



The Interdisciplinary Centre for the Broader Application of Genizah Research

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With the discovery of the Cairo Genizah one hundred and twenty years ago, researchers from diverse disciplines and fields gained access to a considerable collection of rare, original documents. This storehouse of primary sources and information shed a new light on medieval Mediterranean society as a whole and particularly on Jewish history and culture from ancient to early modern times. Today, the Cairo Genizah continues to provide an inexhaustible source for interdisciplinary research involving scholars from an array of disciplines, spanning from India to Western Europe. This research includes the fields of social, economic and intellectual history; Jewish literature from ancient times through the Middle Ages in the realm of Piyut, Talmud, Midrash, and Halakha; Philosophy; Semitic languages (Hebrew, Judaeo-Arabic, Aramaic); and the study of daily life, medicine, and trade.

In recent years the Friedberg Genizah Project has digitized documents from almost all of the Genizah collections, granting researchers around the world access to these primary sources and enabling them to catalogue them in a systematic manner. Genizah study now stands at a watershed point in time which is likely to inspire considerable new research thereby illuminating yet more of the Genizah's innumerable facets. Interdisciplinary research by its nature involves those few who engage in multiple fields of research. While a vast amount of the results of such research has been displayed and publicized on the podium of various academic institutions, in most cases it has not permeated public awareness.

In order to address these challenges we have established the Haifa Centre for the Broader Application of Genizah Research. The Centre aims to encourage interdisciplinary research in the Genizah, bring the Genizah to the public's notice, and integrate it into various educational frameworks in Israel and around the world. This exhibit is one of the centre's first fruits. Its purpose is to publicly present the story of the Genizah and offer a glimpse at some of the current research projects involving it.

