preserve an initial assumption that it might have been considered appropriate to eat unleavened bread (*massah*) and to dwell in the festival hut (*sukkah*) on each of the three pilgrimage festivals (including on Šavu'ot; not just on Pesah and Sukkot, respectively). See *Sifre on Deuteronomy | Corpus Tannaiticum…Pars Tertia, Siphre d'be Rab, fasciculus alter, Siphre ad Deuteronomium*, H.S. Horovitz and Louis Finkelstein, eds. (reprint: New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1969 [originally: Berlin, 1939]), p. 193, ll. 10-13, Re'eh, §139 (to Deut 16:12) and Sifra, Isaac Hirsch Weiss, ed. (Vienna, 1862), p. 100a, (col. B), 'Emor, §11 (to Lev 23:6) and p. 102a (col. B), 'Emor, §12 (to Lev 23:34).

2. See, e.g., Simcha Fishbane, ‘In the absence of ritual: customs of the holiday of Shavuot’, in: *Научные труды по иудаике*, V.V. [Victoria Valentinova] Mochalova, ed. (Moscow, 2012), pp. 49-70. Reprinted in his: *The Impact of Culture and Cultures Upon Jewish Customs and Rituals: Collected Essays* (Brighton, MA: Academic Studies Press, 2016), pp. 126-161.
3. We will use the term Provençe broadly, to the refer to southern France generally, rather than solely its southeastern corner. Narbonne, the site of R. Aaron ha-Kohen’s initial literary activity, is actually in the Languedoc region of France.
4. Kol Bo, Vol. III, David Abraham, ed. (Jerusalem: Feldheim, 1992), cols. 218-219, §52: Seder Tefilat ha-Mo‘adot.
5. E.g.: Gedaliah Oberlander, "תועובשה גחב בלח ילכאמ תליכא", *’Or Yisrael* 32 [8.4] (Sivan, 2003): 104-120; David Golinkin, ‘Why do Jews Eat Milk and Dairy Products on Shavuot?’ *Responsa in a Moment*, Vol. 10, No. 7 (June 2016); Eliezer Brodt, ‘The Mysteries of Milchigs’, *Ami Magazine* (12 May 2013): 89-93. For Šavu‘ot baked goods: Daniel Sperber, *Minhagei Yisra’el*, Vol. III (Jerusalem: Mossad ha-Rav Kook, 1994), p. 139, n. 69; Antonius Margaritha, *Der gantz Jüdisch glaub* (Augsburg: Heynrich Steyer, 1530) (no pagination; section on the festivals, by marginal subheading: ‘Pfingsten’); Johann Buxtorf, *Jüden Schul* (Basel: Sebastian Henricpetri, 1603), p. 450 (ch. 15); Joseph Juspa Han, *Yosef ’Omes* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1723), p. 106b, §854.
6. Qalonymos b. Qalonymos of Arles, *Even Bohan*, A.M. Habermann, ed. (Tel Aviv: Machbaroth Lesifruth Publishing House, 1956), p. 34. (He describes ‘ladder’-shaped breads, different-sounding from those mentioned in *Kol Bo*.)
7. Jacob b. Abba Mari Anatoli (13th c.), *Malmad Hatalmidim* [= ‘A Goad to Scholars’] (Lyck: M’kize Nirdamim, 1866), p. 121b.
8. Though his traditional moniker includes the city of Lunel, he was not from Lunel but from Narbonne. See, generally, Judah D. Galinsky, ‘Of Exile and Halakhah: Fourteenth-Century Spanish Halakhic Literature and the French Exiles Aaron ha-Kohen and Jeruham b. Meshulam’, *Jewish History* 22.1-2 (2008): 81-96.
9. Šelomoh Z. Havlin, "ןיינעל םירפסה ‹ובלכ› ‹וחרא›ו ‹םייח תוחרא›: רקחמ יוהיזל רבחמ םירפס ולא ,יבתכ דיה שלהמ םהיתורודההמו", in: םייח תוחרא, ינייע תבש, S.Y. Klein and Y Klein, eds. (Merkaz Šapira’, ’Or ‘Esyon,1996). pp. 41-68.
