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The Text of the Masoretes
Its Character, Historical Setting,
and Relationship to Jewish Biblical Exegesis

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Disertační práce

The Text of the Masoretes
Its Character, Historical Setting,
and Relationship to Jewish Biblical Exegesis

Text Masoretů

*Jeho charakter, historický kontext
a vztah k židovské biblické exegezi*

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Souhlasím s tím, aby práce byla zveřejněna pro účely výzkumu a soukromého studia.

V Praze dne 29.11.2011

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Acknowledgement

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Summary

This work tries to take a new look at the Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible. Based on the assumption that the masoretic vocalization has its roots in the oral tradition it asks what is the character of this text, why it was transmitted orally, and in which context it was written down only at such a late date. It asks further what was the function and mutual relationship of the other masoretic elements: the Hebrew vocalization, the accentuation and the Masoretic notes, and whether they all can be traced back to a common denominator. Lastly, this work tries to answer a question whether the masoretic tradition presented a reinterpretation of the consonantal text to some degree. To answer these questions this thesis analyses phenomena connected to the masoretic vocalization, accentuation and masoretic notes. Further, it observes some grammatically unusual masoretic forms. It comes to the conclusion that all of the masoretic elements of the Hebrew biblical text are to be traced back to an institutionalized oral study of Bible, which was the prevalent way of learning before the literacy became common. The present work could not testify any interpretative tendency in the Hebrew vocalization.

Keywords

Hebrew Bible, Old Testament, textual criticism, Masoretic text, punctuation, vocalization, Hebrew accents, liturgical chant, targum, masoretic notes, oral study.

נוסח המסורה, הניקוד, טעמי המקרא, הערות המסורה, תרגום, לימוד פעל-פה.

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Anotace

Tato práce se snaží nově prozkoumat masoretský text Hebrejské bible. Na základě předpokladu, že masoretská vokalizace má svůj základ v ústní tradici, se táže, jaký byl charakter tohoto textu, proč byl předáván ústně a v jakém kontextu byl zapsán teprve v dosti pozdní době. Dále se tato práce ptá, jaká byla funkce a vzájemný vztah jednotlivých masoretských elementů: hebrejské vokalizace, akcentuace a masoretických poznámek, a zda-li všechny tyto elementy mají nějaký společný základ. Tato práce se rovněž táže, zda-li masoretská tradice představovala do nějaké míry reinterpretaci hebrejského konsonantního textu. K zodpovězení těchto otázek analyzuje tato dizertace jevy související s masoretskou vokalizací, akcentuací a s masoretskými poznámkami a dále si všímá některých gramaticky nezvyklých masoretských tvarů. Práce dochází k závěru, že všechny masoretské elementy hebrejského biblického textu lze chápat jako výsledek institucionalizovaného ústního studia biblického textu, které bylo běžné dokud se dostatečně nerozšířila gramotnost. Práce nepotvrdila žádné interpretativní tendence hebrejské vokalizace.

Klíčová slova

Hebrejská Bible, Starý zákon, textová kritika, masoretický text, punktace, vokalizace, hebrejské akcenty, liturgický zpěv, targum, masoretské poznámky, ústní tradice.

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Abbreviations, Sigla, Signs

a) general abbreviations

| | |
|-------|---|
| BA | Biblical Aramaic |
| BH | Biblical Hebrew |
| ed. | editor, edition. |
| lit. | literary |
| LXX | The Septuagint |
| Mm | <i>masora parva</i> |
| Mp | <i>masora magna</i> |
| ms. | manuscript |
| Okl | <i>Oklā we-Oklā</i> |
| Qr | <i>qerē</i> |
| Kt | <i>ketīḇ</i> |
| MT | The Masoretic text |
| Symm | Symmachus |
| TaNaK | The Hebrew Bible (תנ"ך , Torah—Nebi'im—Ketubim) |
| var. | variant |
| VUL | The Vulgate |

b) bibliographic abbreviations

| | |
|------|---|
| BHS | <i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i> (BHS) |
| BHQ | <i>Biblia Hebraica Quinta</i> (BHQ) |
| BL | Bauer-Leander Hebrew grammar (Bauer-Leander 1922) |
| DJA | Dictionary of Judean Aramaic (Sokoloff 2003) |
| DJBA | Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic (Sokoloff 2002) |
| DJPA | Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic (Sokoloff 2002b) |

| | |
|-------|---|
| GesK | Gesenius-Kautzsch Hebrew grammar (Gesenius-Kautzsch 1909) |
| HALOT | <i>Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon to the Old Testament</i> (Koehler 1994-2000) |
| JE | <i>Jewish Encyclopedia</i> (Siger 1901-1906) |
| KBL | Koehler-Baumgartner Hebrew Lexicon (Koehler 1985) |
| MMB | <i>Monumenta Musicae Byzantinae</i> series |
| MurJ | Muraoka-Joüon Hebrew grammar (Muraoka-Joüon 2000) |
| OHB | <i>Oxford Hebrew Bible</i> (in preparation, see http://ohb.berkeley.edu/) |
| PL | <i>Patrologia latina</i> |

c) sigla

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| א | The Arabic translation of Rav Saadya Gaōn |
| Ⲙ | The Septuagint and other Greek translations |
| Ⲙ ^Θ | Theodotion |
| Ⲙ ^A | Septuagint, “text A” (in Judges; =Codex Alexandrinus) |
| Ⲙ ^B | Septuagint, “text B” (in Judges; later Jewish[?] revisions) |
| ⲙ | Masoretic Text |
| ⲙ ^r | Masoretic Text—textus receptus |
| Ⲛ | Biblical text(s) from Qumrān |
| ⲛ | Samaritanus |
| Syh | Syro-hexampla |
| Ⲟ | Pešittā |
| ⲟ | Targum (ed. Sperber) |
| ⲟ ^O | Targūm Onkelos |
| ⲟ ^J | Targūm Jonathan (Prophets) |
| ⲟ ^N | Targūm Neofyti |
| ⲟ ^{PJ} | Targūm Pseudo-Jonathan |
| Ⲡ | The Vulgate |

d) mediaeval Jewish commentators

| | |
|-------|-------------------------------|
| ראב"ע | Rabi Abraham ibn Ezra |
| רד"ק | Radak (Rabi David ben Qimḥī) |
| רש"י | Rashi (Rabi Šimon ben Yiṣḥaq) |

e) Tiberian masoretic codices

| | |
|----------------|---|
| A | Aleppo codex (see Yeivin 1980, §§26-29) |
| C | Cairo codex of the Prophets (see Yeivin 1980, §32) |
| L | Leningrad codex, <i>Evr. I B 19a</i> (see Yeivin 1980, §30) |
| M ₁ | Madrid codex M ₁ (see below chapter 6.1, p. 112) |

f) other manuscripts or manuscript collections

| | |
|-------|---|
| H | ms. Halle of <i>Oklā we-Oklā</i> |
| P | ms. Paris of <i>Oklā we-Oklā</i> |
| T.-S. | The Taylor-Schechter collection of Genīzah fragments at Cambridge |

g) signs

| | |
|-------|--|
| <אבג> | word in question (if quoted in context) |
| [abc] | explicative additions (in translations etc.) |
| √אבג | Hebrew (or Aramaic) root |
| אבג* | hypothetical form |
| A > B | form A developed into / was translated as B |
| A < B | form A developed from form B |
| × | not extant |

Masoretic and Other Notation Systems

a) masoretic punctuation systems¹⁾

| vowel | Tiberian | Babylonian punctuation | Palestinian |
|-------------------------|----------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| <i>qāmeš</i> (ā) | ◌ִ | ◌ֿ | ◌ִ |
| <i>pataḥ</i> (a) | ◌ִ | ◌ֿ | ◌ֿ |
| <i>segōl</i> (æ) | ◌ִ | = <i>pataḥ</i> [or ◌ֿ] | ◌ֿ |
| <i>šērē</i> (e) | ◌ִ | ◌ֿ | ◌ֿ |
| <i>ḥīreq</i> (i) | ◌ִ | ◌ֿ | ◌ֿ |
| <i>ḥōlēm</i> (o) | ◌ֿ / ִ | ◌ֿ | ◌ֿ |
| <i>šūreq/qibbūš</i> (u) | ◌ֿ / ִ | ◌ֿ | ◌ֿ |
| <i>šwa</i> (ə) | ◌ִ | ◌ֿ | × ²⁾ |

Table 1: Basic vocalization signs in all three Hebrew punctuation systems

1. Due to the lack of freely available fonts containing Babylonian and Palestinian masoretic signs I had to prepare my own variant of a Hebrew font (based on the free typeface “Taamey Frank CLM”, <http://culmus.sourceforge.net/>). Unfortunately, as the result of technical difficulties the masoretic signs are not always correctly placed.
2. *Segōl*, *šērē* or *pataḥ* may be used for *šwa mobile*.

b) the Judaeo-Arabic notation (in Hebrew script)

| phoneme | trans- -scription | Hebrew script | Arabic script |
|-------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <i>tā</i> | <i>t</i> | ת | ت |
| <i>tā</i> | <i>ṭ</i> | ת̣ | ث |
| <i>ġīm</i> | <i>ġ</i> | י | ج |
| <i>ḥā</i> | <i>ḥ</i> | ח | ح |
| <i>ḥā</i> | <i>ḥ̣</i> | ח̣ | خ |
| <i>dāl</i> | <i>d</i> | ד | د |
| <i>dāl</i> | <i>ḍ</i> | ד̣ | ذ |
| <i>sīn</i> | <i>s</i> | ס | س |
| <i>šīn</i> | <i>š</i> | ש | ش |
| <i>ṣād</i> | <i>ṣ</i> | צ | ص |
| <i>dād</i> | <i>ḍ</i> | צ̣ | ض |
| <i>ṭā</i> | <i>ṭ</i> | ט | ط |
| <i>zā</i> | <i>ḍ/ẓ</i> | צ̣ | ظ |
| <i>‘ayin</i> | <i>‘</i> | ע | ع |
| <i>ġayin</i> | <i>ġ</i> | ג | غ |
| <i>kāf</i> | <i>k</i> | כ | ك |
| <i>tā marbūtā</i> | <i>-a(tun)...</i> | ת̣- | ة |

Table 2: Judaeo-Arabic Notation

Chapter 1

The Problem of the Masoretic Text

For a very long time, the “Masoretic text”¹⁾ of the Hebrew Bible, i.e. a text containing Hebrew consonants, vowels and accents, has been seen as a result of the “work of the Tiberian Masoretes”. According to the accepted view (which saw the emergence of this text through the prism of the “modern” literate society) the Masoretes worked as a kind of grammarians and “punctuated” the consonantal text with vocalization and accentuation signs, and annotated it with marginal notes. As to the reason for this presumed work several explanations were proposed. Some saw the need for “fixing” the Hebrew text even to the smallest detail to be under the influence of the “exegetic school of Rabbi Aqiba”²⁾. Negatively formulated, the vocalization signs were thought to “to limit the midrashic excesses”³⁾. The proponents of such a thesis, however, didn't explain why the vocalization signs were introduced only at such a late point and not much earlier. Paul Kahle⁴⁾, on the other hand, claimed that the Masoretes strived to reconstruct “the original” vocalization of the Hebrew Bible. According to Kahle this should have happened as a response to the early Jewish-Muslim polemics and as an attempt to equal the readers of the *Qur'ān*. His theory was, however, already opposed, with good arguments, by G. Bergsträsser, who above all pointed out the fact that if the Tiberian vocalization was a reconstruction, much less irregularly and peculiarly vocalized forms would be found⁵⁾.

