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no evidence that relics were translated within Wales or Brittany. Anglo-Saxon interest at home appears initially to have been equivocal and probably dependent on a degree of cultural translation that began with Bede. The extent and nature of Offa’s involvement remains unclear, but, if it did exist, seems not to have reached further than the abbey site. Insular interest, on the whole, dates mainly from the late tenth century onwards. Abroad, a more drastic form of ‘translation’ may have occurred at Mainz, where Anglo-Saxon missionaries possibly created an entirely new identity for their local martyr. Gallic uptake of the cult, stemming from a translation undertaken by Germanus of Auxerre in 429, was by contrast highly energetic, particularly in south-eastern France. The subsequent translation of relics between and within dioceses seems to have provided Gallic bishops with a useful tool by means of which a further kind of ‘translation’ could occur, as pagan sites and extramural burial grounds were transformed by the construction of Alban churches into places of Christian worship. Paradoxical though it may appear, in the early Middle Ages it was France that saved Albion’s foremost martyr.

Christian Hebraism in Twelfth-Century Rome: A Philologist’s Correction of the Latin Bible through Dialogue with Jewish Scholars and their Hebrew Texts

Marie Thérèse Champagne*
University of West Florida

In mid-twelfth-century Rome, one clerical scholar, Nicolaus Maniacutius, harnessed his philological skills as he endeavoured to return to the text of the Psalter to the original. Maniacutius met the challenge of editing Scripture in an unusual manner as a Christian Hebraist, consulting with Jewish scholars to compare the Vulgate Book of Psalms with the Jews’ Hebrew text. In doing so, he followed the example set by his scholarly predecessor, St Jerome, centuries earlier, as well as his contemporary, Hugh of St Victor. While scholars have acknowledged that Maniacutius consulted with Jews and learned Hebrew, the identity of the one or more Jewish scholar(s) remains obscure. The Sephardic scholar Abraham ibn Ezra lived in Rome c.1140–1143, and while there wrote a commentary on the Psalms. Nicolaus also revised the Psalter and wrote of a ‘learned Spanish Jew’. This article explores the phenomenon of Christian Hebraism in mid-twelfth-century Rome through the life and work of Maniacutius, and presents evidence that supports Cornelia Lind’s suggestion that Abraham ibn Ezra was the ‘learned Spanish Jew’ with whom Maniacutius worked. In addition, textual evidence supports Maniacutius’s work within an informal, cross-confessional discourse community of Jewish and Christian scholars.

Near the middle of the twelfth century, a Roman deacon wrote about his efforts to return biblical texts to their original form, while serving at the church of San Lorenzo in Damaso. He followed a practice, highly unusual in that era, of consulting Jewish scholars and comparing their sacred Hebrew texts with the Latin translations used by Christians, particularly the Book of Psalms, to determine the original wording and eliminate errors. Referring to one such encounter, he wrote of a ‘certain Spanish Jew learned in the writings of several

* Department of History, University of West Florida, 11000 University Parkway, Pensacola, FL 32514, USA. E-mail: mechampagne@uwf.edu.

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Macie Thérèse Champagne

languages.¹ Nicolaus Maniactius (Maniacoria)² who served as a deacon, Lateran canon and Cistercian monk (fl. c.1130–1160s), filled a unique role in Rome as a Christian Hebraist.³ This article explores the historical phenomenon of Christian Hebraism in mid-twelfth-century Rome through the lens of Nicolaus Maniactius’s life and work, as revealed in his own words.⁴ Passages in his extant texts suggest that his Jewish contact in Rome was Rabbi Abraham ben Meir ibn Ezra (d. 1167), a Sephardic scholar who lived in Rome during the early 1140s. Linde first proposed that ibn Ezra may have been the ‘Spanish Jew’ that Maniactius consulted, although she acknowledged that this cannot be conclusively proved.⁵ ibn Ezra holds an important position among the medieval Jewish scholars from Muslim Spain (Al-Andalus): ‘He stands at a crossroads: behind him the


² Over the centuries, his surname has been recorded in at least twenty-eight different spellings. In this article, Maniacoria and Maniactius denote the same individual.

³ The sequence in which Maniactius moved between these three roles is not certain. Most scholars have claimed that Maniactius had joined the Cistercians by early 1145; however, I firmly support a position first proposed by Linde, that he probably joined that order in his later years (c.1160s), after having served as a deacon and then as a Augustinian canon regular. For a thorough discussion of the problems inherent in determining Maniactius’s chronology, see CChr.CM 262, vii–xxv.

⁴ Maniactius’s works have been extensively studied from Heinrich Denièfle in the late nineteenth century onwards. For a recent study, see Rossana Guglielmetti, ‘Nicola Maniacia, “Correzzione e correzione dei testi”’, Estetica 5 (2008), 267–98.


flourishing era of Andalusian linguistics ... before him, with his move to Italy, his transfer of the linguistic heritage of his Spanish ancestors to central Europe.⁶ Among the many texts ibn Ezra composed in different genres was a commentary on the Psalms, written while he was in Rome (c.1140–1143) or Lucca (c.1143–1145).⁷ Maniactius also undertook a revision of the Latin Psalter that had been translated by Jerome (c.420) from the Hebrew text, apparently within the same time-frame as ibn Ezra.⁸ This article will delve more deeply into the evidence for Jewish scholars in Rome, and particularly Abraham ibn Ezra’s presence and work, presenting additional correlations between the approaches to language skills, accuracy and concern for the sacred texts taken by Maniactius and ibn Ezra, which further substantiate the possible relationship suggested by Linde.⁹ In addition, it will argue that the evidence indicates the existence of a discourse community of Christian and Jewish scholars in mid-twelfth-century Rome, which extended to Monte Cassino; scholars from both religions circulated copies of scriptural texts and discussed them. Such cross-religious cooperation and consultation, which has been demonstrated among Parisian and northern French Christian and Jewish scholars from the early twelfth century, has not hitherto been noted in Rome.¹⁰ There is substantial overlap in the scriptural texts regarded by Christians and Jews as authoritative: the books known to Christians as the Old Testament and to Jews as the Tanakh, which Jews divide into the Tanah or Pentateuch, the Nevi'im or Prophets and the Ketuvim or Writings.¹¹ Since all Western texts before the mid-fifteenth
century were handwritten, scribal errors, omissions and additions gradually altered the texts over centuries of copying. For Christians, the steady circulation of manuscripts between abbeys, bishops, monasteries, churches and cathedrals added to the complexity by producing many copies of the same text, with slight variations between them. Even though the version of the Scriptures that Jerome had produced in the late fourth and early fifth centuries was the authoritative Latin text in the Christian West, hand-copying and the resultant numerous copies in circulation introduced variations in that text.12

In the era in which Manicius and Ibn Ezra lived, the authoritative Hebrew text of the Tanakh was the Masoretic Text. In addition to it, another body of texts used by both men, although not considered sacred, were the Targums, paraphrased Aramaic translations of the books of the Tanakh with accompanying exegesis.13

The Targums were known among the Jewish scholarly community in Rome; an early twelfth-century Roman scholar, Rabbi Natan ben Yehiel (c.1101) referred to Targum Job in his influential Talmudic encyclopedia, the Arukh.14

In both Christian and Jewish communities, a profound reverence for the Word of God underlay exegesis; within a renewed interest in the liberal arts, exegesis flourished during the High Middle Ages in Al-Andalus and Christendom among Jewish and Christian scholars alike.15 As Signer has shown, from the eleventh century an increased emphasis on education prevailed among both Jewish and Christian students.16 From the 1130s to the 1160s, the city of Rome was the setting for Manicius’s endeavours to correct the Old Testament


18 Hayward, Targums, 301–4, 315–17.
21 See Smalley, Study, 77–82, 97–111, for a discussion of Hugh’s predecessors and followers who also consulted learned Jews in Paris and elsewhere from as early as c.1070. This article presents the current state of knowledge regarding Christian Hebraism in mid-twelfth-century Rome; at this point there is only evidence for Manicius working as a Christian Hebraist in the city at that time.
a rich tradition of contemporary Jewish exegesis continued.\textsuperscript{22} They perceived their Jewish counterparts as valuable resources; as Smalley suggested, ‘the Jew appealed to [the medieval scholar] as a kind of telephone to the Old Testament’.\textsuperscript{23} To that end, some medieval scholars also learned Hebrew and participated in a ‘discourse community’ that crossed confessional lines.\textsuperscript{24}