10. R. Aaron ha-Kohen of Lunel, *Orhot Hayyim* (Florence, 1750), p. 78a, §Seder Tefilot ha-Pesah u-She‘ar ha-Mo’adot, ¶13 | (Jerusalem, 1956), p. 172.
11. With regard to the other two customs, R. Aaron clarified that honey and milk were eaten specifically on the first of the two days of Šavu‘ot and he seems to have provided a diagram of the four-headed Šavu‘ot bread, which was left out of the print versions of his book.
12. R. Menahem b. Solomon ha-Me’iri, *Bet ha-Behirah to Pesahim*, Joseph ha-Kohen Klein, ed. (2nd corrected edition; Jerusalem, 1967), p. 115, to bPesahim 36a. R. Manoah of Narbonne, *Sefer ha-Menuhah* (Jerusalem: Pardes, 1957), p. 15, §20, to Maimonides, Laws of Hames and massah 5:20. Both Me’iri and R. Manoah are based upon R. Abraham b. David of Posquières in his animadversions to Maimonides’ Laws of Hames and massah 6:5 that one can fulfill the obligation of eating massah on the first night of Passover with massah which is seasoned after it has been already baked.
13. In his introduction to the book, found in the MS at Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, the Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg, Russia Ms. B 183, NLI film no.: F 53333, the author clearly indicates that the title, דעומ להא, is a chronogram for the year in which the work was completed, i.e. 1396. R. Samuel b. Meshullam also gives the date of his birth as 1335. This section of the introduction is cited in Samuel Wiener, השמ תלהק | *Bibliotheca Friedlandiana: Catalogus Librorum Impressorum Hebraeorum in Museo Asiatico Imperialis Academiae Scientarum Petropolitanae Asservatorum*, Vol. I: א-ז (Petersburg, 1893-1902), p. 39, no. 324. The introduction is printed in full in Ya‘aqov Šhemu’el Spiegel, "רוביחה תמדקה דעומ להא לעב ידנורי םלושמ ר"ב לאומש 'רל חספ ליל רדסו", Moriah 21:10-12 (1998): 6-15. The author’s date (c.1300) given in the entry of Israel Ta-Shma, ‘Gerondi, Samuel bem Meshullam’, *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Vol. 7 (Jerusalem: Keter, 1971), col. 509, should be corrected. The entry was copied verbatim in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Second Edition, Vol. 7 (Jerusalem: Keter | Thomson Gale, 2007), p. 549. (Ta-Shma had died in 2004.) For the background: Benjamin R. Gampel, *Anti-Jewish Riots in the Crown of Aragon and the Royal Response, 1391-1392* (Cambridge University Press, 2016), Part I, Chapter 5: Girona, pp. 114-133.

14. Quoted from the MS above. Printed first (with only minor variations from the MS here) as R. Samuel b. Meshullam of Gerona, *'Ohel Mo'ed* (Jerusalem, 1886), p. 107a (Sha'ar ha-Pesah, Derek 6, Netiv 4 [end]).
15. Gerrit Bos, *Novel Medical and General Hebrew Terminology from the 13th Century: Volume 4* (Leiden | Boston: Brill, 2018), p. 51, s.v. "תורשקתה", quoting Hebrew translations of Avicenna's book on cardiac remedies; Maimonides, *On the Elucidation of Some Symptoms and the Response to Them (Formerly Known as* On the Causes of Symptoms*)*, Gerrit Bos, ed. & trans. (Leiden | Boston: Brill, 2019), pp. 61-62, 99, ll. 14-15 (Hebrew translation), and p. 62, n. 122. See also: Gerrit Bos, *A Concise Dictionary of Novel Medical and General Hebrew Terminology from the Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).
