

PeregrXML

The challenges posed by a 17th century corpus of Medieval Christian Hebrew

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*Hebrew Carmina Gratulatoria of the
Hungarian Peregrines in the 17th century
(K-125486) PI: József Zsengellér*



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PROJECT
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Overview of this talk

1. Introduction of the project

“Hebrew Carmina Gratulatoria of the Hungarian Peregrines in the 17th century”

2. Challenges

3. PeregrXML



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Student mobility in the early modern period

- **Peregrines**, such as protestant students (of theology, among others) from Hungary studying in the Netherlands in the 17th century.
- NRDI project (PI: József Zsengellér) 2017-2021, focusing on their Hebrew.



Relief of a Hungarian “peregrine”.
Academy Building, Utrecht University.
<http://kcl-eldering.blogspot.com/2007/08/>



Research group members:

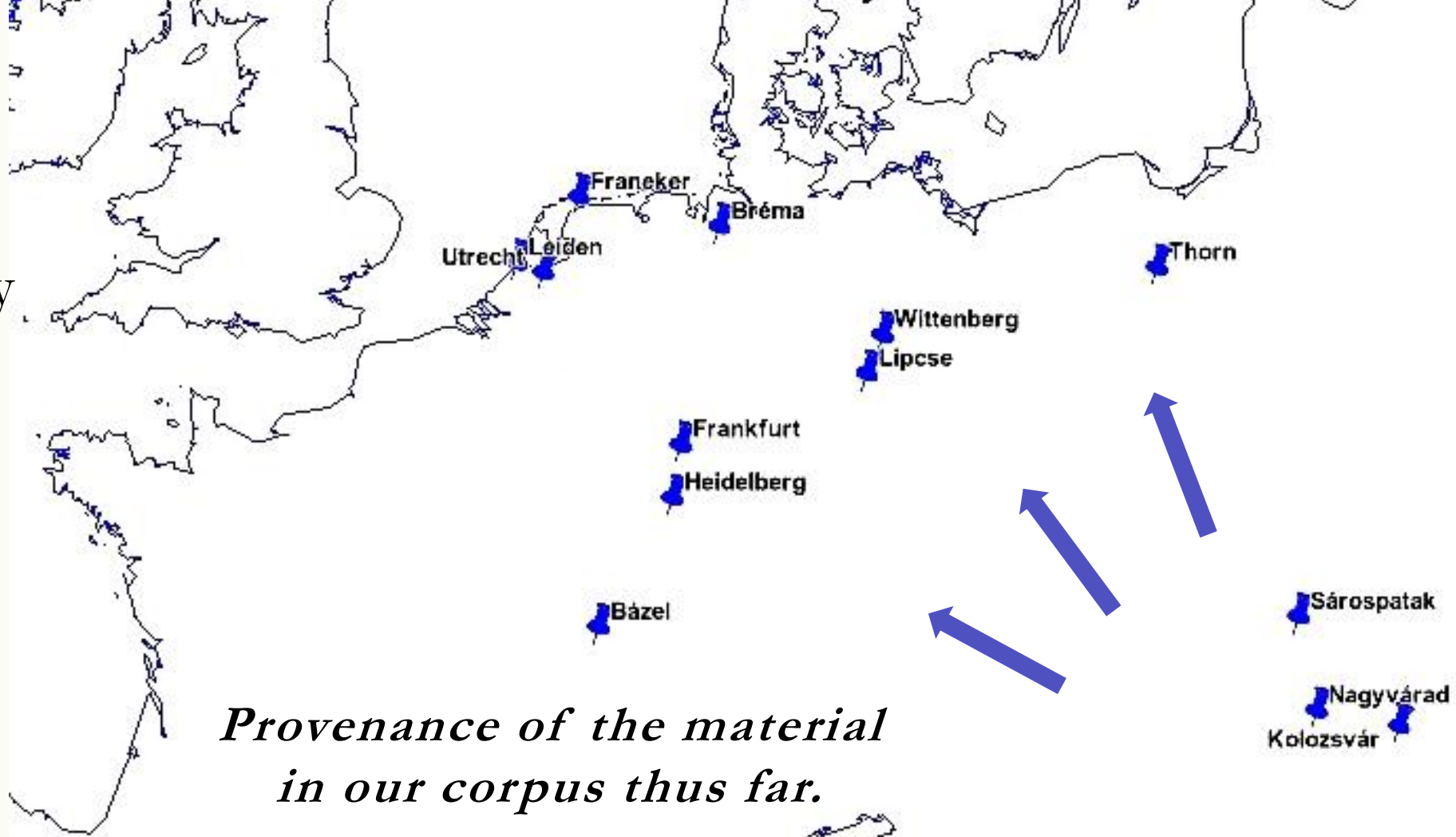
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Peregrines