On the other hand, some more recent scholars don't regard the vocalization of the masoretic codices as a direct outcome of the work of the Masoretes themselves but rather as being based on an older oral tradition, which was only then written down by these Jewish scholars. This

1. The use of this term is inconsistent in biblical scholarship: often it refers to the (consonantal) Hebrew textual tradition that eventually led to the text of the masoretic codices as opposed to other ancient versions. I, however, use this term strictly for the vocalized (and accentuated) biblical text as found in the oldest masoretic codices, such as the Aleppo codex or Codex Leningradensis.
2. For the overview about the scholars who held this thesis see Albrektson 1977, p. 53). Albrektson himself criticises the approach.
3. Levy 2001, p. 5
4. Kahle 1961 and Kahle 1947.
5. Bergsträsser 1924, p. 585.

was claimed, for example, by James Barr⁶, Moshe Goshen-Gottstein⁷ or Shlomo Morag⁸. Their argument is, most notably, supported by the character of the masoretic vocalization itself, which shows many irregularities (whether they are to be explained as dialectal deviations or rather as textually corrupted forms), inconsistent with the idea of the Masoretes as “grammarians”.

1.1 Basic Questions of the Present Work

In this dissertation I generally accept this later mentioned approach as the best way to explain the masoretic material. It seems, however, that this opens more questions which need to be investigated and that I'm trying to answer in this work:

1. If the Masoretic text as found in the early masoretic codices reflects by its vocalization an orally transmitted text of the Hebrew Bible, what was the relationship between the two basic elements of the masoretic text, namely the masoretic oral tradition and the consonantal biblical text? To what degree were they transmitted independently and how much were they they influenced each by other, respectively? This provokes further questions: What was the reason for the existence of an oral tradition, parallel to a written Biblical text? And if indeed the written and oral versions of the same biblical text existed in parallel why were they written down as a compound text only at the end of the first millennium C.E. and, in addition, why hadn't it been done before?

2. Furthermore, in the masoretic codices we find three basic elements in addition to the consonantal text: the vocalization, the accent signs and the masoretic notes, and occasionally other para- and meta-textual elements. We shall, thus, ask why all these elements appear in the masoretic codices and what is their mutual relationship (if any)? Are these “separate traditions” that were integrated into their final form only by chance or is there a common denominator of all these new elements? Can some of these elements (like the masoretic notes, or the *puncta extraordinaria*) be catalogued under the “scribal practices” or did they originate in external traditions that were incorporated into the “compound” Masoretic text only at a late stage by the Masoretes?

6. Barr 1968, p. 194-203. Similar opinion he expresses elsewhere, most notably in Barr 1981 (see also below, chapter 4.1, p. 31).

7. Goshen-Gottstein 1974.

8. Morag 1974.

We should further ask who was the “recipient” and “target” of the Masoretic text and what was the *milieu* it emerged in: was it scribal circles or was this text rather directed towards the readers and exegetes?

3. Lastly, we shall ask whether there was some relationship between the Jewish exegetical tradition and the masoretic elements of the Hebrew Biblical text. As said above, the Masoretes were regarded by many biblical scholars as those responsible for inventing the vocalization and the accentuation and were thus also suspected of having influenced the “masoretic reading” by their own interpretive traditions. However, if we regard the vowels and accents as representing an oral tradition the question still remains: Can some sort of systematic exegetical or midrashic features be found in these elements of the Masoretic text? Note, that for the accentuation, at least, this has already been claimed by several scholars⁹. In the present work we should, therefore, ask whether the same is true for the vocalization or even the masoretic notes, and what is typical for each of these components of the Masoretic text.

9. See e.g. Cohen 1974. See also the book of Simcha Kogut who analyses the accentuation as one of the Jewish exegetic traditions (Kogut 1996).

Chapter 2

The Jewish Bible between the Scribes and the Oral Tradition

2.1 Socio-economic Conditions of the Transmission of Biblical text in the Rabbinic period

If we look at the material evidence concerning Jewish written sources from the rabbinic era we can see that in the period from roughly after the Jewish revolt (i.e. after the time of the Dead Sea scrolls) up to about the eighth or ninth century almost no Hebrew written witnesses survived. The first datable manuscript emerging after this period is the Masoretic codex of Prophets from Cairo written (if we are to believe its colophon) in the year 896¹⁾. Obviously, some of the materials with unknown dating may have been written before the 8th-9th century, as is presumed for many of the fragments from the Cairo *Genīza*. Some of these fragments may possibly even go back to the pre-islamic times (this has been claimed for the Avōt de Rabbi Nathan²⁾), but such dating remains uncertain. Also, some amulets are reportedly dated to about the 5th/6th century³⁾. At any rate, evidence for a mass production of biblical texts in this period (and with the exception of the Qumran texts in the antiquity in general) is lacking⁴⁾. This is in striking contrast to a significant number of Christian biblical manuscripts produced in their *scriptoria*⁵⁾ which emerged in about the third century C.E.

Clearly, there must have been some biblical texts written in this period among the Jews, as can be deduced alone from the fact, that the consonantal text of the Masoretic codices is very close to that of some biblical scrolls found in Qumrān, and one can assume that the TeNaK was copied at least in the emerging centres of the rabbinic Judaism. Also, the post-talmudic tractate *Soferīm*,

1. Some scholars consider the colophon, however, not being authentic, see Lehman 1974, see also Yeivin 2001, p. 18.

2. See Hezser 2001, p. 478, Sirat 2002, p. 11.

3. Hezser 2001, p. 482.

4. Hezser 2001, p. 146.

5. *ibid.*

even if its final text is to be dated between the eighth and tenth century C.E., witnesses to the scribal practices of the late Roman and early Byzantine times⁶. The Torah scrolls must have been very expensive, at least at the beginning of the rabbinic era, and it seems that until the third century C.E. Jewish scribes were relatively rare⁷. From the fact that Samaritan and gentile scribes are discussed by Mishna and the Yerushalmi in connection with writing the Torah scrolls⁸, we can conclude that, even if the Samaritan scribes are actually rejected by the Yerushalmi as those who had “forged the Torah”, at least some Torah scrolls may have been produced by non-Jewish (professional) scribes. That would speak for a certain lack of scribes within the Jewish community. Mostly, Torah scrolls must have been owned by local Jewish communities, but the story of Rabbi Meir, who is said to have written down a scroll “from his mouth”⁹, shows that some smaller communities may even have existed, which possibly owned no Torah scrolls (note, however, that the story of Rabbi Meir speaks rather about the Ester scroll, the *Megila*). Private ownership of biblical books was very rare and limited to wealthy persons. We have several records of wealthy rabbis owning a Torah scroll. Apart from these, only a king is depicted as an individual possessing a Torah scroll¹⁰. The situation didn't change much even in the amoraic times¹¹.

In the rabbinic period we are, also, witnesses to a widespread illiteracy: the legal system was still largely based on oral transactions and the testimony of witnesses, instead of written documents¹². Even in the amoraic times, the Yerushalmi discusses the possibility that the witness does not know how to sign¹³. In the Roman times it seems that even the members of the higher strata of the society were often unable to sign documents¹⁴.

This situation apparently changed only in Islamic times. Among the genizah fragments several pieces of children's exercise books were found (the TS Box K5 contains a whole collection of

6. Hezser 2001, p. 479.

7. Hezser 2001, p. 122.

8. Hezser 2001, p. 123, YSOT 7:3, 21C; YSOT 7:5, 21D and MSOT 7:5.

9. See below figure 2, p. 8.

10. Hezser 2001, p. 147.

11. Hezser 2001, p. 148.

12. Hezser 2001, p. 111ff

13. Hezser 2001, p. 484.

14. Hezser 2001, p. 483.

them)¹⁵. At this time, many of the oral traditions were put into writing and codices started to be used more widely beside the scrolls¹⁶. This is explained by some as the result of centralization and the organization of the Jewish community under the Islamic rule, which allowed for a wider distribution of written texts and their acceptance as being authoritative¹⁷.

2.2 The Role of Orality in the Rabbinic Times

Not only was literacy rather uncommon among the Rabbis, but there are enough indications left that they frequently used oral techniques in their studies, instead. This becomes obvious if we consider that the illiteracy of the rabbinic Jewry didn't mean a lack of education, but on the contrary, the Mišna, Talmud and the *midrašim* attest a highly developed culture based on close study and interpretation of the Jewish law and (to a lesser degree) of the only written document accepted in rabbinic circles: the Hebrew Bible.

The oral study was in no way uncommon practice in the ancient world and was not solely limited to the Jews. Much of Graeco-Roman education, even the higher one, took place by oral means, without the necessity of using written texts or fixing one's own arguments in writing¹⁸. We can even see a sentiment against writing among some of the philosophers, most notably with Seneca¹⁹ or Galen²⁰. Even if written rhetorical handbooks existed and speeches were occasionally written down²¹, as L. Alexander states, “as late as the fourth century C.E., rhetors discouraged the use of shorthand note-taking, ‘in keeping with their tradition of memorization, public exhibition and limited distribution’ ”²².

15. Hezser 2001, p. 88, n. 247; Goitein 1971, p. 557, n. 21.

16. Hezser 2001, p. 504.

17. Reif 1990, p. 145-146, Hezser 2001, p. 504.

18. See Rawson 1985, p. 51; Hezser 2001, p. 99.

19. See e.g. L. Alexander 1990, p. 232ff.

20. See L. Alexander 1990, p. 255, quoting Galen, *De compositione medicamentorum secundum locos* 6. See also Hezser 2001, p. 99.

21. Hezser p. 99.

22. L. Alexander 1990, p. 255 with reference to Norman 1960, p. 126. See Hezser 2001, p. 99.

Similarly in the Jewish tradition, even if some accounts of Rabbis taking private notes exist²³, the study of rabbinic teachings as well as the disputes thereof were mostly carried out orally. Most notably, this is true for the main corpora of rabbinic teachings—the Talmud and Mishna, and is evident from the rhetorics of these texts. Even if Shaul Lieberman's thesis²⁴ about an “oral publication” of the Mishna is disputed among the scholars, this rabbinic opus clearly shows “oral characteristics” (Neusner²⁵), i.e. the text is composed in a form suitable for memorizing and oral discussion.

This led later to the emergence of a doctrine of “Written and Oral Torah” (תורה שבכתב and תורה שבעל פה)²⁶, which decisively stressed the importance of the oral teaching. This concept shows up also in the famous story from the *Avōt de-Rabbi Nathan*:

23. Hezser 2001, p. 96-97.

24. Lieberman 1950, p. 87. See also Hezser 2001, p. 427ff.

25. Neusner 1987, p. 75; Hezser 2001, p. 427ff.

26. According to Jaffe, the doctrine is “probably a late third-century development”; the term “Oral Torah” doesn't appear in the Mishnah and Tosefta, only in the Talmudim and related literature, see Jaffe 1997, p. 534. See also Hezser 2001, p. 201.

How impetuous was Shamaï, the elder! A story was told about a man who stood before Shamaï and said to him: “Rabbi, how many *Torot* do you have?”. [Shamaï] said: “Two, the written one and the oral one.” [He replied]: “The written one, I believe you, but the oral one, I do not believe.” [Shamaï] shouted at him and drove him angrily out. [The man] went to Hilel and said to him: “Rabbi, how many *Torot* were given to you?” [Hilel] said: “Two, the written one and the oral one.” [The man said]: “The written one, I believe you, but the oral one, I do not believe.” [Hilel] said to him: “My son, sit down, write for me an alphabet.” And he asked: “What is this [letter]?” [The man] replied: an “*’alef*”. [Hilel said:] “[No,] it is not *’alef*, it is *bēt*”. And he asked: “What is this?” [The man] replied: “*bēt*”. [Hilel said:] “[No,] it is not *bēt*, it is *gimmel*”. [The man asked:] “Where do you know from that this is *’alef*, this *bēt* and that *gimmel*”? [Hilel] said to him: “So handed down to us our ancient fathers that this is *’alef*, this *bēt* and that *gimmel*”. And as you accepted this with your belief, so you should accept that with your belief.

