

A Mahzor from Worms: Art and Religion in a Medieval Jewish
Community by Katrin Kogman-Appel.
Harvard University Press 2012.

Katrin Kogman-Appel holds the Evelyn Metz Memorial Research Chair in Art at Ben Gurion University in Israel, and together with Marc Michael Epstein is probably the greatest living scholar in the field of Jewish illuminated manuscripts.

In a Mahzor from Worms, Professor Kogman-Appel analyses in intriguing detail the content and history of the Leipzig Mahzor, (Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, MS Voller 1002/I-II), a two volume work of breathtaking beauty and quality. As the book develops, Kogman-Appel sets the mahzor in the context of the Worms Jewish community from which it originated and whose influence, and that of its greatest sons, the mahzor bears.

A Mahzor from Worms is divided into six chapters with an introduction and conclusion: Facts about the Leipzig Mahzor; Worms: Community, Society, and Scholarship; A Pesah Sermon by Eleazar ben Judah of Worms; Halakhah and Minhag: Religious Law and Custom; Musar: Pietist Ethics; Sod: Mystical Dimensions.

Kogman-Appel not only makes the Worms Mahzor come alive, aided by some beautiful illustrations, she also makes its birth community in all its intriguing aspects live anew. A Mahzor from Worms is a study worthy of its subject, and a further indication of the fineness of the scholarship of its author.

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh