

Crown of Aleppo – The Mystery of the Oldest Hebrew Codex  
by Hayim Tawil and Bernard Schneider.

JPS 2010.

The Aleppo Codex, the oldest, most complete codex of the Hebrew Bible, with vocalisation and cantillation added, was produced in Tiberias in the 10<sup>th</sup> century CE, and made its way to Aleppo in Syria, not without incident, where it resided for five hundred years before being transferred to Jerusalem and safety.

The Crown of Aleppo is the story of that momentous journey, as well as detailing the production of the text, the characters behind its scribing, and the political undercurrents of the contemporary Jewish world of the period. The story starts with the terrible pogrom in Aleppo following the UN vote to partition Palestine between Jews and Arabs, and continues with an account of its fascinating history.

It is written as a labour of love, as well it might, for one of its authors, Haim Tawil, is a relative of the former chief Rabbi of Aleppo, Rabbi Moshe Tawil, and the survival of the Crown is replete with personal meaning for him.

The Crown of Aleppo is a fascinating historical and textual tale, copiously illustrated, and it concludes with a passionate plea that its missing pages, if they still exist, may be restored to it, so that both it and its journey to safety in the Jewish State may be considered completed.

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