



## UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository)

### Links in a chain: Early modern Yiddish historiography in the northern Netherlands (1743-1812)

Wallet, B.T.

**Publication date**  
2012

[Link to publication](#)

#### **Citation for published version (APA):**

Wallet, B. T. (2012). *Links in a chain: Early modern Yiddish historiography in the northern Netherlands (1743-1812)*.

#### **General rights**

It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

#### **Disclaimer/Complaints regulations**

If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: <https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact>, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. Introduction</b>	7
1.1 Between Gans and Zunz: defining the eighteenth century	7
1.2 State of research	11
1.3 Research questions	16
1.4 Contents	18
1.5 Methodological reflections	20
<b>PART I: MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN JEWISH HISTORIOGRAPHY</b>	
<b>2. Jewish historiographical traditions</b>	29
2.1 Decline of ancient Jewish historiography	29
2.2 <i>Shalshelet ha-qabbalah</i> and Jewish historiography	31
2.3 <i>Sefer Yosippon</i>	32
2.4 Crusade chronicles	33
2.5 Anthological historiography	37
2.6 Sixteenth-century Jewish historiography	38
2.7 Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Jewish historiography	45
2.8 A reservoir of models and methods	48
<b>3. From Hebrew to Yiddish historiography</b>	51
3.1 Politics of translation	51
3.2 The start of Yiddish history writing in Amsterdam	58
<b>PART II: AMELANDER AND HIS <i>SHEYRIS YISROEL</i> (1743)</b>	
<b>4. Menahem Amelander: Portrait of an eighteenth-century Amsterdam Ashkenazi</b>	
4.1 The Jewish early modern age and the character of Jewish historiography	65
4.2 Ashkenazim in early modern Amsterdam	69
4.3 Menahem Amelander and his family	71
4.3.1 The Amelander and Rudelsum families	71
4.3.2 Amelander and Eleasar Soesman	75

4.4 Amelander the Western Ashkenazi yeshiva network	79
4.5 Amelander and the Jewish printing industry	83
4.6 Jewish library awareness and the formation of a Jewish Republic of Letters	93
4.7 The early ‘emancipation’ of Yiddish	97
4.8 Conclusion: Amelander as a hybrid intellectual	103
<b>5. A history of the Jewish world: <i>Sheyris Yisroel</i> (1743)</b>	109
5.1 Introduction: traditional and enlightened historiography	109
5.2 Paratextual features of <i>Sefer Yosippon</i> and <i>Sheyris Yisroel</i>	110
5.2.1 Paratexts of Amsterdam Yiddish books	110
5.2.2 The three brothers and the three crowns	112
5.2.3 The remnant of Israel	120
5.2.4 Paratextual poetry	124
5.2.5 The ‘visualization’ of Jewish history	126
5.3 Amelander’s idea of history	134
5.3.1 <i>Sheyris Yisroel</i> as Jewish historiography	134
5.3.2 Benefits of history	135
5.3.3 Temporal and spatial connections	140
5.3.4 The utopic Ten Tribes	145
5.3.5 The concept of <i>galut</i>	149
5.4 Methodology	153
5.5 Conclusion: <i>Sheyris Yisroel</i> as a hybrid book	157
<b>6. Mediating knowledge. Amelander and his sources</b>	161
6.1 Hebrew, Yiddish and Dutch sources	161
6.1.1 Sources: a classification	161
6.1.2 Hebrew historiography	163
6.1.3 From halakha to almanacs: other Hebrew sources	165
6.1.4 Folktales, poetry and pamphlets: Yiddish sources	170
6.1.5 Other Jewish sources	173
6.1.6 The question of non-Jewish sources	175
6.1.7 Amelander’s non-Jewish sources	178
6.2 Strategies of editing sources	183

6.2.1 The narrative structure of <i>Sheyris Yisroel</i>	183
6.2.2 Abridging information	191
6.2.3 Interpretative additions	192
6.2.4 Omitting of information	195
6.2.5 Mono-causal argumentation	197
6.3 Mediation and brokerage structures	198
6.4 Cultural contact and conflict	205

### **PART III: IN THE WAKE OF *SHEYRIS YISROEL***

<b>7. Successor chronicles. Amelander and his epigones (1740-1812)</b>	211
7.1 Successor chronicles: towards a genre definition	211
7.2 Successor chronicles to <i>Sheyris Yisroel</i>	216
7.2.1 Braatbard's <i>Ayn Naye Kornayk fun 1740-1752</i>	216
7.2.2 Kosman's Chapter 36, 1771	223
7.2.3 Prinz' <i>Kronik min sbnas takmad ad sbnas takmah</i> , 1788	225
7.2.4 Chronicle fragments, 1766 and 1779	231
7.2.5 Wing's <i>Lezikorn</i> , 1795-1812	233
7.2.5.1 Contents	233
7.2.5.2 Manuscripts	237
7.2.6 Trebitsch' <i>Qorot ha-ittim</i>	245
7.3 The authors: socio-economic profiles	248
7.4 The authors as secondary intelligentsia	258
7.5 The sources for contemporary history writing	261
7.5.1 Written Jewish sources	262
7.5.2 Written non-Jewish sources	264
7.5.3 Oral sources and own experiences	268
7.6 Conclusion: Amelander and his epigones	273
<b>8. Transmission of a history book. The second life of <i>Sheyris Yisroel</i> (1767-1988)</b>	
8.1 Jewish historiography and the open book tradition	279
8.2 The canonization of <i>Sheyris Yisroel</i>	281
8.3 The Eastern European <i>Sheyris Yisroel</i> : Between Haskalah and Orthodoxy	287

8.4 The Yiddish <i>Sheyris Yisroel</i> in the nineteenth century	305
8.5 <i>Wissenschaft des Judentums</i> and the Dutch 1855 edition	308
8.6 Between Ultra Orthodox marginality and academic research	318
8.7 The transmission of <i>Sheyris Yisroel</i>	323
<b>Conclusion/Summary</b>	325
<b>Samenvatting</b>	333
<b>Appendices</b>	339
1: The development of illustrations in the Yiddish <i>Yosippon</i> editions, 1546-1743	339
2: Chronicle fragments, <i>Menahem Zion</i> (Amsterdam 1760)	349
<b>Bibliography</b>	351
<b>Acknowledgments</b>	379