16. Pliny, *Natural History* 21:17 and 21:81. Dioscorides, *De materia medica*, Lily Y. Beck, trans. (Alterwissenschaftliche Texte und Studien, Band 38) (3rd revised edition | Hildesheim: Georg Olms-Weidmann, 2017), p. 23 (Book I, §26). Saffron does not appear in Galen's *De alimentorum facultatibus*. Though Dioscorides does mention some dangers associated with overuse of saffron, this does not merit the characterization of Francis Adams, *The Seven Books of Paulus Ægineta*, Vol. II (London, 1846), p. 242, that 'Dioscorides and Pliny likewise reckon saffron, or the *crocus sativus*, a deleterious plant. Its deleterious action is very weak'.
17. Their teachings had significant influence on the early Arabic medical works. Oliver Kahl, *The Sanskrit, Syriac and Persian Sources in the* Comprehensive Book *of Rhazes* (Leiden | Boston: Brill, 2015), pp. 7-28 (Introduction, I. The Sanskrit Sources). See the sparse references listed for saffron (*Crocus sativus*) in *Caraka-Samhitā*, Priya Vrat Sharma, ed. & trans., Vol. II (Varanasi | Delhi: Chaukhambha Orientalia, 1981), p. 697; *Súsruta-Samhitā*, Priya Vrat Sharma, ed. & trans., Vol. III (Varanasi: Chaukhambha Visvabharati, 2001), p. 664; *Bhela-Samhitā*, K.H. Krishnamurthy (Varanasi: Chaukhambha Visvabharati, 2000), p. 625; Dominik Wujastyk, *The Roots of Āyurveda: Selections from Sanskrit Medical Writings* (Penguin Books, 2001). Saffron also does not figure in lists of botanical pharmacological simples.
18. Martin Levey, 'Ibn Māsawaih and His Treatise on Simple Aromatic Substances: Studies in the History of Arabic Pharmacology I', *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 16.4 (Oct 1961): 403. A cardiac effect is also absent in the passage from Ibn Māsawayh in: Pseudo-Serapion, *De simplicibus medicinis* (Strasbourg: Georgius Ulricher, 1531), p. 120.

19. *Omnia opera Ysaac* (Lyons: Bartholomeus Trot, 1515), Part I, fol. 130, col. C. 'De croco. …stomachum confortat: epatis oppilationem aperit…' The book includes the medical works of Isaac Israeli with, despite the title, compositions by others Arabic authors (including those of ʿ Alī b. al-ʿ Abbās al-Majūsī and Ibn al-Jazzār), all in Latin translation from Constantinus Africanus (d. before 1098/99 at Monte Cassino).
20. *Continens Rasis*, Vol. II | *Seconda pars continentis Rasis*, Hieronymus Surianus, ed. (Venice: Bernardus Benalius, 1509), Bk 37 (i.e. Libri Ultimi), Tract 1, Ch. 241: De croco, fol. XXIvb-XXIIra – 'Dixit Costa: crocus letificat cor…'
21. Also quoted in: Pseudo-Serapion, *De simplicibus medicinis* (Strasbourg: Georgius Ulricher, 1531), p. 120 (ch. 173).
22. Pseudo-Serapion, op cit., p. 119, under 'Constan.)'. The relevant passages in Rhazes, Constantine, and Avicenna, were also excerpted in Matthaeus Sylvaticus (d. ca.1342, Salerno), *Pandectae medicinae* (Lyons: Theobaldus Paganus, 1541), fol. 107vb, ch. 367. On Pseudo-Serapion: Frank J. Anderson, *An Illustrated History of the Herbals* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), pp. 40-44; E. Ruth Harvey, 'Ibn Sarabi (Serapion)', in: *Encyclopaedia of the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine in Non-Western Cultures*, Helaine Selin, ed. (Kluwer Academic Publishers / Springer, 1997) pp. 433-434 (2nd edition, Vol. I [Springer, 2008], pp. 1118-1119); Curt Peters, 'Johannan b. Serapion', *Le Muséon* 55 (1942): 139-142.
23. Latin translation: Avicenna, *Liber Canonis…* (Basel: Ioannes Heruagios, 1556), p. 206 (Liber II, Tractatus II, Cap. 129). English translation: Avicenna, *Al-Qānūn fi'l-Tibb*, Book II, Maulana A.H. Farooqi, trans. (New Delhi, India: Dept. of Islamic Studies, Jamia Hamdard [Hamdard University], 1998. Discourse II, pp. 241-242 (letter Za, no. 14).