While unique and significant for his time and place, Maniacitus’s Hebraism is only part of his intriguing life story and oeuvre. Ten of his texts are still extant. They include hagiographic works, adulations (of the papacy), methodological treatises and revisions of the Psalter.\textsuperscript{25} In these works Maniacitus demonstrated his familiarity, not only with a broad range of Christian texts, but also with the works of ibn Ezra and Rabbi Solomon bar Isaac, commonly known as Rashi (d. 1105).\textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{22} Smalley, Study, 112–95; Deborah Goodwin, ‘Take Hold of the Robe of a Jew’: Herbert of Bethan’s Christian Hebraism (Leiden, 2006), 73–94.

\textsuperscript{23} Smalley, Study, 362.

\textsuperscript{24} On the concept of the ‘discourse community’, see Erik Borg, ‘Discourse Community’, \textit{ELJT Journal 57} (2003), 398–400; James E. Porter, ‘Intertextuality and the Discourse Community’, \textit{Rhetoric Review 5} (1986), 34–47. In the setting of mid-twelfth-century Rome, this informal group of scholars discussed common texts, and also circulated texts among themselves. The number of participants is uncertain; however, Maniacitus’s \textit{Libelli} clearly indicates communication and sharing of texts between Jewish and Christian scholars: see the excerpt from it at n. 48 below.

\textsuperscript{25} \textit{Vita beata Constantii virginis, Vita beatae Priscilae et Paduniones, Vita Santes Hieronymi, Ad inquirientes pontificum nominis conservandae, Tractatus Nicolai Maniaci de imago SS. Sabatini in Lateranensi palatio} (also known as \textit{Historia imagini Temporis et De aura imaginis}; \textit{Libelli de corruptione et de corruptione palmarum et aliarum cunctarum scripturarum et stigmatarum bibliothecarum}, revisions of the \textit{Psalter ad Romanum} and \textit{Psalter incita Hebraenus} (Jerome’s Gallican Psalter), and a third revised Psalter that apparently has elements of all three versions; in addition, each revised Psalter has a preface.


\textsuperscript{28} Kelly, Jerome, 12–18. The \textit{Hexapla}, compiled by Origen in the 230s, was a comparison of six different versions of the Christian Old Testament: the Hebrew text, the ‘Greek trans literation of the Hebrew’, the ancient Septuagint, and three Jewish revisions of the Septuagint then in circulation, by Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion: T. M. Law, ‘Origen’s Parallel Bible: Textual Criticism, Apologetics, or Exegesis?’ \textit{JBS 57} (2006), 3–9. The Gallican version of the Psalms, which Jerome had translated earlier from the Septuagint with the help of the Hexapla, was more familiar in most of Christian Europe, and was generally inserted into the Old Testament instead of a translation from the Hebrew. In the sixteenth century, the authoritative text became known as the Vulgata Bible: see Eatont, \textit{Psalms}, 44. For a summary of these different translations and historical issues, see Kelly, Jerome, 89, 158, 283–6.

\textsuperscript{29} Maniacitus, \textit{Libelli}, fol. 145v, col. B (Peri, ‘Correctores immo corruptores’, 91). His revision of the \textit{Psalterium Romanum} is found today in only one manuscript, Rome, Archivio Capitolare Lateranense, S.M. in Trastevere, Arm. I, lett. A, num. 2, in capsa ferrea. The manuscript was examined in the archive of Santa Maria in Trastevere in 1953, but was moved to the archive in the Lateran basilica complex at a later date: Robert Weber, ‘Deux Prêches au psalmier dues à Nicolas Maniacior’, \textit{RB} 63 (1953), 3–17, at 4–5 n. 4.

was familiar with the *Psalterium Romanum* in common use in the city; he also knew the *Psalterium Gallicanum* from its wider circulation in Europe at that time. Differences between the Psalters based on the Septuagint (*Psalterium Romanum*), the Hexapla (*Psalterium Gallicanum*) and the Hebrew text (*Psalterium textum Hebraenum*) appear in the division of individual psalms and in the wording. Translating the Psalms through multiple languages, such as Jerome's translation into Latin from the Septuagint, which itself was translated from the Hebrew original, had changed the text. Comparing the result of that process with a more direct translation from Hebrew to Latin, as Jerome later did, demonstrated variations in the wording.