17th c.: typically from Calvinist regions in Eastern Hungary to major Protestant universities.



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Gratulatory poems (*carmina*)

- Open lectures, public defenses and viva proceedings (*disputa*), accompanied by poems, written by fellow students (or by professors).
- Welcoming the event, commenting on the works presented + entertainment.
- Written in various languages: Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac, but also Dutch, Hungarian, etc. (Postma 1995: at least 15 languages in Franeker).
- Published in print together with thesis, lecture, etc.

*Our project:
Hungarian authors, Hungarian addresses.*



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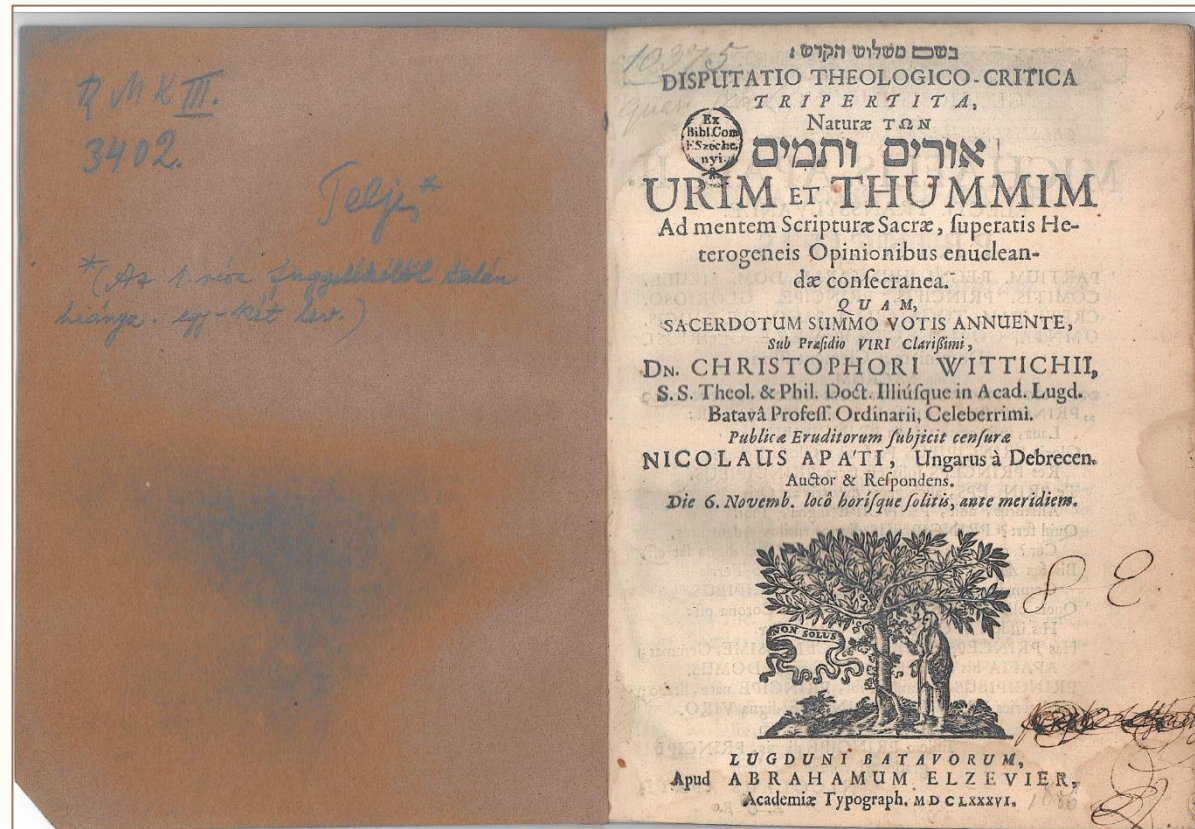



