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A Hebrew witness of the Theorica Planetarum from 1492 Naples

Thursday 19 September 2024 09:40 (20 minutes)

In my talk, I will discuss the hitherto unstudied Hebrew transmission of the Theorica Planetarum, which was translated in the middle of the fifteenth century by the Italian Jewish physician and polymath Judah Astruc ben Samuel Shalom Ha-Rofe. I shall focus on a beautiful copy from 1492 Naples, part of a rich collection of astronomical and mathematical treatises (Biblioteca nazionale Vittorio Emanuele III, Ms. F 12), created by Abba Mari Ḥalfan, who had come to Naples to study astronomy, as one learns from the colophon. Ḥalfan's copy is characterised by extremely high textual as well as diagrammatical precision and it raises interesting questions regarding its role and connection to the other surviving manuscripts, while serving as a palpable witness to the dissemination of the Theorica Planetarum outside the Latin sphere.

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