24. On saffron in the Middle Ages and its medical uses, see the discussions in: Luise Bardenhewer, *Der Safranhandel im Mittelalter* (PhD diss., Bonn: P. Hauptmann, 1914) and Maria Tscholakowa, 'Zur Geschichte der medizinischen Verwendung des Safran (crocus sativus)', in: *Kyklos: Jahrbuch des Instituts für Geschichte der Medizin an der Universität Leipzig* 2 (1929): 179-190. A lot more could be said on the topic.
25. *Orhot Hayyim* | *Orchoth Chajim*, Part II, M. Schlesinger, ed. (Berlin: M'kize Nirdamim, 1902), pp. 638-655.
26. Cyrus Adler and M. Seligsohn, 'Kol Bo', *Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. VII (New York & London: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1916), pp. 538-539.

27. *Perušim u-Pesaqim le-R. Avigdor Sarfati*, I. Hershkovitz, ed. (Jerusalem: Makon Harerei Qedem, 1996), p. 478, §§595-598. Ephraim Kanarfogel, *The Intellectual History and Rabbinic Culture of Medieval Ashkenaz* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2013), pp. 360-361 and pp. 472-477.
28. Simcha Emanuel, ed., *Rabbi Elazar Vormsensis / Oratio ad Pascam* (Jerusalem: Mekize Nirdamim, 2006), pp. 39-40: "השעו רשב ינפל הניבג לכאש תרצע לש בוט סויבש סחנמ 'יבר ודודש הארו ירמ אבא ,חקרה 'תכ מייתניב ההש אלו ןייב תפב לובטב הפה חוניק." (In the version of *Sefer ha-'Asufot* it says "ידודש".) On p. 110 within the text of his sermon for Passover, R. Ele'azar refers to a dairy dish on Šavu'ot – "רזעלא יל הארנ תא םגו הצוח םילחגה תא ףורגל ול רתומ ,תרצעב הניבג לש אתילמ וא חספ לילב תוצמ ןוגכ ,תופאל הצורש םדא ןטקה רפאה...". (Contrast the printed Ma'aseh Roqe'ah [Sanok, 1912] p. 14, §48 which omits the references to Šavu'ot and cheese.) R. Menahem b. Jacob of Worms was either uncle of R. Ele'azar b. Judah himself or uncle of R. Ele'azar's father, R. Judah b. Qalonymos of Mainz.
29. *Sefer ha-Roqe'ah ha-Gadol* (Jerusalem, 1960), p. 164, §296. Translated in: Ivan G. Marcus, *Rituals of Childhood: Jewish Acculturation in Medieval Europe* (New Haven | London: Yale University Press, 1996), p. 26. And Gedaliah Oberlander, op. cit., p. 106, n. 17.
30. *Mahzor Vitry* [*Machsor Vitry*], S. Hurwitz, ed., Vol. II (Nürnberg: I. Bulka, 1923), pp. 628-629, §508: "... לש ארקמ ןיעמו ."עלסמ שבד והקניו" רמאנש םושמ ?בלחו שבדב תולחה תא ןישל המלו...שבדב תולח ותוא ויליכאמו רמאנש ,בלה תחיתפ:"דנושל תחת בלחו שבד"." (Note the citation of Cant 4:11, used also as prooftext for the custom in *Kol Bo* and *Orhot Hayyim*.)
31. Gedaliah Oberlander, op. cit., pp. 106-107. A similar thought, that Šavu'ot cakes (but not specifically milk and honey) are related to the childhood education initiation ritual from Ashkenaz was suggested by M.M. Honig, as cited in: Daniel Sperber, *Minhagei Yisra'el*, Vol. VII (Jerusalem: Mossad ha-Rav Kook, 2003), p. 398 (Addenda and corrigenda to Vol. III [1994], p. 139, n. 69).
32. Ivan G. Marcus, op. cit., p. 33.
33. Shlomo Eidelberg, *The Jews and the Crusaders: The Hebrew Chronicles of the First and Second Crusades* (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav, 1996), p. 23. For the Hebrew texts, see A.M. Habermann, ed., Sefer Gezerot Aškenaz ve-Sarfat (Jerusalem: Taršis / Mossad ha-Rav Kook, 1946) and Eva Haverkamp, ed., *Hebräische Berichte über die Judenverfolgungen während des Ersten Kreuzzugs* (Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Hebräische texte aus dem Mittelalterlichen Deutschenland, Vol. I) (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2005). In the latter, the parallels between the different accounts can be more clearly seen.
34. Ibid., pp. 28-29.
35. Ibid., p. 49
36. Ibid., p. 85
37. Ibid., p. 44.
38. See: Siegmund Salfeld, *Das Martyrologium des Nürnberger Memorbuches* (Berlin: Leonhard Simion, 1898), pp. 5, 8, 10. See also David Wachtel, 'The Ritual and Liturgical Commemoration of Two Medieval Persecutions', (MA dissertation, Columbia University, 1995).
39. R. Abraham Klausner, *Sefer ha-Minhagim*, S. Spitzer, ed. (Jerusalem, 2006), p. 120, §131; R. Jacob Moellin, *Sefer Maharil: Minhagim*, S. Spitzer, ed. (Jerusalem, 1989), p. 159, 243-244; R. Zalman Yent, *Minhagim / Seder Treviso*, appended to: R. Isaac Tyrnau, *Seder ha-Minhagim*, S. Spitzer, ed. (Jerusalem, 2000), p. 171; Israel Elfenbein, ed., *Sefer Minhagim de-Be Maharam bar Baruk mi-Rothenburg* (New York, 1938), p. 29; *Mazhor mi-Kol ha-Šanah ki-Minhag Q'Q 'Aškenaz = Mahzor with commentary Ma'agle Sedeq* (1568), p. 220b; R. Solomon b. Judah Lebuš of Lublin (d.1591), *Pisqe u-Še'elot u-Teshuvot Maharaš mi-Lublin*, Isaac Herskovitz, ed. (Brooklyn: n.p., 1988), p. 3, Pisqe Maharaš mi-Lublin §11.
40. Anonymous, *Hemdat Yamim* ('*The Choicest* [or: *Best*] *of Days*'), Vol. 3 (Constantinople, 1735 | reprint: Jerusalem: Makor, 1970), p. 51d. Of note, and in closer proximity to the time of the author of *Hemdat Yamim*, the 20th of Sivan (earlier a fast day instituted by Rabbenu Tam for the martyrdom of thirty-two Jews at the French town of Blois in 1171) became a communal fast day in the seventeenth century to commemorate the ravaging of hundreds of Polish Jewish communities in the Cossack programs under Bogdan Chmielnitzky in 1648. (See: Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory* [Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1996], pp. xxvii-xxviii [within Preface to 1996 edition] and 48-52.) The teaching of *Hemdat Yamim* here is later cited in: R. Hayyim Palaggi (1788-1869), *Mo'ed le-Kol Hai* (*A Time for All the Living*) (Izmir, 1862), p. 40b, §8:8; R. Hayyim Palaggi, Ru'ah Hayyim (*Spirit of Life*), Vol. I (Izmir, 1876), p. 77b, O.H. 494:8; R. Joseph b. Solomon Mordok, *Nefesh Yosef* (Salonika, 1856), appendix: "לגרה ידעומ סירטנוק", pp. 3a-b; Joseph Joel Rivlin, "תועובש יגהנמ", *Hed*

ha-Mizrah (*Echo of the Orient*) 3.1 (Gilyon Šavu'ot) (Friday, 4 Sivan / 26 May 1944), p. 5; R. Gabriel Sinner, *Nit'ei Gavriel: Hilkot Hag ha-Šavu'ot* (Jerusalem, 1999), p. 77, §8:15 (only cites Palaggi, so does not mention recitation of the book of Obadiah). On the 'teacher' cited by the author of *Hemdat Yamim*, see: Isaiah Tishby, ' The 'Genealogy' of 'My Teacher' (ירומ) and 'My Father Who is My Master and My Teacher' (ירומ א'א) as Pseudonymous Quotations in '*Hemdat Yamim*'', *Tarbiz* 50 (1981): 464-514 [reprinted in his: *Studies in the Kabbalah and its Branches*]. Part