מה היה קפדנותו של שמאי הזקן, אמרו מעשה באדם אחד שעמד לפני שמאי. אמר לו, רבי כמה תורות יש לכם אמר לו, שתיים אחת בכתב ואחת בעל פה אמר לו, את שבכתב אני מאמין לך, את שבעל פה איני מאמין לך. גער בו והוציאו בניזיפה. בא לפני הלל אמר לו, רבי כמה תורות נתנו, אמר לו, שתיים: אחת בכתב ואחת בעל פה. אמר לו, בכתב אני מאמינך, בעל פה אין אני מאמינך. אמר לו, בני שב, כתוב לי אלף בית. אמר לו, מה זה, אמר לו, אלף. אמר לו, אין זה אלף אלא בית. אמר לו, מהו זה אמר לו, בית אמר לו, אין זה בית אלא גימל. אמר לו, מניין אתה יודע שזה אלף וזה בית וזה גימל, אמר לו, כך מסרו לנו אבותינו הראשונים, שזה אלף וזה בית וזה גימל. כשם שקבלת זו באמונה, כך קבל עליך זו באמונה.

Figure 1: *The Written and Oral Torah. (ARNA 15:14-16)*

Clearly, as can be seen also from the above anecdote, the doctrine of “Oral Torah” wasn't only meant to describe how study in rabbinic circles was performed but its actual goal was to give legitimation to the rabbinic teachings, which stand parallel (on the basis of both their use and authority) to the text of Torah (and the Hebrew Bible in general). Nevertheless, even if the circumstances of the rabbinic education became itself an ideological statement, it is actually also a strong witness to the conditions of the rabbinic study itself. That the memorizing was not limited

to the rabbinic traditions but was a common form of intellectual activity and thus also possible in the case of the transmission of biblical text, can be seen from the following text:

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Rabbi Shimeon ben Eleazar said: “A story [is told] about Rabbi Meir that he went to spend a year in ‘Asya and they had no scroll [of Ester] there, so he wrote [one] from his memory and read it.”</p> | <p>אמר רבי שמעון בן אלעזר: מעשה ברבי מאיר שהלך לעבר שנה בעסיא, ולא היה שם מגילה, וכתבה מלבו וקראה</p> |
|---|---|

Figure 2: Rabbi Meir and his “scroll” written from memory. (BMEG 18B)

2.2.1 The Ability to Read but not to Write?

According to Catherine Hezser, the Jewish elementary in the rabbinic times education was focused on the reading of the Torah²⁷), however, as she states, there is “no unambiguous evidence that (*the instruction of writing in Jewish elementary schools*) ever took place”²⁸). Further, Hezser gives examples of rabbis who could not write (e.g. YGIT 9:9, 50D quotes R. Abbahu and R. Chisda who supposedly signed with simple signs resembling the letters א and ט, respectively)²⁹), and notes a comparable example of an Egyptian Christian church “reader” Aurelius Ammonios (living in the 4th century C.E.) who is described as someone “who did not know letters”. Hezser concludes from these examples that, while the ability to read written texts was common among the Jews in the rabbinic period (and in their surrounding world), only a small fraction of them were actually taught to write and were capable of writing.

While it's certainly possible that certain people in various cultures and times may have been able to read but were lacking the knowledge of writing techniques (or at least were without the ability to write longer texts), one can hardly believe that Rabbis, who were fluent in the biblical text (and one should therefore assume that they had a good practice in reading the Torah), would not be capable of signing with their full name! There is, however, another way to understand rabbinic text concerning the teaching of children to read the Torah (and Torah-reading in general), which I would propose here: The Hebrew קרא√ can express a broader variety of meanings than

27. Hezser 2001, p. 68ff.

28. Hezser 2001, p. 88.

29. Hezser 2001, p. 181.

just “read from a book”. Its basic meaning is “to call”/“to shout” and, having a text as a subject, “to proclaim” or “to read aloud”³⁰. It is thus possible that it could have denoted not only (loud) “reading from a book”, but also “reciting” (from memory).

Interestingly, on many occasions, קרא, “to read” is found parallel with שנה, “to repeat” (or its Aramaic counterpart, תנא). For example, concerning the synagogues is said: קורין ושונין ודורשין (תנא). It is generally accepted that שנה denotes an oral study of Mishna or later rabbinic traditions. קרא apparently must then point to a complementing or even competing educational institution. Therefore, a question should be raised as to whether this “reading” really meant “reading out of a written text” in the modern sense. It is well possible that in the time after the “publication” of the Mishna two competing textual traditions were memorized and studied by a somewhat broader circle of students than that of the professional scribes, namely the *Miqrā* and the *Mishna*, and only later did they both become a part of the common Jewish *curriculum*. While the former was more specifically connected with the education of children, the latter posed rather the basis for “higher education”.

Obviously I’m not claiming that קרא would always point to a recitation of a memorized biblical text and never to a reading from a written book (scroll). It may well be the case that the same utterance was understood in different stages and by different Rabbis in the one or the another way, or maybe could have meant both. There are, however, indications that memorizing was, at least to some degree, part of the “elementary education” in the Torah. If the Torah-scrolls were so costly, one could hardly imagine that each child had access to its own copy, nor does it seem realistic that several children would read from one scroll at the same time. Rather, it would seem that the teacher alone “read” (be it from a scroll or from his memory) a portion which was repeated by the pupils (probably on a verse-by-verse manner) and so memorized by them. Such a picture would fit well into passages from the Rabbinic literature depicting various people passing near (or behind) the synagogue and hearing the children “read” their Torah-portion³². If this reflects the ancient reality, it is not clear whether the children were taught to read from a book at all—such reading apparently was not the obvious goal of the education. The ability to read

30. See KBL.

31. TMEG 2:18; see Hezser 2001, p. 43. See also ARNA 8 or BSOT 21B.

32. ARNA 15, YHOR 2:5, 46D. See also Hezser 2001, p. 51, 77.

the Torah portion correctly as part of the synagogal liturgy depended on oral teaching anyway (consider the consonantal nature of the Hebrew Bible texts!) and a collective teaching/study was also easier done by oral means.

2.3 Liturgy or Study?

Sometimes, in the biblical studies a question arises whether a particular text emerged from—or a particular textual feature had its *Sitz im Leben* in—the context of liturgical reading or whether it rather emerged as part of the study of the text. The same question applies to our discussion about the term קרא and the *Sitz im Leben* of the biblical text in rabbinic times.

Clearly, we should assume that there existed an established tradition of teaching/study of the Hebrew bible as can be heard from the following well-known passage from the mishnaic tractate *Pirqē Avōt*:

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>He was saying: “at five years to the <i>Mikrā</i>, at ten to <i>Mišna</i>, at thirteen to ‘the commandment’, at fifteen to the ‘learning’ (תלמוד, ‘<i>talmūd</i>’)...”</p> | <p>הוא הִיא אֹמֵר בֶּן חֲמֵשׁ שָׁנִים לְמִקְרָא בֶּן עֶשְׂרִי לְמִשְׁנָה בֶּן שְׁלֹשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה לְמִצְוֹת בֶּן חֲמֵשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה לְתַלְמוּד בֶּן שְׁמוֹנֶה עֶשְׂרֵה לְחִפָּה ...</p> |
|---|---|

Figure 3: *The ideal of rabbinic education. (MAVOT 5:21)*

It is assumed by some scholars that this mishnaic utterance didn't describe the reality, but rather presents a rabbinic ideal of the education and their stages (or as Hezser puts it: it shows “an idealistic expression of rabbis wishful thinking”³³). Nevertheless, it seems that some sort of education based on the Hebrew Bible existed at least in some Jewish circles even in the first centuries C.E.

Even though the Torah study is described as a “primary education” stage, clearly, the knowledge of the *TeNaK* was also part of rabbinic education and study. From the talmudic times (apart from the fact that the actual text of Talmud was supplied with many Bible quotations in order to support the authority to the mishnaic traditions) we have the following tradition:

33. Hezser 2001, p. 80.

Rabbi Levi said that Rabbi Shimeon ben Lakish says: “What [does it mean that] this bride is adorned with twenty-four kinds of precious stones? So should the student of the sage be skilled (פְּקֻחַ) and nimble (זְרִיז) in the twenty-four books [of the Bible].”

אמר רבי לוי אמר רבי שמעון בן לקיש, מה הכלה הזו מקושטת בעשרים וארבעה מיני תכשיטין, כך תלמיד חכם צריך להיות פקח וזריז בעשרים וארבעה ספרים.

Figure 4: The “students of the sages” and 24 books of the Bible. (TANḤ KI-TISSA, 16)

Apparently, the skills described by this passage (פְּקֻחַ, literary “quick-witted” and זְרִיז : lit. “quick”, “nimble”) don't deal with scribal or literary expertise but with abilities to handle the Biblical text orally (and most notably it points to a profound knowledge thereof). Moreover, the quoted utterance doesn't speak about the knowledge of the Torah (which can be acquired purely by listening to synagogal reading) but rather of the whole TeNaK, i.e. the “twenty-four books”. Furthermore, it can be shown on a couple of rabbinic texts that the liturgical reading of a particular text presupposed that these texts had been previously memorized. See for example the following *baraita*:

Our rabbis taught: “If a scribe omitted letters or verses in [a Torah scroll] and the reader read them [in the same way] as the *meturgeman* translates - he fulfilled [the rule].”...

תנו רבנן: השמיט בה סופר אותיות או פסוקין, וקראן הקורא כמתורגמן המתרגם - יצא

Figure 5: A *baraita* in BMEG 18B on reciting the Torah by heart.

Apparently the text presupposes that the Targum is known by heart by the *meturgeman*, and in the same way the Torah may be “read” even if some part of the text is omitted by the scribe. This, however, shows that the reader who recited the Hebrew Torah text in the synagogue already knew it by heart. This only seems to be practically possible on the basis of some kind of oral study. This also seems probable, given the fact that there were few Torah scrolls available and the reader may not have had access for private study.

Further, a list of passages forbidden “to be read” (liturgically) and to be “translated”³⁴ is mentioned by the Rabbinic literature:

34. See P. S. Alexander 1976.

There are [passages] that are read and translated, read but not translated, not read and not translated ... but the scribe will teach as usual.

יש נקראין ומתרגמין ונקראין ולא מתרגמין לא
נקראין ולא מתרגמין ... והסופר מלמד כדרכו

Figure 6: *Forbidden passages from the Bible and Targum. (TMEG 3:19)*

Apparently, a distinction is made between the liturgical “reading” and “translating”, and between analogous processes “taught by the scribe” and certain passages are forbidden to be “read” or “translated” liturgically. It seems therefore, that the reading of the Hebrew Bible had two *Sitze im Leben*: the study lesson and the synagogal liturgy, both being generally similar but some minor differences existing between the two contexts. The most striking differences concern the choice of the texts “read” and “translated”: Apparently in the lesson more texts (and lengthier ones) could have been read than in the liturgy which, in turn, was aimed at the broader public. Furthermore, we should consider additional possible settings for the study of Biblical text: perhaps a teaching of children or “laymen” existed beside a more professionalized study by specialized scholars (one can probably think about rabbinic academies or similar institutions). Clearly, the ordinary people, even the rabbinic scholars, did not have the capacity for memorizing the whole Torah, Prophets and Writings:

Rabbi Abahu said: “All forty days Moses was up [in the Heaven] he learned the Torah but was forgetting it. At the end he said to Him: ‘Lord of the Eternity, forty days are over and I don’t remember a [single] word.’ And what the Holy, be blessed, did? After forty days he gave him the Torah as a gift, as it is said: ‘And he gave to Moses’ (EXOD 31:18). ‘When he finished’ (כְּבִלְתּוֹ, *ibid*): Did Moses learn the whole Torah? Isn’t it written: ‘Its measure is longer than the earth’ (JOB 11:9)? But the Holy, be blessed, taught it to Moses as principles (כללים) only, as it is said: כְּבִלְתּוֹ (lit. ‘when he finished’).”