Maniacutius's motivation for following Jerome's example derived from a deeper reason than methodology. In his *via* of Jerome, Maniacutius expressed his personal devotion to the saint, which was probably influenced by his mother's own devotion to Jerome. Maniacutius explained that when pregnant with him, his mother had prayed for Jerome's intercession for the safe delivery of her baby. Undoubtedly Maniacutius was also influenced by scholarly motives, but where and when he received his education, learned of Jerome's approach, and decided to follow it, is unclear.

In another text, *Libellus de corruptione et de corruptione psalmorum et aliorum quaedam scripturarum*, Maniacutius discussed his work in correcting the biblical text. He began by addressing his patron, Abbot Dominic, and in so doing revealed that he had acquired a scholarly reputation amongst the Roman clergy.

Wishing to mend your psalter as you had asked, Abbot Dominic, according to our version, that is, that of the Cistercian Order, I discovered this one to be more corrupt than yours. What shall I do? For if I carry it out, I have not lessened corruptions, but rather increased them; if not, however, I shall perhaps incur suspicion of laziness, while you can suppose that what I claim is false. So that I can avoid this suspicion, therefore, I shall undertake a labour greater than that which you are demanding and no less useful to us ourselves than to you, unless perhaps it should fall into the hands of those despisers who, embracing custom alone, prefer naked lies to the truth.

As Maniacutius gained expertise with exegesis and the mechanics of the Latin language, and recited the psalms day after day, he grew increasingly concerned about out-of-place words and phrases, and the differences between copies of what were supposedly the same version of the Psalter. His words also indicate his frustration with others who did not value an accurate translation as much as he did.

Maniacutius's texts also reveal a greater degree of familiarity, not only with Jewish texts but also with Jewish practices and traditions, than would be expected in Christian clergy at that time, suggesting that he had first-hand knowledge of rabbinic and scribal practices. His decades-long activity within the Roman clergy in different roles also indicates familiarity with the city and its people, including its Jews. As Maniacutius wrote in his *Libellus*, again to Abbot Dominic:

You will answer, 'And from what [source] will I distinguish a lie from the truth?' I will say, 'From the Hebrew source.' ... Therefore, when you discover clashing versions, have recourse to the language from which they were translated and, from the volumes varying among themselves, believe that one which you will find to harmonize with the language from which it was taken. ... You will say, however, 'Perhaps the codices of the Jews have been falsified.' I will answer, 'I will not neglect the counsel of wise men for the sake of that doubt of yours.'

35 Weber, *Deux Préfaces*, 3–17; *CChrCM* 262, xx–xxx; see also PL 22, cols 183–202, at 185.
39 A definitive chronology of Maniacutius's life is still not established, therefore any correlation of his works with each clerical role he undertook remains insecure.
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Still you will add, 'I myself believe that they have been falsified.' ... Nevertheless, incline your ear and hear how they cannot easily be violated. Their whole zeal is given to the Old Testament, and among them it has not been altered by any translators (so that one translation can be mixed up with another). Furthermore, an old copy, written out with the utmost zeal, is guarded with great diligence in the reliquary of the synagogue.40

Somewhat surprisingly, this passage suggests that Maniactius had personal knowledge of Jewish scribal practices, particularly within the synagogue. He also knew of the 'niche' in which the Torah scroll was kept in the synagogue.41 In the middle decades of the twelfth century, Christian clergy who had personal knowledge of Jewish practices and traditions were usually converts from Judaism. There is no evidence, however, that Maniactius was a convert. His confident statement reveals very specific knowledge, gained either first-hand or from his Jewish counterparts, that supported his belief in the accuracy of the Hebrew text.