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Dissertation of *Nicolaus Apati, Ungarus à Debrecen* Abrahamus Elzevier, 1686

RMK III. 3402




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What can we learn from studying these poems?

Questions to be answered include:

- What level of linguistic competence could students achieve?
- Was their knowledge of Hebrew confined to Masoretic Biblical Hebrew?
- Or were they familiar with latter stages of the Hebrew language, as well?
- Was there transfer from mother tongue / from dominant second language?
- How do they fit into contemporaneous Hebrew / European poetry?
- What features characterize the *carmina gratulatoria* as a literary genre?



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Early Modern Christian Hebrew as a case of Medieval Hebrew?

Medieval Jewish Hebrew

- Second Language Acquisition only
 - Very early and intensive acquisition
- Heavy training on Torah, *then* NaKh,
+ heavy training on postbiblical Hebrew
- Written modality, incl. reading up
 - Oral modality??
- Inference from L1? (+ from Aramaic?)

Medieval Christian Hebrew

- Second Language Acquisition only
 - Late and not so intensive acquisition
- Heavy training on Old Testament, e.g.,
Mishlei + some postbiblical influence?
- Written modality, incl. reading up
 - Oral modality ????
- Inference from L1 + Latin, Greek etc.?



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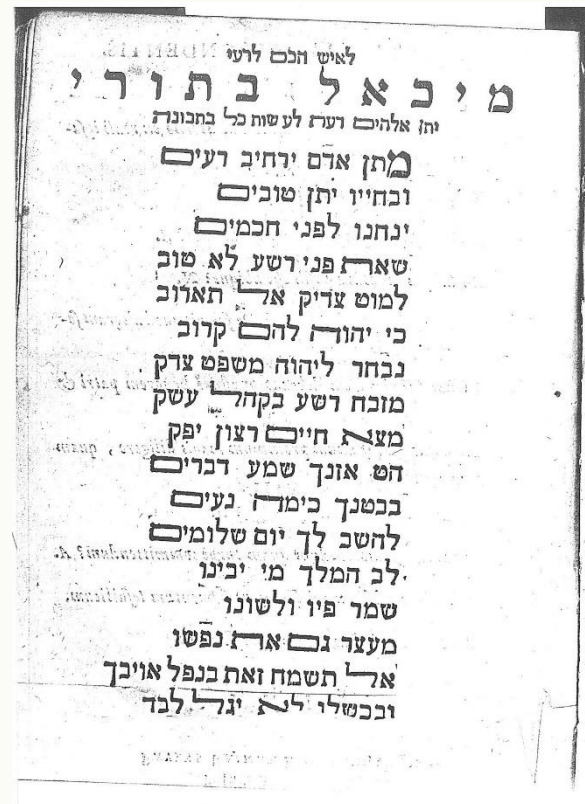
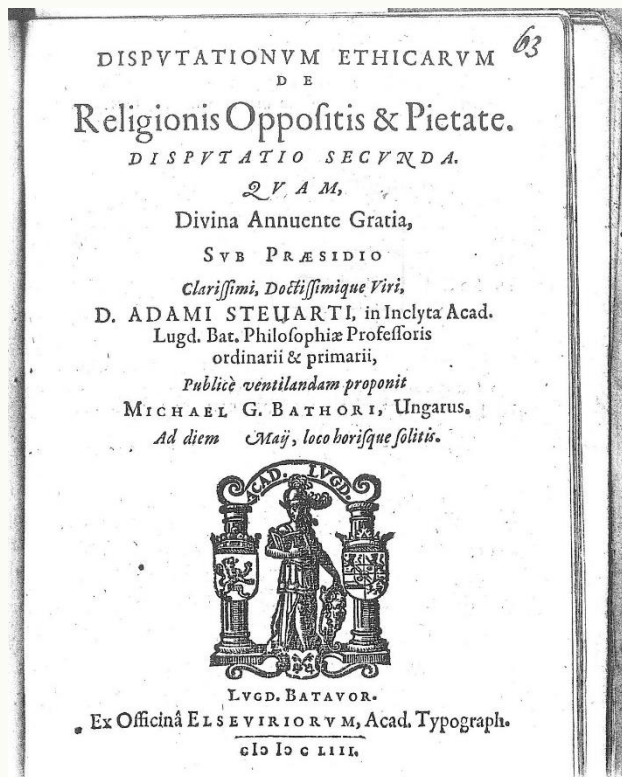


