

ENGLISH ABSTRACTS

THE *ME'UN* (REFUSAL): THE COMPLEX HISTORY OF HALAKHIC ANOMALY

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The halakhic tradition allows an orphan girl, who was married off by her mother or brothers, to refuse the marriage and to annul it unilaterally. This is an exceptional legal phenomenon in the history of halakhah: it has no biblical source, and it contradicts basic halakhic institutions. The present article reveals the origins of this phenomenon and analyses the different ways in which the refusal (*me'un*) procedure was constructed by the Tanaim, who debated the nature of the *me'un*, the degree of its institutional structure, and the degree to which it is compatible with accepted halakhic principles.