אמר רבי אבהו, כל ארבעים יום שעשה משה מלמעלן, היה לומד תורה ושוכח. לסוף, אמר ליה, רבונן של עולם, הרי באו ארבעים יום ואיני יודע דבר. מה עשה הקדוש ברוך הוא. משהשלים ארבעים יום נתן לו את התורה במתנה, שנאמר, ויתן אל משה. ככלתו. וכי כל התורה למד משה, והלא כתיב ארכה מארץ מדה. אלא כללים כללים למדה הקדוש ברוך הוא למשה, שנאמר, ככלתו.

Figure 7: A Midrash: Moses didn’t succeed in memorizing the Torah. (TANḤ KI-TISSA, 16)

It seems, however, that the memorizing of the Hebrew was institutionalized and specific scholars were trained to memorize either the whole TeNaK or at least parts of it either (single books or a couple of them). Such scholars, the “readers” of the Hebrew Bible, seem to be mentioned occasionally in the rabbinic sources:

The generation of Rabbi Eleazar ben Rabbi Shim’on were saying about him: “Who is she that comes up from the desert Like columns of smoke, In clouds of myrrh and frankincense, Of all the powders of the merchant?” (SONG 3:6). What does “Of all the powders of the merchant” mean? That he was a <reader> (קריי) and a Mishna expert and a *payṭān* and an exegete.

ר"א בר"ש היה דורו קורא עליו: מי זאת עולה מן המדבר כתימרות עשן מקוטרות מור ולבונה מכל אבקת רוכל. מהו מכל אבקת רוכל אלא דהוה <קריי> ותניי ופייטן ודרשן

Figure 8: Talmudic “Bible professionals”. (LEVR 30:1)

Clearly, a profession (קריי, *qārāyē*, “a reader”) is mentioned here along with תניי (*tānāyē*, a *tannaite*, i.e. the Mishna reader) a *payṭān* and a *darshān* (i.e. a “exegete”, a *midrash* professional). Already from the terminology alone it can be concluded that this profession has something to do with the

“*Mikrā*”, i.e. the Hebrew Bible, and designates someone who “reads” it. Another rabbinic passage from the Babylonian Talmud can be of interest with regard to our question:

Our sages taught: “In order to become קריינא (‘a reader’), if [I only] read three verses in the synagogue: it is approved” ... and why is the word קריינא used? I can only be called קרא (*qarā*, “a [professional] reader”) if I can “read” the Torah, Prophets and Writings accurately. “In order to become ‘a repeater?’” ... And why is the word תנינא (“a repeater”) used? I can only be called תנא (*tannaite*) if I can repeat the *Halacha*, *Sifrā*, *Sifrē* and *Tosefta*.

תנו רבנן: על מנת שאני קריינא, כיון שקרא שלשה פסוקים בבית הכנסת - הרי זו מקודשת, ... והני מילי דא"ל קריינא, אבל אמר לה קרא אנא, עד דקרי אורייתא נביאי וכתובי בדיוקא. על מנת שאני שונה ... והני מילי דאמר לה תנינא, אבל אמר לה תנא אנא, עד דתני הילכתא ספרא וסיפרי ותוספתא.

Figure 9: “Bible professionals” in Talmudic times. (BQID 49A-B)

This passage from the tractate Qidushin is even more important in two aspects: First, the Rabbis discuss the “reading” of the Bible and two very similar terms are used: קריינא and קרא (*qarā*). Both have something to do with “reading” the Bible. Presumably, the first word (at least according to the text) depicts someone who reads in the synagogal liturgy. It seems that the requirement of being able to read three verses is best explained by the fact that it describes memorizing and accurate reciting by heart rather than reading from the written text in our modern sense (if one can “accurately read” a written text it doesn’t make any difference if it is one verse or a hundred). On the other hand, according to our text, someone can call himself קרא only when he can “accurately read” the whole Hebrew Bible. In my opinion there is no fundamental difference in reading three verses or the whole Hebrew Bible from a written text, unless we consider that the reader must have known the text by heart. It seems therefore plausible to me to regard the קרא as someone who has memorized the whole (if we are to take the text seriously) Hebrew Bible. Of course, one could argue that since the Hebrew text is unvocalized, one must prepare/learn how the text is to be read (even from the written text) and it therefore does make a difference whether someone learned three verses or the whole corpus. However, I would argue that preparing even a short lesson is actually very close to a memorizing of a larger text.

Moreover, the terms קריינא and קרא don't come alone but are paralleled to תנינא and תנא which denote similar phenomena, differing only in that the latter terms have the rabbinic traditions and not the Hebrew Bible as their object. Clearly both arguments apply equally with regard to the “Bible readers” and the “Mishna repeaters”: in both cases a man can only carry the more honorable title if he can “read”/“repeat” the appropriate textual corpus. Obviously in the latter case concerning the rabbinic traditions memorizing is meant. It stands to reason that analogous is expressed by the term קרא. Note, that in Islam similarly only someone who is able to accurately memorize the whole *Qurʾān* can be called حافظ (*hāfiẓ*), analogously.

Obviously, one could ask why a resemblance of the “*tanna'im*” remained well rooted in the Jewish tradition, while only small traces of the tradition of an oral study of the Hebrew Bible remained. I'm convinced that the reason is that the term קרא received another meaning in the post-talmudic times: “a member of the Karaite sect”³⁵). However, as the name of some of the important mediaeval Rabbis show, the title was still used occasionally even in later times, among the Jewish scholars who were considered to be “Bible experts” (e.g. Rabbi Yosef Qara and others).

2.3.1 Liturgical Reading as a Ritualized Form of the Study of the Bible

On the basis of the above said I'd like to propose here a thesis about the connection between the public “liturgical reading” and a study of the text (whether done by more specialized professionals or made by “laymen” in context of their educational curriculum). First, it seems that of these two contexts the study is actually the primary one: the synagogal lessons are prepared by a “study”, i.e. the memorizing of the text. But note that some passages are a subject for study but are forbidden to be read publicly which means that the study had a broader goal than just to prepare for the liturgical reading.

I would therefore like to propose that the liturgical reading developed as a ritualized form of the study of the biblical text. This can explain why initially no special “study houses” existed but that the synagogues are reported to be the place of the study.

35. Note, that some scholars have even proposed that the name of the sect has its origin in the “Bible professionals”, see Erder 2004, p. 319ff.

Moreover, if this thesis is correct, it may have consequences for our understanding of ancient translations of the Bible: sometimes the “liturgical” origin of a particular translation is thought to be a competitive explanation to a “study” translation. Obviously, if the liturgical reading is profoundly connected to the study, as I am suggesting, one translation may be the outcome of a biblical study (in the form of memorizing!) and at the same time be used for the public reading. Clearly, if we spoke about a special “liturgical” translation, it would rather present a mere selection from the “study translation”, while there wouldn't be many differences in the text itself (if any).

2.4 The Complementarity of the “Written-” and “Oral Torah”

It is a well known fact that the Rabbinic literature attests a strong sentiment against writing down the rabbinic traditions. However, these sayings also show that the written (biblical) text became autonomous beside the oral traditions. A story is told in the *Yerushalmi*:

Rabbi Ḥaggai said: “Rabbi Shmu’el bar Rav Yiṣhak went to a synagoge [and] saw one scribe who read³⁶ his *targūm* out of a book. He said to him: ‘It is forbidden to you. The words that are said by mouth, [should remain] in mouth; [things] that are said by writing [should remain] in writing.’”

ר' חגי אמר ר' שמואל בר רב יצחק עאל לכנישתא
 חמא חד ספר מושט תרגומא מן גו סיפרא א"ל אסור
 לך דברים שנאמרו בפה בפה דברים שנאמרו בכתב
 בכתב

Figure 10: A prohibition to read the *targūm* from a book. (*YMEG* 4:1, 28A)

As we can see, according to Rabbi Shimeon, the written and oral traditions are to be strictly separated from each other, each representing its own realm which shouldn't be mixed with the other one. Interestingly the person who, according to the story, broke the rule formulated by Rabbi Shimeon, was a scribe, i.e. a professional who possessed an authority regarding the written biblical text. Clearly the scribes were actually the only persons who were able to write and were therefore typical characters to be depicted in such anecdotes as those who read from a book. I would, however, argue that the choice of a scribe may rather mirror their role within Judaism in the rabbinic times, as being those who guarded the transmission of the written Torah, and as such

36. The term used, מושט, is not completely clear.

possessed a certain authority. If writing (and reading) was practically inaccessible to the broader masses, an attempt by a scribe to write down a *targūm* could have been seen as an attempt to control the knowledge thereof and was, consequently, opposed strongly by the rabbis.

As can be further seen from other rabbinical utterances, in the rabbinic times there was not only a strong feeling against writing down the oral traditions, but activities in the opposite direction were also opposed, i.e. it was perceived inappropriate that the written biblical text be influenced by the oral tradition, as shown, for example in the following passage from *Genesis Rabba*:

Rabi Zeira and Rabbi Ḥananel [handed over a tradition] in the name of Rabbi: “Even a man as fluent in the Torah as Ezra should not read from his mouth and write.” But didn’t we learn a story about rabbi Meir in ’Asya where no Ester scroll was present and he read it from his mouth and wrote? About [this story] it was said that he wrote two scrolls, he has hidden the first and left the later.

רבי זעירא ורבי חננאל בשם רבי אפי' אדם רגיל בתורה כעזרא, לא יהא קורא מפיו וכותב, והא תני מעשה שהיה ר"מ באסייא ולא היה שם מגילת אסתר וקרא לו מפיו וכתבה, תמן אמרין שתי מגילות כתב, גנו את הראשונה וקיים את השנייה.

Figure 11: A prohibition of writing down the Torah from memory. (GENR 36:8)

Clearly neither the “Written Torah” nor the oral traditions (and in the first place the *Targūm*) is shown as being superior to the other and both are depicted as two authoritative sources whose authorities should not be mixed. Interestingly the actual meaning of the “oral traditions” is somewhat variable. Mostly they are represented by a *targūm* recited along with the Torah (and other parts of the Hebrew Bible) in the synagogal liturgy. On the other hand, in other passages, they are the “aggadic traditions”³⁷⁾ or even parts of the liturgy:

He, that writes *halēl* and *šema*^ç to the children, even if he is not allowed to do so, [such written *halēl* and *šema*^ç] make the hands unclean.

הכותב הלל ושמע לתינוק להתלמד בו, אף על פי שאין רשאי לעשות – מטמא את הידים

Figure 12: On writing down the *halēl* and *šema*^ç. (TYAD 2:11)

37. YMEG 4:1, 74D; YŠAB 16:1, 15C. See also Hezser 2001, p. 202.

It seems that the exact type of literature which can be taken as a counterpart to the “Written Torah” is not really important and what matters is the opposition between the written and the “oral literature”. Also, the fact that the *targūm* appears several times as representing the oral literature may be attributed to the fact that it was the *targūm*, which was the most striking oral tradition being publicly displayed as a counterpart to the written Torah. This was due to the fact that both texts were recited together as part of the synagogal liturgy. It seems that it was exactly this question as to how the public would understand the relationship between the two texts which was the determining factor for these rabbinic rules:

| | |
|--|--|
| He that reads from the Torah shall not help to the <i>meturgemān</i> so that [people] won't say: “The Targum is written in the Torah.” | הקורא בתורה לא יסייע למתורגמן כדי שלא יאמרו תרגום כתוב בתורה |
|--|--|

Figure 13: *The Targum and the Torah.* (BMEG 32A)

Apparently, it was the symbolic value of both texts that was the reason for keeping them apart and defining the rabbinic sentiment against writing down the oral traditions (and orally transmit the written Hebrew Bible):

| | |
|---|--|
| [What's the difference between] the <i>meturgeman</i> and the Torah reader? It is forbidden for him [the <i>meturgeman</i>] to look into the Torah [scroll] and to translate. And he that reads the Torah, it is forbidden to put his eyes outside the Torah [scroll], because the Torah was not given other than in written [form]. | המתרגם לקורא בתורה, אסור לו להסתכל בתורה ולתרגם. והקורא בתורה, אסור לו ליתן עיניו חוץ מן התורה, שלא נתנה התורה אלא בכתב. |
|---|--|

Figure 14: *The meturgemenān and the Torah-reader.* (TANḤ, KI-TISSA, 34)

Interestingly, our text is concerned mainly with the symbolic meaning and the picture it evoked among the public present at the liturgical reading in the ancient synagogue. It doesn't primarily try to answer the question as to whether a *targūm* is recited from memory and the Torah not, but whether the reader and the *meturgemān* look into the Torah scroll during the reading or not. Note that is even possible that some of the Torah-readers weren't actually able to read a written text. Actually, the consonantal character of the Hebrew script forced the reader to memorize

his portion at least to some degree. Given the illiteracy rate in the rabbinic period (see above chapter 2.1, p. 4), our assumption that a large number of synagogal readers actually memorized the text becomes rather plausible.

It would seem, therefore, that the reason for the rejection of writing down the oral traditions has mainly something to do with the authority of the texts and traditions and is not primarily caused by other motives. Catherine Hezser, for example, assumes that this sentiment was caused by the importance of a teacher for his student which would be reduced if the student had direct access to the (written) sources.³⁸⁾ While this motive could have played some minor role, it doesn't seem to be the main reason for such a rejection of literacy. Actually, even from the gaonic times onwards, when the paradigm changed into a more literary one, the authority of a Rabbi among his disciples didn't suffer any damage.

2.4.1 Rabbis and Scribes: A Dispute over Authority

Interestingly, it seems that the role of the written Torah in the rabbinic era played rather a “symbolic and artefactual role”³⁹⁾. It was the oral traditions that crystallized into the Mishna and later into both *Talmudim* that were essential for the life of the Jewish community. The Torah scrolls remained, however, the main symbol of the antiquity of the Jewish religion and as such was shown and read from during public synagogal services (however, its symbolic value can be demonstrated in other phenomena, such as the magical use thereof⁴⁰⁾).

Apparently the very existence of the written Torah could have posed a problem for the authority of the rabbis: it was the scribes who, as a professional elite, were responsible for the transmission of the written biblical text and must have had of a great degree a control over it. Clearly, the scribes were a distinct group within the Judaism of the first couple of centuries C.E. (and the fact that occasionally a Rabbi was also a scribe doesn't change this basic setting much), are were not to be equated with the rabbis. Sometimes even conflicts arose between the two groups⁴¹⁾. Also note that already before 70 C.E. there were two competing groups (among others)

38. Hezser 2001, p. 161.

39. Hezser 2001, p. 207; 193-195

40. Hezser 2001, p. 210, 213.

41. Hezser 1997, p. 467-475; 67.

who disputed authority amongst themselves: the Sadducees, coming mostly from the upper class, possibly connected with the priestly circles and the scribes located in the Temple⁴²⁾, who saw themselves as the real “guardians of the Torah”. On the other hand we have the Pharisees who were targeting a broader public (i.e. the lower and middle class) and concentrating primarily on their “Ancestral laws”⁴³⁾. Obviously the latter group later became the basis for the emerging rabbinic movement, while the scribes of the rabbinic times may have their roots in circles connected to the šadokite movement before 70 C.E.

Based on these premises I would like to propose a thesis that the sentiment of the rabbinic movement against writing down their oral traditions was a direct result of the “democratic” character of this movement. The opposition to the authority of the written text was, in my opinion, primarily an opposition to the scribal elite trying to control the study and interpretation of the “Holy text”. As we have, however, seen, the written Torah had a highly symbolical value as it defined the Jewish national identity by pointing to the “ancient history” of God's nation, and apparently the Jewish scribes were, therefore, needed by the Rabbis to help to preserve these Jewish national scriptures. It seems, therefore, that the sentiment against mixing the oral and written tradition is a result of exactly this kind of dispute over authority between the rabbis and scribes.

2.5 Conclusion

As we have seen, it may be assumed with a reasonable degree of plausibility that the biblical text was transmitted through two distinct (but possibly interconnected⁴⁴⁾) means: through the copying of the written biblical text by the scribes, and by memorizing it and oral study. The main *Sitz im Leben* of the latter text lay primarily in the context of the oral study of the biblical text and further in the liturgical reading (which itself can be seen as a special case of the oral study of the Hebrew Bible). The Biblical text was studied most probably by some professional scholars who were trained to memorize the biblical text accurately. As such, the orally transmitted biblical text must have presented a parallel phenomenon to the Mishna and other rabbinic traditions (already

42. Hezser 2001, p. 123.

43. Hezser 2001, p. 199.

44. See chapter 7.2.3, p. 199.

in the mishnaic times there were possibly two groups of Jewish scholars, one learning Mishna and the other *Miqrā*) and been opposed to the written Bible, which was in the hands of the scribes. Clearly, the reason for the oral study (whether of the Bible or of Mishna and later traditions) seems to be the desire to target as broad a spectrum of Jewish people as possible.

This changed only with the massive advent of literacy and its techniques in the Gaonic/Islamic period. Presumably, only when a large number of people were able to read and write in their everyday life was it more and more difficult for them to learn using the old oral techniques. What is more important, however, is that with a more widespread literacy the oral means of the study was no longer necessary to keep the learning “democratic”. This is, in my opinion, the context in which the Masoretic text emerged, striving to combine the “written Torah” with the (dying out) oral biblical traditions.

Chapter 3

Masoretic Text and its Character

3.1 Masoretic and Proto-Masoretic Elements of the MT

There are two sorts of typographic elements (other than the basic consonants) in the masoretic text: we can call them “proto-masoretic” and “masoretic” elements. Not only is the former group found in the masoretic codices but these elements are also the only signs (besides consonants) allowed by the *halacha* to be present in the Torah scrolls designated for a liturgical use¹⁾. All the other elements²⁾ are found exclusively in the masoretic manuscripts and consequently in the printed editions of the Hebrew Bible.

1. See Yeivin 1980, §7, p. 8..

2. There exist, however, some examples of later (8th century and later) Torah scrolls which have verse-end markings: some of them marked with two dots as in the masoretic codices, others with a point pressed into the parchment with no ink, see *ibid.*

| sign, element | function | context |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| masoretic elements of the MT | | |
| vowel signs | vocalization | oral performance |
| accents | cantillation | oral performance |
| <i>maqēf</i> | connecting words | oral performance |
| <i>pasēq</i> | pause between words | oral performance |
| <i>ge‘ayā</i> | syllable prolongation | oral performance |
| <i>sōf pasūq</i> sign | verse division | oral and scribal(?) context |
| masoretic notes | learning / verification of the text | oral learning scribal techniques |
| “proto-masoretic” elements of the MT | | |
| <i>puncta extraordinaria</i> | editorial sign (originally) | scribal techniques |
| <i>nūn invertum</i> | editorial sign (originally) | scribal techniques |
| “suspended letters” | correction (originally) | scribal techniques |
| big letters | emphasis | scribal techniques |
| special letters | coincidence ³ | scribal context |
| “crowns” (תגים) | ornaments | scribal techniques |
| <i>parašiyōt</i> | text division | scribal and oral context |

Table 3: Masoretic and proto-masoretic elements, their function and context.

As we can see, most of the “proto-masoretic” elements belong to the context of scribal practices. Some of them (*puncta extraordinaria*, *nūn invertum* and “suspended letters”) are examples of ancient editorial techniques, although their meaning was later almost lost and they were just faithfully copied by the scribes who may no longer have known their original purpose. They inspired, however, a number of hagadic interpretations⁴ which tried to explain their existence.

3. See Tov 2001, p. 58.

4. For *puncta extraordinaria*, see e.g. Lieberman 1950, p. 43-46; Shinan 1994.

Excursus: The “Suspended letters”

The last mentioned phenomenon, i.e. the “suspended letter” (אותיות תלויות) is, however, somewhat ambiguous with regard to the issue of written biblical text and the oral tradition. A scribal practice of correcting words by writing the emendation (whether a single letter or larger cluster) above the word is well known to us from the Dead Sea scrolls⁵. If we take a closer look, however, at the four examples of the “suspended letters” in the Hebrew Bible, we notice that three of them (Ps 80:14, מיֵר ; JOB 38:13,15, רשעים , מרשעים)⁶ point to a misspelled variant of a word containing the letter *ayin*, i.e. a laryngal, which is known for not having been pronounced in several ancient reading traditions of Biblical Hebrew (mostly influenced by non-semitic languages). It is thus reasonable to assume that the addition of “suspended letters” did not present a correction made by the original scribe⁷ (who omitted these letters apparently due to the fact that in his reading tradition the laryngals were not pronounced) but by some later scribe who did pronounce this consonant. The fact that we are dealing here with laryngals makes it plausible to assume that the correction was done on the basis of the oral knowledge of the later scribe who corrected this text – otherwise we would have expected to find other similar corrections which are not connected to the pronunciation issues.

The fourth occurrence of this phenomenon, מיֵשה in JUDG 18:30, is of another type. Here we have to deal with a variant which may have an ideological background or at least resulted from a textual variant. From Rabbinic sources we are told that the addition of the letter *nūn* is meant to disqualify the Danite priest Yehonathan by denying his relationship to Moses. The best known

5. See e.g. Tov 2001, p. 215.

6. Note that all the examples are from the three “poetic” books. This may, of course, be a coincidence, but it may be a hint to a common transmission history of these books (e.g. through some specific community).

7. Note, however, that some scholars assume that in a similar case, ישׁיהוּ in 1QIsa^a (ISA 1:1) is a correction of the original scribe of the scroll, for more see e.g. Person 1998, p. 607. Such an opinion cannot be proven, though, as is the case with all such examples where one scribe is assumed to be the author of both the original text and its correction (unlike other cases where a correction looks different to the underlying text and one can discern a “second hand”), see Tov 1997, p. 222.

rabbinic passage⁸⁾ commenting on this name change is to be found in the *Baba Batra* tractate of the Babylonian Talmud:

...and is his name not Jonathan, as it is said: “Jonathan son of Gershom son of Manasseh, and his descendants, served as priests to the Danite tribe...” (JUDG 18:30)? [Rava] said to him: How can you explain that he was the son of Manasseh? Was it not a son of Moses, as it stands written: “The sons of Moses: Gershom and Eliezer” (1 CHR 23:15)? But because he did the deed of Manasseh, the Writing hung [the letter נ] for him so that he becomes] Manasseh!

