

Medieval rabbinic literature seen in a new light –The Yalkut Shimoni on Minor Prophets

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The Yalkut Shimoni compiles important annotations from rabbinic literature to each book of the Hebrew Bible. The voluminous commentary cites more than 50 traditional rabbinic texts including sources which have been lost. Most academic research on the Yalkut Shimoni has focused on reconstructing these lost sources such as Midrash Jalamdenu, other research issues about Yalkut Shimoni have been neglected.

In my paper I will focus on the Yalkut Shimoni on the Minor Prophets. The author of the Yalkut Shimoni was not able to rely on consecutively commentaries on the Minor Prophets such as for example the commentaries on the book of Numbers. In my paper I will therefore focus on the question of compilation techniques. Consequently, the author had to use pieces of commentaries on the Torah or other biblical books where minor prophets are cited and then he compiles them to a new commentary. Furthermore, he puts these fragments together without naming the sources or introducing them to the text.

Part of the discussion is if and how sources were changed to fit the exegesis. I will put the question up for discussion how the composed text functions in general and as how it functions as independent commentary. In my paper, I will show how the author combines the Palestinian and the Babylonian tradition. The author uses different techniques to cut and inweave different commentaries. Furthermore, I will focus on the ongoing discussion whether the Yalkut Shimoni can be seen as a compilation at all. If this important work can be proofed to be no compilation, it has severe consequences especially for the reconstruction of lost sources quoted inside the Yalkut Shimoni.

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