40 'Respéndebis: et unde meadoxium a veritate discernit? Ex Hebraico, inquam, fonte. ... Cum ergo discordantia répereris exemplaria, ad linguam recurre unde translata sunt et de variabilitatibus inter se voluminibus illi credo quem linguæ de qua sumptum est invenies concordare. ... Dices autem: forsas falsitatem codicibus Iudaicis. Respéndebus: pro dubitatione tua noro negligentiam scribiturum. Et tamen adhuc esse eodem modo nequeant facile violati. Penes Vetus Testamentum est totum eorum studium et hoc apud eos nullus est translatorius varietas, ut una translatio positum sit alia comminaci. Praterea vetus exemplar summo studio exaratum in synagoga loculo magna diligentia custodiatur: Maniactius, Libelli, fol. 146', cols A–B (Peri, 'Corretores immodi corruptores', 92). Linde explains why Maniactius turned to the Psalterium sacrum Hebræum to correct the Latin Psalter versions, and why he believed the Hebrew was actually a more reliable guide to the original text: CChr.CM 262, xxviii.

41 The translation of hekho is rather uncertain. According to J. F. Niemeyer and C. van de Kieft, Medicina Latinatissimi Lexicon Minus, 2 vols (Leiden, 2002), 1: 808, hekho could mean a coffin, reliquary or grave. It is unclear how the Torah scroll would have been stored in a twelfth-century Roman synagogue, as compared to the Ashkenazi or Sephardic traditions, but it definitely would have been in a reverent and secure location within the synagogue; therefore 'reliquary' seems appropriate. In addition, that meaning would have been a familiar concept to Maniactius; see also Kenneth R. Stow, Alterned Memory: The Jews of Medieval Latin Europe (Cambridge, MA, 1992), 69. This reference by Maniactius to a hekho will be studied further in the context of the Roman Italo-Ashkenazi synagogue traditions. For an explanation of how the Torah was covered and protected in the synagogues of Rome in the early modern and modern eras, see Daniela Castro, ed., Treasures of the Jewish Museum of Rome: Guide to the Museum and its Collection (Rome, 2010).

In the Libelli Maniactius also referred directly to his personal study of Hebrew:

For indeed I have decided to carefully mark all the passages corrupted either by the carelessness of scribes or by the presumption of any others, and to uncover the cause of each corruption with as much care as I can, having employed aids for this purpose from all sides, and especially the source of Hebrew truth, from which you know that I have tasted (even if only a little), but also the new translation of blessed Jerome and the Roman translation, and also other translations, when I can, so that from the collection of many considerations the truth may more easily begin to shine.42

Although he wrote that he had only 'tasted (...) a little' of the Hebrew text, Maniactius's texts indicate otherwise.43 The numerous correlations between his corrections to the Old Testament in his Sufficientes bibliae and works by Rashi and Abraham ibn Ezra stand as evidence.44 In addition, Maniactius occasionally wrote Hebrew letters within his Latin texts to demonstrate a particular point in his translation.45 In the Sufficientes, he only commented on corrections to the books of Christian Scripture that were in the Hebrew Bible, and not in contention between Jewish and Christian scholars. It is clearly apparent that Maniactius valued the Hebrew source as the most accurate.46 Again, from the Libelli:

Meanwhile, I do not cease to wonder that this translation of Jerome according to Hebrew truth is not to be included in his Bibles.

42 'Deceveri nunciue sancta loca, vel scriptorum inexacta vel quorumlibet aliorum praesumptione corrupta, curiose notare et occasiones singularum corruptionum quota possum cura detegere, adhibitis mihi [sic] ad hoc undecunque suffragis et maxime fonte veritatis Hebraice, de quo me scis esti mediocrem degastasse, sed et nova bens Ieronimi ac Romanae translatione, alis quoque, si possum, probationibus, ut ex multorum rationem collegio veritas facilem elucescat: Maniactius, Libelli, fol. 144', col. A (Peri, 'Corretores immodi corruptores', 88). Maniactius's phrase fonts veritatis Hebraicae refers, apparently, to the Hebrew text.