והלא יהונתן שמו, שנאמ': ויהונתן בן גרשם בן מנשה הוא ובניו היו כהנים לשבט הדני. אמר ליה: וליטעמך, וכי בן מנשה הוא? והלא בן משה הוא, דכתיב: בני משה גרשם ואליעזר! אלא, מתוך שעשה מעשה מנשה - תלאו הכתוב במנשה

Figure 15: A haggadic interpretation of the “suspended letter” in JUDG 18:30. (BBB 109B)

We may, of course, ask how far this Talmudic saying attests that the Rabbis (or the scribes?) intentionally changed the biblical text in this particular word. Our Talmudic passage discusses the problems of family names and inheritance issues and the matter of Manasse's name presents an *ad hoc haggadic* argument which is only a minor point in the course of the discussion. The rabbinic report is, therefore, most probably no more than a haggadic explanation for the written form. If we consider the ancient versions, however, we will see that both variants (i.e. משה and מנשה) are well attested:

JUDG 18:30

ויהונתן בן-גרשם בן-**מְנַשֶּׁה** הוא ובניו היו כהנים לשבט הדני

Ancient Versions

Q: × || G^A: καὶ Ἰωνᾶθαν υἱὸς Γερσωμ υἱοῦ <Μωυσῆ> || G^B: <Μαν(ν)ασση> || T: בן <מנשה> הוא || S: <משה> || Syh: ⋈ υἱὸς <Μανναση> υἱοῦ ⋈ Γερσᾶμ υἱοῦ <Μωσῆ> ⋈ αὐτός ὤ || B: et Ionathan filium Gersan filii <Mosi>

8. The other places being YBER 13D (also quoted in *Yalqut Šim‘ōnī*) and in MIDRASH ŠIR HA-ŠIRĪM II, 5:3.

9. My translation follows the pun on the Jewish term for the “suspended letters” - אותיות תלויות.

The LXX^A, as well as the Vulgate¹⁰, attest the presumably older spelling מֹשֶׁה, while LXX^B, the Peshiṭta and Targum comply with the masoretic reading (מֹנֶשֶׁה). Interestingly, there also exists a conflate reading found in the Syro-hexaplaric tradition¹¹ which combines both names, Moses and Manasse.

What conclusions can be drawn from these readings? First, we may assume that the double reading of the Syro-Hexapla is a result of some interpretation (both names are arranged in this reading making them plausible in the context of biblical historiography texts according to the traditional interpretations!) and it stands to reason that it had emerged from the study of the biblical text. Most probably this was done orally and not through reading the manuscripts. Such an interpretation goes, in my opinion, far beyond what would be expected from an ordinary scribe, even if we assumed that he did more than just copy a text from a single source, but also collated variant readings from other manuscripts. It seems to me much more probable that the conflate reading in question is a result of an exegetic discussion about two known variants, brought perhaps by different scholars into the debate.

Secondly, we can see that the reading מֹשֶׁה is found in the LXX^A, i.e. in the Codex Aleandrinus that seems to mirror an older version of the Greek translation (which was also accepted by the Christian church)¹². All the other variants (except for the Vulgate which most probably goes back to the same tradition as that of LXX^A) support a reading which we later find in the Jewish tradition (MT and the Targum). Note that LXX^B presents this later “revision” of the Septuagint following much closely the Masoretic text. Note also, that this “relative chronology” agrees with the one we have seen in the shape of the consonantal text, i.e the original מֹשֶׁה being extended into מֹנֶשֶׁה.

Further, this sort of textual change¹³ that tries to avoid a blasphemous or other inappropriate reading is more typical of an orally transmitted text, see e.g. the high frequency of such

10. The Vulgate could have depended either on some of the Greek or Old-Latin versions or on the Hebrew tradition Hieronymus received from his Jewish teachers (see e.g. Hayward 1995, p. 19), which has possibly its source in the Jewish oral teaching.

11. See Field 1875, sub loco. Cf. also McCarthy 1981, p. 229.

12. See e.g. Fischer 2009, p. 121.

13. I generally agree with McCarthy (McCarthy 1981, p. 229) who regards this word as a “genuine emendation”.

phenomena in the *targumim* or among the *qerē* cases (this is the only *qerē* variant where a whole offending word is replaced by another one)¹⁴).

In the light of these findings I would propose a hypothesis that the consonantal form מִשֶּׁה presents a correction of the consonantal text according to the oral tradition. This assumption is strengthened by the fact that also the other three examples of “suspended letters” in the Hebrew Bible concern phenomena typical for the oral performance of the text. If this is correct we may interpret the phenomenon of these four “suspended letters” that occur in the (masoretic) consonantal text as a sort of complement to the *qerē/ketīḥ* cases and to those forms where the vocalization is adapted to match the consonants¹⁵). Here we are obviously dealing with only a very small number of cases in which the consonants could have been affected by or changed towards the oral tradition. Most probably other such cases existed (and maybe many more if we went back to the time of the stabilization of the biblical text) but we have little possibility to find them due to the lack of sources. Most notably we are lacking evidence for the shape of the ancient, pre-masoretic oral tradition of the Hebrew Bible—the biggest corpus of such traditions, the second column of the Hexapla being too sparsely preserved.

Whether this theory is correct or not, we can certainly see the “suspended letters” as a genuinely scribal phenomenon, even if we presume for good reasons that the variant represented by this phenomenon in the Hebrew Bible has its roots in the oral transmission of the Hebrew Bible, i.e. not just in memorizing the text but also in the thorough study thereof.

Besides the three above mentioned phenomena (*puncta extraordinaria*, *nūn invertum* and “suspended letters”), there also exist “big letters”, “special letters” and “crowns” which belong beyond any doubt to the realm of scribal practices and habits, even if we do not always know their exact function¹⁶) or the original meaning of these phenomena.

14. See chapter 4.3, p. 56.

15. See chapter 7.2.3, p. 199.

16. See e.g. the big letters in DEUT 6:4 which agrees with the liturgical significance of this verse in (ancient and contemporary) Judaism.

On the other hand, most of the “masoretic” elements describe, or are somehow connected to, the oral performance of the biblical text: the vocalization specifies the precise pronunciation belonging to particular consonants and the accentuation describes the exact “musical” performance of the biblical text and, as I will argue later, actually seems to have originally been a mnemonic device¹⁷). Also, the three peculiar signs, *maqṣēf*, *ge‘ayā/meteg* and *pasēq* specify more exactly the oral “shape” of the text: *maqṣēf* points out clusters of words which are to be read as one unit¹⁸), *pasēq* marks a *caesura* between words (this can even sometimes contradict the division that follows from the accents¹⁹). *Ge‘ayā* indicates, most probably, a prolongation (or a certain high-tone pronunciation) of a particular syllable. Even the *sōf pasūq* sign belongs to this context, as the division of the biblical text into verses presents the smallest self-contained unit of the oral performance of the Hebrew Bible (note that the accentual system is structured primarily into verses).

The only phenomenon which may at first glance be seen as being of purely scribal nature is the Masoretic notes, i.e. the *Masora* in the narrow sense. However, as I will argue later²⁰), there are indications that even the masoretic notes were of an oral nature originally, being based on the oral knowledge of the text and only later became a (written) guide for the scribe.

The last thing not yet mentioned is the “open and closed sections” (*parašiyōt*)²¹). These *spatia* can be regarded as text divisions which belonged to both the oral performance and memorizing on the one hand, and the study of the biblical text on the other²²). Moreover these sections are also related to the habits and techniques of the scribes. These divisions are well known not only from the Masoretic codices but also from liturgical Torah scrolls, and we can find them already

17. See chapter 5.2, p. 64.

18. On the differences in the perception of word boundaries in the written and oral context see Person 1998, p. 603f.

19. See below p. 40.

20. See chapter 6, p. 112.

21. The markings of liturgical sections (פרשה, סדר) are to be regarded rather as a special form of a Masoretic note and they are only found in the Masoretic codices (similarly to the other masoretic elements). Note, that the open and closed sections were not marked by the letters פ, ס initially; the marking of the *parašiyōt* by these letters is probably slightly later; Oesch speaks about twelfth-century manuscripts containing such signs (see Oesch 1979, p. 131. This is most probably to be attributed to the influence of Maimonides' canonical list of *petuchōt* and *setumōt*).

22. The *parašiyōt* are, for example, the principle according to which some *midrashim*, like *Bereshit Rabba*, are divided, see JE, p. 63f.

in the biblical scrolls among the Dead Sea manuscripts. It can be shown that the correspondence between the former and the latter is relatively high²³. This can be explained by the assumption that the *parašiyōt* also presented a division scheme used for the copying of the text, and mark the portions of text that had been copied at once²⁴.

We can thus see that the “proto-Masoretic” phenomena (along with the consonants, obviously) are all connected to the way that the Biblical text was copied by the scribes (even if some of them touch the realm of the oral transmission of the Hebrew Bible), whereas the “masoretic” signs and elements all describe the oral shape of the text, with the only exception of the masoretic notes. As we will discuss later, even masoretic notes show a clear connection to the oral study of biblical text²⁵. Thus it stands to reason that the “Masoretic text” itself is a mixture of the written text traditionally copied by the scribes, and the oral tradition learned by heart, either by the broader public or by a small group of professional Bible specialists.

23. Oesch 1979, p. 181ff; 247.

24. The Babylonian Talmud (בְּיּוֹם 37ב) discusses a *mišna* about the Queen Helena who presented to the Temple of Jerusalem a golden tablet with two verses (NUM 5:21F) written on it. There existed, apparently, a rule not to copy a sequence of a biblical text which in itself didn't constitute an open or closed section. Therefore the Rabbis had to explain here how only two verses could be written on this tablet. The explanation given by Resh Lakish (and later repeated by Rashi) may suggest that the shorthand (סִרְיֹגִית) system (see also below, chapter 4.1.3, p. 47) was seen as a particular form of written representation of the Biblical text which didn't have to follow this rule. See Friedländer 1896, p. 87.

25. See chapter 6, p. 112.

Chapter 4

The Vocalization

4.1 The *Qerē* and *Ketīb*

The *qerē/ketīb* cases present a peculiarity of the text of the Hebrew bible that each student of the Biblical Hebrew must learn as soon as he starts reading actual texts. As is well known, in such cases the consonants “inside” the Hebrew text have a vocalization which (in most cases) doesn't fit well with the consonants themselves. The consonants which correspond to this vocalization are then written “outside”, i.e. in the right- or left-hand margin of the codex as a part of the *masora parva* notes, introduced by the abbreviation ק̇, = קרי (q̇rē or q̇rī), “to be read”¹⁾. Therefore actually we have two variants: the consonantal form (“inside” the text) with no vocalization, and a form consisting of the consonants “outside” the text with the corresponding vocalization “inside”. As we can see, even though the *ketīb* variant (i.e. the consonants “inside”) usually receives a vocalization in the biblical studies²⁾, this is, however, always a reconstruction and no such vocalization is found in the sources. Thus the *qerē* and *ketīb* variants are asymmetrical, in that the *ketīb* is lacking the vocalization while with the *qerē* the vocalization seems, by contrast, to be more important.

Furthermore, a variant of the same phenomenon named *qerē perpetuum* exists, which differs from the basic *qerē/ketīb* only in that it is not mentioned in the marginal Masora, and it concerns four words occurring very frequently (יהוה read as ^adonāy or perhaps šmā, יהוה and יהוה, and יהוה). Clearly, each of these variants represents separate category, usual among the regular *qerē/ketīb* cases: יהוה is a “euphemism” intended to avoid reading out the Tetragramm, יהוה and יהוה are simple variants originating in most cases from a scribal error (caused by the similarity of

-
1. Mostly, ק̇ is written under the consonants of the *qerē* form. In some of the codices, however, a simple line (somewhat resembling the final letter ׀) is made instead of “ק̇”. See below chapter 4.1.3, p. 47.
 2. So does, e.g. Gordis in his treatise on *qerē/ketīb* (Gordis 1971) and many others. Actually, most of the modern textual databases (Based on the “Westminster Leningrad Codex” digital text of the Hebrew Bible) include also the *ketīb* variants vocalized. Note, that such a vocalization is not more than a modern reconstruction.

the letters ו and י) while ירושלים represents dialectal variation between the consonants and the “*qerē*”.