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Poem from 1653 by *Pál Diószegi Kalmár* (1628/9-1663) to *Michael G. Báthory* (1631-1669)



RMK III. 1840



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Poem from 1653 by *Pál Diószegi Kalmár*

Prov. 8:35:

כִּי מִצְאֵי מִצְא חַיִּים
וַיִּפֶק רָצוֹן מִיְהוָה:

(1663) to *Michael G. Báthory* (1631-1669)

נבחר ליהוה משפט צדק
מזבח רשע בקהל עשק
מצא חיים רצון יפק [יפיק]
הט אזנך שמע דברים
בבטנך כימה נעים
להשב [להשיב] לך יום שלומים
לב המלך מי יבינו
שמר פיו ולשונו
מעצר גם את נפשו
אל תשמח זאת **בנפל אויבך**
ובכשלו לא **יגל לבך**

Prov. 24:17:

בְּנֶפֶל אוֹיְבֶךָ אַל-תִּשְׂמַח
וּבְכִשְׁלוֹ אַל-יִגַּל לְבָבְךָ:



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לאיש חכם لرעי
מיכאל בתורי

יתן אלהים דעת לעשות כל בתבונה

Prov. 18:16:

מִתֵּן אָדָם יִרְחִיב לוֹ
וְלִפְנֵי גְדֹלִים יִנְחֲנוּ:

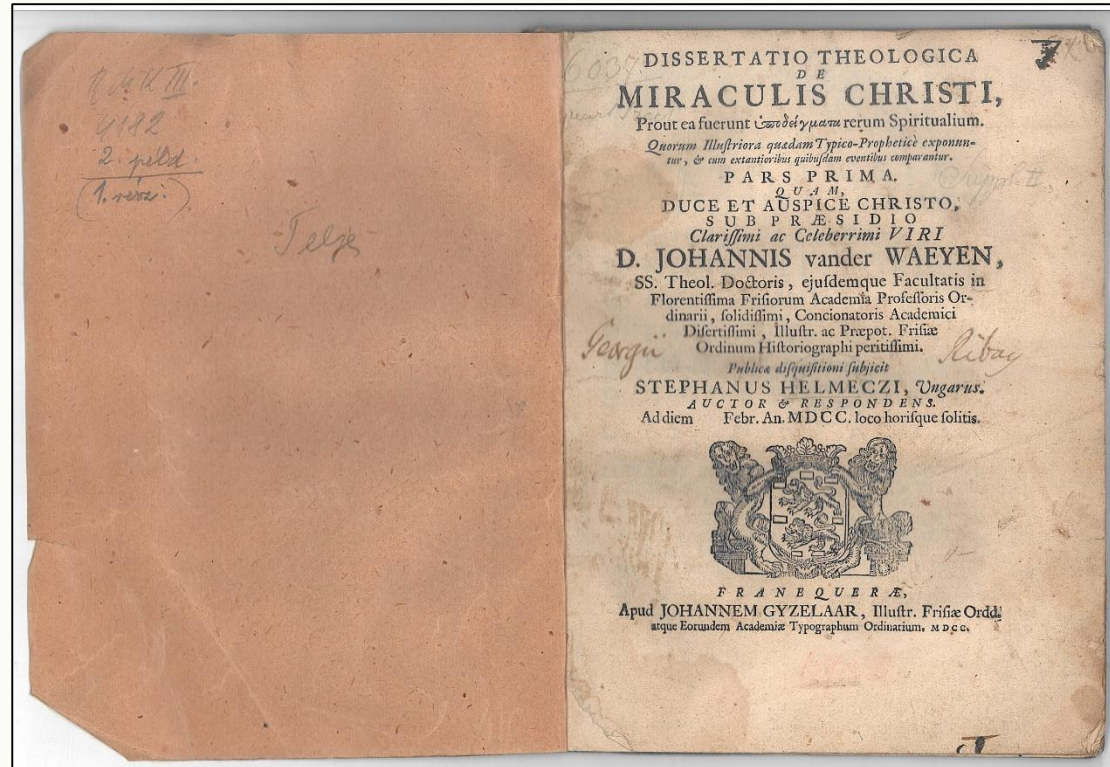
מתן אדם ירחיב רעים
ובחיו יתן טובים
ינחנו לפני חכמים