43 Linde posits that Maniactius's statement near the beginning of the Libelli regarding the 'Hebrew truth, from which you know that I have tasted (even if only a little), reflects a humility-topos: CChr.CM 262, 84.

44 See CChr.CM 262, 178, 206–7, for a listing of twenty-six instances identified by Linde in Maniactius's Sufficientes bibliae that correlate with Abraham ibn Ezra's commentaries, and twenty-seven correlations with Rashi's texts.

45 CChr.CM 262, xvi n. 34; Weber, 'Deux Préfaces', 6–8.

46 Linde, 'Basic Instruction', 4.
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For even if, at the request of Pope Damasus, it is read that he first translated it [the Old Testament] from the Greek and afterwards corrected it again and again, as he says to Paula and her daughter Julia Eustochium in a certain prologue, nevertheless none of those editions so expresses the truth as this one does. I suppose, however, that, annoyed now by so many revisions, the Church made provision neither to include this one (though truer than all) in Bibles nor to chant it in churches. Thus, up to these times, his [specta Hebraicum] version could scarcely be discovered.47

While recent scholarship, particularly within Cistercian studies, has continued to acknowledge Maniactius's Hebraism, scholars have not focused specifically or extensively on his communications with Jews or his use of their sacred texts. Nor have they discussed his personal goal of learning Hebrew, also expressed in his Libellus:

For even I would perhaps not have it unless a certain Hebrew, arguing with me and claiming that almost everything that I was objecting to him from the Psalms was otherwise, had indicated that it had been brought from Monte Cassino in the possession of a certain priest. It was then that I first aspired to the knowledge of the Hebrew language.48

The information provided by the 'certain Hebrew' indicates communication between that individual and a priest, and particular knowledge of the origin of 'it' (the Psalms text), the Benedictine abbey of Monte Cassino. These intriguing points indicate that in this case, Jewish and Christian scholars were comparing texts and discussing the meaning of the Psalms in Rome; however, they also indicate that communication within this 'discourse community' extended to the circulation of texts beyond Rome to Monte Cassino, if not further.49

The significance of Maniactius's Roman origin, long service in the local church, and communication with Jewish scholars is especially notable in light of the make-up of the Roman Jewish community, whose roots extended back to at least the second century BCE.50 It had a long-standing relationship with the bishop of Rome, and at times had acted as intermediary between Jews elsewhere in Christendom and the papacy.51 In twelfth-century Rome, an active and vibrant community of Jews continued to practise their faith and traditions. Despite separation from Christians in many aspects of their lives, these Jews thought of the city of Rome as their home. They interacted with Christians in the marketplace and participated, along with the Christian population, in the acclamation of a newly elected pope as one of the seventeen Roman scholae, civic groups of craftsmen.52 One prominent Jew seems to have served Pope Alexander III as his papal steward. According to Benjamin of Tudela, 'R. Yehezkel, a minister of the Pope ... is a handsome young man, intelligent and wise, and has access to the residence of the pope, serving as the steward of his household and all of his property. He is a grandson of R. Nathan, who composed the Sepher ha-aranim and its commentaries.53 These Jews participated in the discourse about the history of their city, holding many of the same beliefs in ancient legends, but also the same misconceptions about local sites and historic objects. For

48 'Nam et ego illud forsitam non habere, nisi quidam Hebraeus, mecum disputans et paene singula quae ei opponebam de psalmodi alter habere se assersens, hoc de Monte Cassino altatum esse penes quendam praebentur inter alium. Tunc primum ad Hebraeos linguae scientiam aspiravist': Maniactius, Libellus, fol. 145v, col. B (Peri, 'Correctores immo corruptores', 91).
49 Both Weber (‘Deux Préfaces’, 14–15) and Linde (CChrCM 262, xv–xvii) indicate that copies of Maniactius's Pudmor iuxta Hebraeum are bound in two other codices: Monte-cassinoso MSS 434, 467.
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Jews as well as Christians, Rome was a dense landscape of cultural memories.54

