



PRAGUE CENTRE
FOR JEWISH STUDIES



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RITUAL AND HISTORY:
THE ILLUSTRATED ASHKENAZI HAGGADAH
AS DIDACTIC TOOL

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We shall examine some aspects of the illustration programs in late medieval haggadot from Ashkenaz for didactic elements in their pictorial language. The haggadah was composed to follow the divine precept to teach one's son the narrative of Israel's departure from Egypt ("And you shall tell your son on this Day," Ex. 13:8). This requirement turned the haggadah into a document of teaching and the late medieval picture cycles were composed accordingly in part as an aid to fulfill these didactic functions.)