

Tosafists as *Peshat* Exegetes: A Century after S. A.
Poznanski

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In an outstanding and still widely-cited monograph published more than a century ago, S. A. Poznanski traces the development of the study of *peshat* in France

during the twelfth century, as well as the reversal of this trend in the second half of the thirteenth century and beyond as seen mainly within Tosafist compilations and commentaries to the Torah. The present study shows that there was in fact a group of five important Tosafists and rabbinic figures who lived in both northern France and Germany in the late twelfth century and during first half of the thirteenth century. The fine *peshat* interpretations that they produced are found for the most part only in manuscript, although remnants of some of these comments can also be identified in a number of published texts. An assessment of this corpus reveals that these comments are formulated more in the style of R. Yosef *Bekhor Shor* (and Rashi) than that of Rashbam. All of this suggests that the *Ba'alei ha-Tosafot* were more sensitive to aspects of *peshuto shel miqra* than heretofore thought, and argues for a broader understanding of the contours of medieval Ashkenazic biblical interpretation.