שאת פני רשע לא טוב
למוט צדיק אל תארוב
כי יהוה להם קרוב

Prov. 18:5:

שְׂאֵת פְּנֵי-רָשָׁע לֹא-טוֹב
לְהִטּוֹת צְדִיק בַּמִּשְׁפָּט:

Poem from 1700 by *Paulus A. Gyöngyösi* to *Stephanus Helmeczi* in Franeker



פזמון שלבלוזמאות לבחור הבחיר
שטפנום הלמצי
על פרישן המשיח הנפלפל
ב סילקי ואלה א. הונא כל לאדם
ב אכן שלמלכ. ב. יי את פרישן חכם
ב. נטרא נמד בארת!
יספ שוב פרס את מתנים בסתר המשיח ג.
פרק את דרכים. ד. ומסתורין. יי אישי אלה
כדין חסיד. ז. ברזילא!
א. Ecol. 11 & 91 Ach. 171 Gen. 11 B. Efa. 33: 43: 44: ג. Prov. 8: Pfal. 78:
Rom. 16: ד. Prov. 11 & 8: Pfal. 119: 1. Gen. 41 & 18: 19: Jef. 32: ז. Joh. 2: 11:
1: Tim. 1:

RMK III. 4182



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Poem from 1700 by *Paulus A. Gyöngyösi*
to *Stephanus Helmeczi* in Franeker

פזמון שלבלוזמאות לבחור הבחיר
שטפנוס חלמצי
על פרישן המשיח המפלפל

Words known only from
postbiblical sources:

בלוזמא, פזמון

(Jastrow: 'drinking of spiced wines')

בסילקי ואלה. α. הוונא כל לאדם
אפן שלמלכ. β. יי' את פרישן חכם
בגמרא גמד בארת:
יספ שוב פרס את מתנים בסתר המשיח. γ.
פרק את דרכים. δ. ומסתורין. ε. יי' אישי אלה
כדין חסיד. ζ. ברזילא:

α. Eccl. 11 & 91, Act. 17, Gen. 1: β. Esa. 33: 43: 44: γ. Prov. 8: Psal. 78: Rom.
16: δ. Prov. 1: & 8: Psal. 119: ε. Gen. 4: & 18: 19: Jes. 32: ζ. Joh. 21: η Tim. 1