A respected tradition of Rabbinic studies continued within the Roman Jewish community through the Middle Ages; from the tenth century, that community supplied legal advice in response to the needs of Ashkenazic communities in northern Europe. Roman Jewish scholars, particularly the Qualonemos family, served as the main channel for Jewish thought and ritual to Jewish communities elsewhere, at first in Lucca, and later to others in northern cities such as Mainz.55 This scholarly role of the Roman Jewish community meant that rabbinic scholars were present and active in Rome during the era in which Maniacitus was consulting Jews. The existence of such a learned element in the Jewish community could explain why Abraham ibn Ezra, after leaving Al-Andalus c.1140, first travelled to Rome and resided with that community for several years.56 As Linde has argued, his expertise added to the collective skills of that community, and communications with him would have benefitted Maniacitus.57 Perhaps Maniacitus’s motivation for consulting the Spanish scholar lay also in the reputation for accuracy that Spanish Hebrew Bibles had within Christendom.58 Maniacitus’s respect for the highest scholarly standards, evident in his texts and in his standing within the Roman community, make the respected Sephardic scholar ibn Ezra a likely consultant.59

Abraham ibn Ezra was clearly one of the most influential medieval Jewish scholars.60 After leaving his homeland, he spent the rest of his life as a wandering scholar. He lived in Rome from c.1140 until c.1143, when he journeyed to Lucca where he remained until c.1145. He then moved to France and thence to England; when he died c.1167, ibn Ezra probably was residing in London.61 His written works included

biblical commentaries, grammatical analyses, poetry, theological treatises, scientific texts and a comprehensive collection of astronomical textbooks.62 Ibn Ezra revered Hebrew as the first language and the language of God, but he also believed it could be used successfully to express contemporary concepts, even if they would have been unknown to ancient writers.63 In many cases he found that terms within the biblical text already carried a scientific meaning; in other treatises, as he translated from Arabic into Hebrew, he introduced a new use for a Hebrew term.64 The reverence in which later Jews held ibn Ezra is apparent in references to him in the works of Maimonides (1135–1204) and Nachmanides (1194–1270), both highly influential Sephardic exegetes and philosophers, as well as their successors.65

While ibn Ezra studied and wrote in a range of fields, his work on Hebrew grammar significantly influenced his writings in other areas. Thus in his commentaries he stressed the importance of grammatical analysis in discerning the meaning of words.66 He advocated an exegetical method which began with close examination of the grammar of each word, before moving on to discerning its meaning.67 In his Commentary on the Pentateuch, ibn Ezra explained his preference for this particular method: 'It appears to me to be correct in the presence of God whom alone I fear. I will not show favouritism to anyone when it comes to interpreting the Torah. I will, to the utmost of my ability, try to understand grammatically every word, and then do my best to explain it.'68

Of the sixty-two extant texts by Ibn Ezra, five focus on Hebrew grammar.69 It is known that he studied the grammar of biblical Hebrew, rather than the spoken Hebrew of his day, holding that the

54 Champagne and Boastean, ‘Walking’, 487.
57 CChr CM 262, xxviii. Linde states that ibn Ezra ‘brought the local Jewish community to intellectual flowering’.
59 CChr CM 262, xxvii–xxx.
61 Sela, Rise of Medieval Hebrew Science, 2.
63 Sela, Rise of Medieval Hebrew Science, 106.
64 Ibid. 104–43.
65 Silver, Preface to ibn Ezra, Commentary on Genesis, ed. and transl. Steichman and Silver, viii.
68 Ibn Ezra, Commentary on Genesis, ed. and transl. Steichman and Silver, 17.
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diaspora and consequent adoption of different languages by Jews living in many cultures had corrupted their spoken Hebrew. It is also known that Maniacitus communicated with the 'Spanish Jew' about the Hebrew Scriptures. His perspective makes ibn Ezra the perfect Jewish biblical scholar for Maniacitus to consult.

Other correlations between Maniacitus's methods and skills and those of ibn Ezra make consultations between the two even more likely. In his commentaries, ibn Ezra used the Targum, the paraphrased Aramaic translation of the Tanakh and associated commentary. Maniacitus also made use of the Targum. Ibn Ezra apparently knew some Latin and may have assisted in producing the Latin translation of some of his texts; Maniacitus knew both Latin and Hebrew. While much is circumstantial, the evidence increasingly supports Linde's theory that Abraham ibn Ezra was indeed the 'Spanish Jew' of whom Maniacitus wrote.

