

## **The Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC)**

cordially invites you to a lecture by

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Munich

### **Sa‘adia Gaon’s Arabic translation of the Tora and its readers: An attempt in reception history**

Texts travel; they circulate, are disseminated, and are diffused. They are uncompromisingly bound to movement along two axes: diachronic transmission over time, in which the transmitter and receptor presumably share a common intellectual setting; and synchronic transmission, in which the transmitter stands apart from that setting.

This is also true for Sa‘adia Gaon’s Judaeo-Arabic translation of the Torah. The Tafsīr, the name by which it became known, is not only one of the most influential texts in Judaeo-Arabic culture, but also among the best-known Arabic versions of the Bible. The frequent attestation of his translation in the Cairo Genizah shows that the Tafsīr has an authoritative, even canonical, status among all Arabic-speaking Jewish communities. Soon after its creation, the Tafsīr could be found in communities throughout the Near East, North Africa, and Muslim Spain. But the Tafsīr did not only have Jewish readers, it was also read and transmitted by Samaritans, Muslims, and also Christian scholars in the Middle Ages. What is more, with the invention of print it became the first biblical version in Arabic to be printed and, thus, became a text sought for by European scholars in the Early Modern Era.

In my contribution, I shall follow the transmission history of the Tafsīr. I will try to understand how, in the process of diffusion, both the material aspects in the manuscripts that contain it and the text itself changed. What were the roles the Tafsīr played in the different receptor communities?

**Thursday, 21 January 2021, 06:00 pm (CET)**

Zoom-Meeting