

## **Practices and Challenges, Old and New, in the Cataloguing of Hebrew Manuscripts**

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### Summary

In the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, pioneering catalogues of Hebrew manuscripts focused mainly on the description of texts. The birth of codicology as a discipline by the mid-twentieth century led to the production of the first “codicological” catalogues, focusing on the description of the material aspects of manuscript production and transmission, and developing into an actual archaeology of the manuscript. The impact of the computer revolution and the ability to retrieve large amounts of data evolved into a quantitative study of the medieval book, prompting new and fundamental questions, such as the progressive or regressive character of medieval book production. In addition to these methodological approaches, there is the current question of the digital catalogue online as a potentially polyvalent and interoperable tool in contrast with the static, linear printed catalogue. This question is often related with the digitization of entire collections of manuscripts in several libraries, even if digitization projects lack, in some cases, cataloguing of manuscripts related to them. In this paper, practices of cataloguing Hebrew manuscripts, old and new, are surveyed and analyzed, as well as the most important challenges in relation with web-based digitized collections of Hebrew manuscripts and their current cataloguing.