Two other variants of the phenomenon also exist: the *qerē ve-lā ketīb* (קרי ולא כתיב) where the *qerē* variant adds a word not present in the consonantal text (a space between words receives the vocalization signs) on the one hand, and *ketīb ve-lā qerē* (כתיב ולא קרי) marking cases where the *qerē* variant omits a word (the word is not vocalized). Additionally, some alternatively worded Masoretic notes also exist which may be seen as equivalent to the *qerē/ketīb* phenomenon, such as the *yetir* notes (יתיר), pointing out cases where the consonantal text has a superfluous letter.

There are basically three approaches to the problem of *qerē/ketīb* among the biblical scholars. The first one views these alternative readings essentially as variants collated from various manuscripts³. Such an interpretation seems to go back to the opinion of Rabbi David Qimḥī⁴ (and can be traced even further back, to an “anonymous Masorete”⁵):

The men of the Great Assembly, who returned the Torah to its original state, found contradictions in the extant scrolls, and they followed the majority of them, according to their opinion. And if they came to no conclusion about the clarification [of such a case] they wrote one but did not vocalize, or they wrote from outside and not from inside, or wrote one [form] from inside and another from outside. (On 2 SAM 15:21)

אנשי כנסת הגדולה שהחירו התורה לישנה
מצאו מחלוקת בספרים הנמצאים, והלכו בהם אחר
הרוב, לפי דעתם. ובמקום שלא השיגה דעתם על
הבירור, כתבו האחד ולא נקדו, או כתבו מבחוץ ולא
כתבו מבפנים, וכתבו אחד מבפנים והאחרת מבחוץ

3. This was held e.g. by Gesenius, De Wette, Dillman and Koenig, see Gordis 1971, p. 11. This theory had some variations, some maintained, e.g. that the *ketīb* presented the older forms. Orlinsky (Orlinski 1974) claimed that the *qerē/ketīb* were manuscript variants chosen on the basis of the Rabbinic principle to “follow the majority”.

4. For mediaeval Jewish views on this phenomenon see Ofer 2007, p. 255-270.

5. See Ofer 2007, p. 55.

And we already wrote our opinion about the *katūḇ* and *qerī*: In the Exile the versions got corrupted and they found one version so and another version so, and they didn't reach a resolution and they wrote one from inside and the another from outside. (On 1 KGS 17:14)

וכבר כתבנו דעתנו בכתוב וקרי: בגלות
נשתבשו הנסחאות, והיו מוצאין בנסחא אחת כד
ובנסחא אחרת כד, ולא עמדו על ברורם, וכתבו האחת
מבפנים והאחרת מבחוץ

Figure 16: Rabbi David Qimḥī on the *qerē*/*ketīḇ*.

Others have argued that these cases rather represent a correction done by the “Masoretes”⁶. Compared to the previous hypothesis this can explain why there is a clear asymmetry between the *qerē* and *ketīḇ* in both the external form (see above) and internal logic: it seems namely, that in the vast number of cases the *qerē* represents the more plausible variant than *ketīḇ*. These cases could be much more easily explained by the assumption that the *qerē* provided a correction to the *ketīḇ*. On the other hand, other examples can be found, although rather exceptional, in which the *qerē* does not seem plausible whereas *ketīḇ* represents the regular form. See e.g. GEN 8:17⁷, Qr= הַיָּצֵא, Kt= הוּצָא : clearly, the usual form of *impt. hif* of $\sqrt{\text{צא}}$ would be הוּצָא⁸ which corresponds with *ketīḇ* while the *qerē* shows a form without a reasonable explanation. Therefore some propose an explanation which combines both theories⁹

About the same time S. Levin¹⁰, M. Breuer¹¹ and J. Barr¹² came up with a completely different solution and this was more recently asserted by Y. Ofer¹³. R. C. Steiner also comes to a similar conclusion but, his starting point is the function of the “letter *śīn*”¹⁴. According to this

6. This was first claimed by Isaac Abrabanel and further by others, Jewish and Christian scholars, up to modern times. Among those were e.g. H. L. Strack or C. D. Ginsburg. See e.g. Gordis 1971, p. 12-13.

7. This is the most discussed example of such cases.

8. See e.g. GEN 19:12; EXOD 3:10; LEV 24:14.

9. See Tov 2001, p. 62.

10. Levin 1970.

11. M. Breuer 1976, p. 104-105. See also M. Breuer 1997 .

12. Barr 1981.

13. Ofer 2007.

14. Steiner 1994. For Steiner, the *śīn* sign also represents sort of *qerē*/*ketīḇ* variant in which the letter is written as ψ (=š) but read as *s* (=ס).

theory the *ketib* simply represents the written text as copied by the scribes, while the *qerē* reflects an oral reading tradition. Such an understanding can explain the above-mentioned contradiction reasonably well. Clearly, a reading tradition seeks a meaningful text and if it produces an error it is mostly due to some sort of harmonization with the (nearer or broader) context, while the written text is mostly corrupted by scribal errors including the misreading of certain letters, metathesis, haplography, dittography and other sorts of errors which are all connected to the way the text is copied. The later cases, obviously, often produce nonsensical forms or texts. If the *qerē* represents the oral tradition, it is no surprise that its variants are usually those that conform with the context and make more sense. This fact alone, however, doesn't prevent the *qerē* from occasionally also representing the opposite. In the above-mentioned example in GEN 8:17, אֲצִיָּהּ can be explained as representing a reading tradition which emerged through an attempt to “correct” (through some sort of “guessing”) an older, grammatically correct reading tradition (*hōṣē*) from a particular manuscript containing a scribal error (אֲצִיָּהּ). Clearly, if such an exceptional form becomes a part of the oral tradition (and therefore presents a basis for the *qerē* variant) it says nothing about the majority of such cases and the character of such variants.

This theory can be supported by several arguments, many of them formulated already by James Barr. As he notices, the *qerē/ketib* variants involve a difference in the consonantal writing and practically never a difference purely in the vocalization of the identical consonants¹⁵. On the other hand an abnormal *plēnē* or *defective* spelling doesn't usually lead to a *qerē/ketib* variant¹⁶ (Barr shows הָאֱתָרָה, Ps 10:14 as an example of a form whose consonants would normally be read as *הָאֱתָרָה, but no *qerē/ketib* note is found at this place). Furthermore, apart from euphemisms and some rare cases the *qerē/ketib* variants differ mostly in only one element of the consonantal text¹⁷. Also, if the *qerē/ketib* variants were a result of a manuscript collation, one would have expected that more than two alternatives had been preserved, at least in some cases. I would like to point out, however, that in the targumic Masora¹⁸, where variants are introduced with the abbreviation

15. Barr 1981, p. 24-25.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

18. Klein 2000.

נָא (נוסחא אחרינא), multiple alternative variants occasionally occur, see e.g. the following example from GEN 25:27:

| | |
|--|---|
| נְחֻשִׁירְכֹן , other variant: נְחֻשִׁידְכֹן , other variant: נְחֻשִׁירְכֹן , other variant: נְחֻשִׁירְכֹן | נְחֻשִׁירְכֹן נָא נְחֻשִׁידְכֹן נָא נְחֻשִׁירְכֹן נָא נְחֻשִׁירְכֹן נָא נְחֻשִׁירְכֹן |
| נְחֻשִׁירְכֹן , other variant: נְחֻשִׁירְכֹן , other variant: נְחֻשִׁירְכֹן | כֹּן |

Figure 17: GEN 25:27: Multiple variants in the targumic Masora.

Another fact that Barr points to is the frequency of the *qerē/ketīb* notes in different biblical Books¹⁹). Obviously, the lowest frequency of this phenomenon can be found in the Torah where the contact between the written text and the oral tradition was most frequent, due to the regular and systematic liturgical use of Torah readings. On the other hand, for example, the book of Daniel has a very high number of *qerē/ketībs*, most of which are in the Aramaic section²⁰). This can be understandable if we consider that the *qerē* emerged in an environment of Aramaic-speaking Jews whose dialect differed from that of the Biblical Hebrews and sometimes contradicted the shape of the consonantal text.

4.1.1 Explicative *qerē/ketīb* Notes?

There is, however, one group of the *qerē/ketīb* notes which, at least on first sight, cannot seem to be explained in this manner. There exists a relatively large set of *qerē/ketīb* variants of several patterns where the *ketīb* is not in contradiction with the oral shape as presumably noted by the *qerē*:

19. Barr 1981, p. 32

20. See also Morrow 1986 who tries to date the tradition of the *qerē* according to the features of the Aramaic they expose into the first half of the first millennium C.E.

| verse | ketib | qerē |
|------------------|---------|---------------|
| Kt=ו- , Qr=וֹ- | | |
| EXOD 27:11 | ועמדו | וְעַמְדוּ |
| EXOD 28:28 | מטבעתו | מִטְבַּעְתּוֹ |
| EXOD 32:19 | מידו | מִיָּדוֹ |
| EXOD 39:33 | בריחו | בְּרִיחָיו |
| LEV 9:22 | ידו | יָדָיו |
| 1 SAM 21:14 | ויתו | וַיִּתְּיוּ |
| PROV 23:6 | תתאו | תִּתְאַוּ |
| SONG 2:11 | הסתו | הִסְתְּיוּ |
| Kt=ה- , Qr=י- | | |
| GEN 13:3 | אהלה | אֶהְלוּ |
| GEN 49:11 | עירה | עִירוּ |
| GEN 49:11 | סותה | סוֹתוּ |
| EXOD 22:4 | בעירה | בְּעִירוּ |
| Kt=ים- , Qr=יִם- | | |
| DEUT 29:22 | וצביים | וְצַבִּיִּם |
| Ps 79:10 | בגיים | בְּגוֹיִם |
| 2 CHR 24:25 | במחליים | בְּמַחְלוּיִם |
| other | | |
| NUM 23:13 | לך | לְכָה־ |
| 2 SAM 5:2 | הייתה | הָיְיֹתָ |
| Ps 74:6 | ועת | וְעַתָּה |
| Ps 90:8 | שת | שֵׁתָה |

Table 4: Examples of explicative qerē notes?

Clearly, if we take the example of EXOD 27:11, there is no problem having ועמדו to be read as *we-amūdāw* (=Qr: וְעַמְדוּ), similarly, it is perfectly possible for אהלה (GEN 13:3) to be pronounced

ʾāh°lō (=Qr: אָהלוֹ) or for בגיים (Ps 79:10) to be read *baggoyīm* (=Qr: בַּגּוּיִם). It would seem, therefore, that such *qerē/ketīb* variants would contradict the hypothesis that the *ketīb* represented the consonantal text as copied by the scribes and the *qerē* a version transmitted orally by memorization, since there would be no need for such notes if *qerē* and *ketīb* didn't actually present alternative versions²¹.

One solution to this problem may be to assume that such *qerē/ketīb* cases are only explicative; this was already claimed by Gordis²², who assumes that such a notation existed before the emergence of the vocalization and it represented a similar guidance to the reader as the vowels later on. Similarly, according to Barr²³, these notes were meant “to avoid mistakes in reading”. Ofer, on the other hand considers such *qerē* notes to be explicative and shows how they can be interchanged with other notes, like those commenting on the *defective* spelling²⁴. Ofer shows this on the example of the defectively written form דְּרָכוֹ. It is marked in the Mp and Mm of A and L as follows:

| verse | <i>ketīb</i> | <i>qerē</i> | Mp/A | Mm/A | Mp/L | Mm/L |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|---------|-------------|----------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 SAM 8:3 | בדרכו | בְּדְרָכוֹ | הַ חֵס | | בדרכיו ק | |
| 1 SAM 18:14 | דרכו | דְּרָכוֹ | דרכיו ק | דרכו הַ חֵס | דַּ חֵס | |
| JER 17:10 | כדרכו | כְּדְרָכוֹ | הַ חֵס | | כדרכיו ק | |
| Ps 10:5 | דרכו | דְּרָכוֹ | דרכיו ק | | כיו ק | הַ בליש (כת דרכיו(!) וקַ דרכיו |
| JOB 26:14 | דרכו | דְּרָכוֹ | הַ חֵס | דרכו הַ חֵס | דרכיו ק | |

Table 5: Alternative notations for דְּרָכוֹ / דְּרָכוֹ in the marginal masorēt (according to Ofer²⁵).