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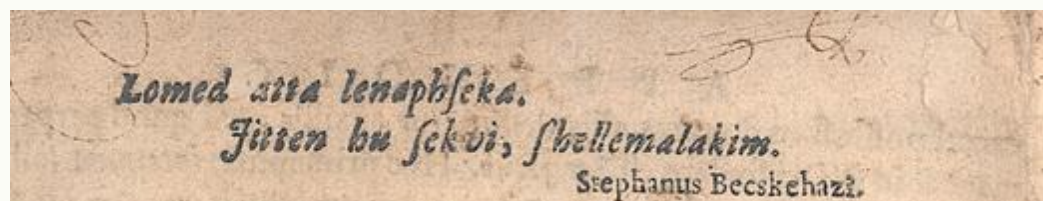
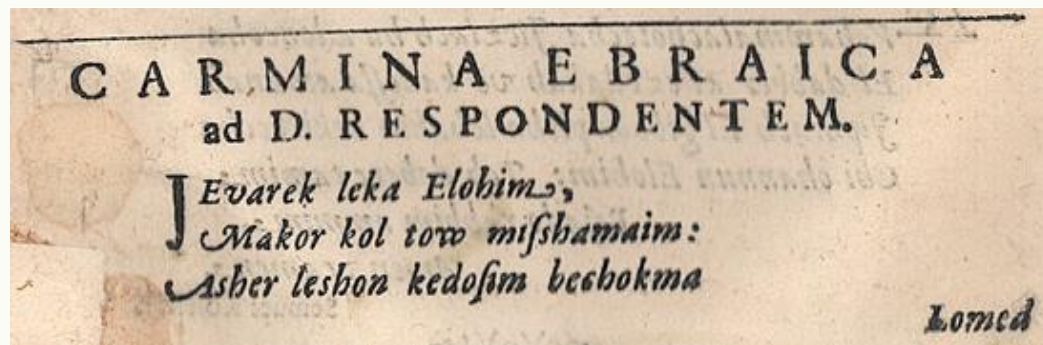
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Reconstructing pronunciation

- *Stephanus Becskehazi* to *Stephanus Szekeleyhidi* in 1651 (RMNY III 2356)

makor → מקור



Jevarek leka Elohim,
Makor kol tov misshamaim:
Asher leshon kedosim bechokma
Lomed atta lenaphseka,
Jitten hu sekvi, shellemalakim.



Challenges – summary

- 1. Quality of the photocopies. Typos in the original texts.
- 2. Imperfect language skills of the authors.
- 3. Various encodings: Hebrew with vocalization, Hebrew without vocalization, Latin.
- 4. Hebrew without vocalization: several readings. Uncertainties and multiple readings.
- 6. Normalization: correct for authors' imperfect language skills? Depends on research Q.
- 7. A broad array of (possible) research questions, including:
 - a. Language skills of the authors.
 - b. (Intended) language of the poems.
 - c. Poetic structures, literary aspects.
 - d. Cultural, historical, theological aspects.