of the section on Šavu'ot in *Hemdat Yamim* here is taken from the book of R. Elijah ibn Hayyim, *Ha-Noten 'Imrei Shefer* (Venice, 1630); see Tishby, 480-481. *Hemdat Yamim* also quoted passages on Šavu'ot from R. Solomon b. Judah Lebuš of Lublin Tishby (d.1591) who, in his decisions, mentions the connection of the First Crusade to Šavu'ot; see Tishby, 472-474. Tishby does not address every passage from *Hemdat Yamim* containing references to his 'teacher'. Moshe Hallamish, *Kabbalah: In Liturgy, Halakhah and Customs* (Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University, 2000), pp. 595-612, deals with the nighttime study of Šavu'ot, and other than a brief reference to the work of Palaggi on p. 610, does not explain the recitation of the book of Obadiah, passages on the sacrificial order or these specific Psalms.

41. Piero Camporesi, *Bread of Dreams: Food and Fantasy in Early Modern Europe*, David Gentilcore, trans. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989). And see Roy Porter's comments and caveats in the preface, esp. on pp. 14-15. See p. 141 for a note on saffron for combatting melancholy.
42. Elliot Horowitz, 'Coffee, Coffeehouses, and the Nocturnal Rituals of Early Modern Jewry', *AJS Review* 14.1 (Spring, 1989): 17-46. For more on European Jews and coffee, see also: Robert Liberles, *Jews Welcome Coffee: Tradition and Innovation in Early Modern Germany* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2012), and his discussion of Horowitz's article on pp. 81-83.
43. Volker Schier, 'The Cantus Sororum: Nuns Singing for their Supper, Singing for Saffron, Singing for Salvation', in: *Papers Read at the 12th Meeting of the IMS Study Group Cantus Planus, Lillafüred / Hungary 2004, Aug. 23-28*, László Dobszay, ed. (Budapest, 2006), pp. 857-870; Ibid., 'Probing the Mystery of the Use of Saffron in Medieval Nunneries', *The Senses and Society* 5 [Pleasure and Danger in Perception: The Senses in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, special issue, Richard Newhauser & Corine Schleif, eds.] (2010): 57-72; Corine Schleif and Volker Schier, *Katerina's Windows: Donation and Devotion, Art and Music, as Heard and Seen in the Writings of a Birgittine Nun* (Pennsylvania University Press, 2009). See, in particular, Letter 19, dated 26 Sept 1517, pp. 199-120, cited in Schier (2006): 864 and Schier (2010): 61.
44. Schier (2006): 866 and Schier (2010): 64.
45. *Le Quadragesimal Spirituel cest assavoir la salade, les feubues frites, les poys passez, la puree, la lamproye, le saffren, les orenges, les pruneaux, les figues, les amandes, les miel, le pain...* (Paris: Michel le Noir, 1520 | Paris: Jehan Janot, 1521). Reprinted with the title: *Le Quadragesimal Spirituel ou Caresme allégorié* (Paris: Jean Bonfons, 1565), with the subtitle that it was 'reviewed and corrected by two venerable doctors on the faculty of theology [of the University of Paris]'. See: Andrew Pettegree, Malcolm Walsby, Alexander S. Wilkinson, eds., *French Vernacular Books. Books published in the French Language before 1601* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).
46. For some bibliographic descriptions of the work and its editions: Georges Vicaire, *Bibliographie Gastronomique* (Paris, 1890), cols. 719-722; Louis Double, *Cabinet d'un curieux: Description de quelques livres rares* (Paris, 1890), pp. 97-98, no. 105; Antoine Laporte, *Bibliographie clérico-galante* (Paris, 1879), p. 148.
