Christian Hebrew Printing in the Sixteenth Century: Printers, Humanism and the Impact of the Reformation *

Christian printers of Hebrew books have long been recognized as a crucial factor in the spread of Christian Hebraism in early modern Europe ¹. Their works have traditionally been listed together with Jewish books in bibliographies such as Moritz Steinschneider's catalogue of books on Hebrew language instruction, and the Bodleian library's collection Hebrew imprints ² since both contain Hebrew type, but grouping them together also blurs their distinctive features. Yet the business of Hebrew printing for Christians differed in character from Jewish printing in a variety of ways ³.

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- 1 Jerome Friedman, The Most Ancient Testimony: Christian-Hebraica in the Age of Renaissance Nostalgia (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1983), 36-38.
- 2 Bibliographisches Handbuch über die theoretische und praktische Literatur für hebräische Sprachkunde (1959; reprint: Hildesheim: Olms, 1976), and Catalogus librorum Hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana (1852-60; reprint: Hildesheim: Olms, 1964). Yeshayahu Vinograd continues this practice in his Thesaurus of the Hebrew Book, 2 vols (Jerusalem: Institute for Computerized Bibliography, 1993-1995) [Hebrew].
- 3 See Alexandre Lorian, «L'imprimerie hébraïque 1470-1550: ateliers chrétiens et ateliers juifs» in: Le Livre dans L'Europe de la Renaissance: Actes du xxviiie internationale d'Etudes humanistes de Tours, ed. Pierre Aquilon and Henri-Jean Martin (Paris: Promodis, 1988), 219-229, and Stephen G. Burnett, From Christian Hebraism to Jewish Studies: Johannes Buxtorf (1564-1629) and Hebrew Learning in the Seventeenth Century, Studies in the History of Christian Thought, vol. 68 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 39-47.