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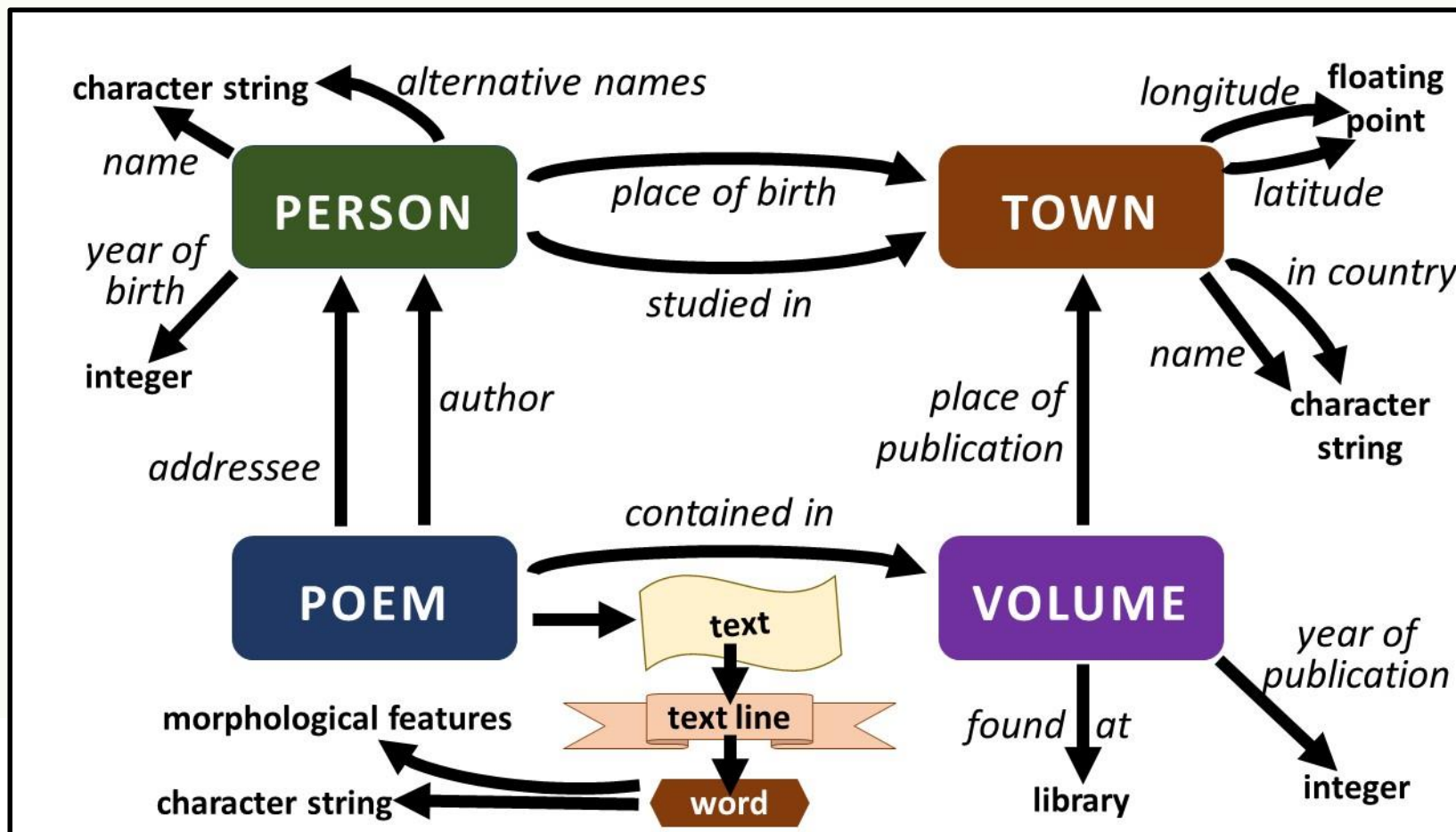
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Data model



Type of intended queries (pseudo-code):

- **SELECT** name, alternative_name **FROM** persons **WHERE**
person.studied_in.in_country == Netherlands
- **SELECT** morphological_feature **FROM** poems **WHERE**
poem.addressee.year_of_birth < 1651
- **SELECT** volume **FROM** volumes **WHERE**
volume.place_of_publication.name == 'Leiden'



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PeregrXML:

- Handle different levels of transcription
- Handle ambiguities, uncertainties.
- Handle errors.



```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<p:poem xmlns:p="peregr.kre.hu">
  <p:location book_id="Leiden5_RMK_III_1840" date="1653" />
  <p:photo src="img5.jpg" />
  <p:photo src="img7.jpg" />
  <p:author id="dkp" name="Diószegi Kalmár Pál" />
  <p:addressee id="bm" name="Báthori Mihály" />
  ...
  <p:line id="13">
    <p:original >ט אָז אַן שטע דברים</p:original>
    <p:normalized>ט אָז אַן שטע דברים</p:normalized>
    <p:transl_en >Turn your ear, listen to my words</p:transl_en>
  </p:line>
  <p:line id="14">
    <p:original >בבטןך כיחה נעים</p:original>
    <p:normalized>בבטןך כיחה נעים</p:normalized>
    <p:transl_en >In your belly, the pleasant Pleiades</p:transl_en>
    <p:normalized>בבטןך כיחה נעים</p:normalized>
    <p:transl_en >In your belly, for how pleasant it is</p:transl_en>
  </p:line>
  <p:line id="15">
    <p:original>להשב לך יום שלוחים</p:original>
    <p:normalized>להשיב לך יום שלוחים</p:normalized>
    <p:transl_en>To return to you the day of retribution.</p:transl_en>
  </p:line>
  ...
</p:poem>
```


A final note

- Please bear in mind that this is still work in progress.
- Any feedback or suggestion is welcome!



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Thank you for your attention!

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