47. Translated as: *A world of wonders: or An introduction to a treatise touching the conformitie of ancient and moderne wonders: or a preparatiue treatise to the Apologie for Herodotus*. The argument whereof is taken from the Apologie for Herodotus written in Latine by Henrie Stephen, and continued here by the author himselfe. Translated out of the best corrected French copie. (London: Iohn Norton, 1607), p. 296. See Henri Estienne, *L'introduction au traite de la conformite des merveilles anciennes avec les modernes. Ou, Traite Preparatif à l'Apologie pour Herodote* (1566), pp. 560-561.
48. For fabliaux: 1) The Mercer: *Fabliaux inédits: tirés du manuscrit de la Bibliothèque du roi*, A.C.M. Robert, ed. (Paris: Imprimerie et fonderie de Rignoux, 1834), p. 6; *Satirical Songs and Poems on Costume: From the 13*th *to the 19*th *Century*, Frederick W. Fairholt, ed. (London: Percy Society, 1849), p. 8 ('II. The Mercer'): 'J'ai les guinples ensafffrenées' | 'I have wimples dyed in saffron'. 2) The Healer: *Recueil general et complet de Fabliaux des XIII*e *et XIV*e *siècles*, M. Anatole de Montaiglon, Vol. I (Paris: Librarie des Bibliophiles, 1872) – XXV. La Sainer esse, p. 289. For English translation: Nathaniel E. Dubin, trans., *The Fabliaux: A new verse translation* (New York | London: Liveright Publishing / W.W.

Norton & Co., 2013), p. 525, no. 44 (The Healer | La Saineresse): 'and pale wimple he wore of saffron yellow'. Cf.: Camille Enlart, *Manuel d'archéologie française depuis les temps Mérovingiens jusqu'a la Renaissance*, Vol. 3: Le Costume (Paris: Picard, 1916), p. 60 (citing the tale of La Saineresse).

49. *The Register of Eudes of Rouen*, Sydney M. Brown, trans., Jeremiah O'Sullivan, ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), pp. 49-50. ('All of them let their hair grown down to the chin, and put saffron on their veils.') William of Waddington, '*Le Manuel des Péchés*' (composed c.1220-1240, Anglo-Norman), WLC/LM/4 (University of Nottingham), f. 8v, mentioning 'Les guymples alsi ensaffronez'. http://mssweb.nottingham.ac.uk/document-viewer/medieval-women/theme8/document4/09-1111m-8-4_1.asp Cf. Florin Curta, Colour Perception, Dyestuffs, and Colour Terms in Twelfth-Century French Literature', *Medium Ævum*, Vol. 73, No. 1 (2004): 62, n. 106, citing Robert Delort, 'Fibres textiles et plantes tinctoriales', in *L'ambiente vegetale nell'alto Medioevo* (Spoleto, 1990), p. 859.

50. *Robert of Brunnè's Handlyng Synne*, F.J. Furnivall, ed. (London: Roxburgh Club, 1862), p. 111, l. 3448; *Robert of Brunne's 'Handlyng Synne,' A.D. 1303, with those parts of the Anglo-French treatise on which it was founded, William of Wadington's 'Manuel des Pechiez',* Frederick J. Furnivall, ed., Part I [Early English Text Society OS, no. 119] (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd, 1901), p. 119, l. 3445. For the late fourteenth century: Heinrich von Langenstein's (d. 1397) tract on sin, *Erkantnus der sund*, quoted by Gabriela Signori, 'Veil, Hat or Hair?' Medieval History Journal 8.1 (2005): 30; Bernat Metge (1340-1413, Catalonia), *Lo Somni* [*The Dream of Bernat Metge*], Richard Vernier, trans. (New York: Routledge, 2016 [originally published 2002]), Book 3, p. 48 and *The Dream of Bernat Metge / Del Somni d'en Bernat Metge,* Antonio Cortijo Ocaña & Elisabeth Lagresa, trans. (Amsterdam | Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Co., 2013), Book 3, p. 128, section 28.