Similarities also exist between the views on textual correction held by ibn Ezra and those of Maniacitus, and specifically in their caustic reactions to incorrect methods. In the Libellus, Maniacitus complained of a reckless scribe he had encountered in the scriptorium of San Martino in Monte, who was incorrectly combining all variants from different copies of the Psalter into his new version. Ibn Ezra similarly criticized the Masoretes for the way they explained inconsistencies in spellings within the Hebrew Bible: "Since the Massorites claim to be able to explain the reasons for full and defective spellings, let them tell us what spelling the scribes should have used in writing Scripture... Actually, the reason[s] given by the Masorites for the different spellings of the same word are for children." Circumstantial evidence supports Linde's thesis that Maniacitus and Abraham ibn Ezra consulted each other about their methods of analysis and correction of Scripture. Both men had tremendous respect and reverence for sacred Scripture; their interests intersected in the value they both placed on the original Hebrew text. Both men worked on the text of the Book of Psalms, and analysed the grammar and meaning of the 'biblical Hebrew' words. Maniacitus's work focused on grammatical dissection and he urged careful analysis. In his treatises, not only those that focused on grammatical theory and analysis, ibn Ezra promoted the careful study of grammar. Both men lived and worked in Rome at the same time, and could have met in consultation over the Hebrew texts. Maniacitus's linguistic skills included Hebrew; he conducted his work within an inter-confessional discourse community of scholars in Rome and outside it; he reported receiving a text from a Jew; and he also referred to a 'learned Spanish Jew', indicating that he was acquainted with the Jewish community. Moreover, Maniacitus's detailed knowledge of Jewish scribal traditions also indicates direct familiarity with those traditions. Whether or not ibn Ezra can be proved definitively to be the 'Spanish Jew' that Maniacitus consulted, at this point he is, as Linde has argued, the most likely candidate. Perhaps most importantly, the intersection of Jewish and Christian scholars in Rome made possible Maniacitus's innovative methodology, which still intrigues us today.

71 ibid., 6.
72 Strickman and Silver, 'Hebrew Bible', 235–322.
73 CChr.CM 262, xxi–xxvii.
74 Chalup, 'Abraham Ibn Ezra's Viewpoint', 8; Ibn Ezra, Commentary on Genesis, ed. and transl. Strickman and Silver, 171–18; G. Signer, 'Rabbi and magister', 131; CChr.CM 262, 178. While the Targum was used by several notable Jewish scholars of this era, including Rashi, it was not always consulted. Some eleventh-century Jewish scholars had advised that study of it be stopped, but this was not generally implemented except in the northern provinces of Spain under Christian rule: see n. 14 above, and Alferdina Houtman, 'The Role of the Targum in Jewish Education in Medieval Europe', in edam, Eveline von Slaudehuis-Sultan and Hans-Martin Kln, eds, A Jewish Targum in a Christian World (Leiden, 2014), 81–98, at 88, 91–2.
75 This raises the question of whether Maniacitus knew Aramaic too. In addition to numerous instances in which he utilized the texts of Rashi and ibn Ezra in his Saffragium biblicum, Maniacitus also used the Targum: CChr.CM 262, 267.
76 Sela, Rise of Medieval Hebrew Science, 23; Maniacitus, Libellus, fol 145v, col. B (Peri, 'Correctores immo corruptores', 91). The question of Maniacitus's actual fluency in Hebrew is still unanswered; however, on the basis of evidence in the Saffragium biblicum, Linde suggested that his skill was 'between cultural and lexical Hebrew' (CChr.CM 262, xli), terms that Michael Signer introduced in 'Polemie et Exegesie', 21–32. In other words, Maniacitus could not read Hebrew completely independently, but he was able to deal with Hebrew texts with the help of his Hebrew consultants.
77 Ibn Ezra, Commentary on Genesis, ed. and transl. Strickman and Silver, 18.
78 CChr.CM 262, xxvii–xxxv.