21. It seems to me unlikely that the *ketīb* would represent a real variant, i.e. for example ועמדו standing for וְעָמְדוּ, but rather an ancient orthography. Unfortunately, the *ketīb* form is too often mechanically taken to be a real variant in the biblical studies and its vocalization is assumed on the basis of the consonants only.
22. Gordis 1971, p. 35f.
23. Barr 1981, p. 29.
24. Ofer 2007, p. 63-64.

4.1.2 The Homophonic *Qerē/Ketīb* לֹא / לוֹ

Even more problematic is a very specific group of *qerē/ketīb* “variants” of לֹא / לוֹ, both of which were apparently pronounced in exactly the same way:

| verse | ketīb | qerē | targūm | plausibility |
|-------------|----------|--|-------------------|---------------|
| EXOD 21:8 | <לא> | [בתו] אֲשֶׁר <לוֹ> יַעֲדָה | <ליה> | q>k (context) |
| LEV 11:21 | <לא> | אֲשֶׁר <לוֹ> כְּרַעִים מִמַּעַל לְרַגְלָיו | <דליה> | q>k (context) |
| LEV 25:30 | <לא> | בְּעִיר אֲשֶׁר <לוֹ> חֲמָה | <דליה> | q>k (context) |
| 1 SAM 2:3 | <ולא> | כִּי אֵל דְּעוֹת יְהוָה <לוֹ> נִתְכַּנּוּ עַלְלוֹת | <לו~> | q~k |
| 1 SAM 2:16 | <לו> | וְאָמַר <לא> כִּי עֲתָה תִּתֶּן | <ליה / לא> | q>k |
| 1 SAM 20:2 | <לו עשה> | הִנֵּה <לא־יַעֲשֶׂה> אָבִי דָּבָר גָּדוֹל | <לא יעביד> | q |
| 2 SAM 16:18 | <לא> | <לוֹ> אָהֳיָה וְאִתּוֹ אֲשַׁב | <דליה> | q>k |
| 2 KGS 8:10 | <לא> | אָמַר <לוֹ> חִיָּה תַחֲיָה | <ליה> | q>k (context) |
| ISA 9:2 | <לא> | <לוֹ> הַגְדִּילָתְהָ שְׂמֵחָה שְׂמֵחוּ לְפָנָיִךְ | <להון> | q>k |
| ISA 49:5 | <לא> | וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל <לוֹ> יֵאָסֶף | <לו~> | q>k (context) |
| ISA 63:9 | <לא> | בְּכָל צָרָתָם <לוֹ> צָר | <לא~> | q>k (context) |
| Ps 100:3 | <ולא> | הוּא עֲשֵׂנוּ <לוֹ> אֲנַחְנוּ | <ודליה> | q~k |
| Ps 139:16 | <ולא> | יָמִים יָצְרוּ <לוֹ> אֶחָד בָּהֶם | <ולית> | k>q |
| JOB 6:21 | <לא> | כִּי עֲתָה הֵינִי תָם <לוֹ> | <הויתן כלא הויתן> | q>k |
| JOB 13:15 | <לא> | הֵן יִקְטַלֵּנִי <לוֹ> אֲיַחַל | <קדמוהי ~לו> | q>k |
| JOB 41:4 | <לא> | <לוֹ> אֶחָרִישׁ בְּדָיו | <לא> | q>k (context) |
| PROV 19:7 | <לא> | מְרַדֵּף אֲמָרִים <לוֹ> הֶמָּה | <לא שריד> | q~k |
| PROV 26:2 | <לא> | כֹּן קָלַלְתָּ חֲנָם <לוֹ> תִּבְאֵ | <לא> | q~k |
| EZRA 4:2 | <ולא> | נִדְרוֹשׁ לְאֱלֹהֵיכֶם <לוֹ> אֲנַחְנוּ זְבָחִים | × | q>~k |
| 1 CHR 11:20 | <ולא> | <לוֹ> שָׁם בְּשָׁלוֹשָׁה | <וליה> | q |

Table 6: The לֹא/לוֹ *qerē/ketīb* cases.

As we can see, in most cases, both readings, the *qerē* and *ketīb*, are possible on the most basic level of the syntax. Mostly, however, the *qerē* presents the more plausible variant; sometimes this is

evident from the syntax of the sentence/verse itself, in other cases it only becomes apparent from the broader context. Only in two cases (1 SAM 20:2, 1 CHR 11:20), we do find one of the readings which doesn't make much sense regarding the syntax of the verse. In both cases this is the *ketib* variant. On the other hand, in both of the two variants occurring in the book of Proverbs both the *qerē* and the *ketib* are equally possible. This may, perhaps, be due to the more “enigmatic” nature of the Proverbs where each verse presents a fairly closed unit, not connected syntactically to other verses.

The most interesting question regarding this group of *qerē/ketib* variants is how to interpret them if we assume that the phenomenon of *qerē/ketib* is based on the dual, i.e. oral and written transmission of the biblical text. At first sight it would seem that the very existence of this group proves that the *qerē* could not have represented an oral tradition for the simple reason that אָל and אֵל are pronounced the same²⁶⁾ (*lō*). There would be no point for the Masoretes to note such a “variant” if it didn't differ in pronunciation from the reading already written “inside” the text.

There are two possible explanations to this problem: first there is the possibility that the Masoretes didn't want to note a *variant* in the margin at all, but their note was solely explicative and interpretive, calling attention to the fact that the consonants do not fit well in the context (or don't go well with the accepted interpretation, at least). Similar Masoretic notes which comment on the meaning²⁷⁾ or even interpretation²⁸⁾ of some words do occasionally occur, even if they are quite rare.

26. While it cannot completely be ruled out that the א of אָל could possibly have been pronounced as a glottal stop in some dialects (see modern colloquial Arabic dialects where the negative particle *lā* may under certain circumstances be pronounced as *lāʔ*), I'm not convinced that this was the rule for the pronunciation of the Masoretic text. For example, in cases where a word following אָל begins with one of the letters בגדכפ"ת one would expect those to be pronounced as plosives, if אָל were read as a closed syllable ending with the glottal stop. In the common case, however, such letters are read in the Hebrew Bible as fricatives; see e.g. אֵל תֹּאכֵל , GEN 2:17. (Forms, like אֵל־תִּקַּח , GEN 24:37 can be explained as having *dehiq* in the first consonant of the word following אָל.)

27. Yeivin 1980, §122, p. 72.

28. Ibid.

Another solution, already suggested by M. Breuer²⁹, lies in the possibility that for the *qerē/ketīb* notes not the consonantal text was initially the primary reference but the oral tradition. If this assumption is correct, such notes were primarily “*ketīb*” remarks on the oral tradition, i.e. stating that a particular word whose pronunciation and meaning is known to the “reader” is to be written using some non-standard or special orthography. If this is correct, the observation on the shape of the consonantal text must have been made orally and even transmitted (i.e. learned) by heart as well. Only later, when the Masoretes prepared their biblical codices, was the logic of these comments reversed to fit the goal of extending the written biblical text with a vocalization based on the traditional oral performance of the Bible. Note, however, that the nature of such presumed original “*ketīb*” remarks is still interpretive to some degree (as with the first explanation) as it pre-supposes a particular meaning to be present somehow in the oral tradition itself. But this should not surprise us when we consider the much more “integrative” nature of the oral tradition compared with the sole copying of written texts.

Moreover, I would argue that this proposed solution could also plausibly and easily explain the “explicative” *qerē/ketīb* cases mentioned in the previous chapter: if, for example, ועמדו in EXOD 27:11 is not the primary form that the masoretic note comments on, but the oral *w²-‘ammūdāw* (=Qr: ועמדוּי), it makes good sense to note the unusual orthography of the written text with a *ketīb* variant, namely ועמדו in our example. This would also nicely explain the unusual cases, where the “ending” יִי- is not a pronominal suffix but a part of the root, such as Kt=הסתו, Qr=הסתוּי in SONG 2:11.

Excursus: Some Peculiar *Qerē/Ketīb* Examples

1 SAM 2:16

וְאָמַר | <לו> בִּי עֲתָה תִּתֶּן וְאִם-לֹא לְקַחְתִּי בְּחִזְקָה: מ:

29. M. Breuer 1990, p. xxviii. Note, however, that Breuer didn't interpret the perspective shift from *ketīb* notes into the *qerē* ones in terms of oral/written transmission of the biblical text but assumed that originally the *ketīb* was directed at scribes (as some sort of scribal guide) while later the *qerē* notes were directed to the “reader”.

Kt: <לו> || Qr: <לא>

An interesting case is found in 1 SAM 2:16 where a *pasēq* is found before the לָ /לוֹ *qerē/ketīb* variant. The division of this verse according to the accents would fit the *ketīb* לוֹ quite well but reading the *qerē* variant לָ here is also not impossible³⁰:

Figure 18: The division of 1 SAM 2:16 by the accents and by the *pasēq* sign.

Clearly, grouping לָ and בִּי together into one cluster would make more sense but, on the other hand, having the phrase בִּי עֲתָה תִּתֶּן somewhat separated from the previous one seems equally plausible (the לָ would be more emphasized in the latter case). It is, therefore, hard to decide whether the division of the accents agrees with *ketīb* or if it just represents an alternative division of the *qerē* version. At any rate, we can see that a *pasēq* is used in this verse to further divide the phrase לָ וְאָמַר. If the accents follow an interpretation which considers the oral form *lō* as a preposition with suffix (i.e. as לוֹ), it would indicate that the *pasēq* further interprets the verse, opposing the accents. If, however, the accentuation reflects an understanding of *lō* as a negation particle לָ, the *pasēq* is not in contradiction with the accents but rather merely seems to serve the goal of making sure that the oral form *lō* is not misunderstood. Obviously the easiest way is to consider the *pasēq* on an oral basis, i.e. as a slight pause between the words during their recitation. Interestingly, the musical logic of the accentuation is broken by the *pasēq* (even if the accentuation doesn't contradict the appropriate interpretation of the oral form *lō*).

LEV 25:30

וְקָם הַבַּיִת אֲשֶׁר-בְּעִיר אֲשֶׁר-<לוֹ> חָמָה

Kt: <לא> || Qr: <לוֹ>

30. When analysing the structure of a Hebrew verse according to the masoretic accentuation I follow the methodology of M. Breuer as described in M. Breuer 1956 and M. Breuer 1988.

In LEV 25:30 we may see how the *qerē/ketīb* variants provoked midrashic interpretive traditions.

Rashi mentions following Rabbinic tradition:

אשר לא חמה - we are reading לו . And the Rabbis, their memory be blessed, said [that it applies also] if [the town] has no wall now, but had one before. And עיר is feminine and should, therefore, have been written לה . But this [reading emerged] from the need to write לא “inside”³¹⁾, so they corrected it to be ולו in the “masoret”, one imposed “on top” of the other.

אשר לא חמה - לו קרינו, אמרו רז"ל אף על פי שאין לו עכשיו, הואיל והיתה לו קודם לכן. ועיר נקבה היא והוצרך לכתוב לה, אלא מתוך שצריך לכתוב לא בפנים, תקנו לו במסורת, זה נופל על זה

Figure 19: Rashi on LEV 25:30.

Apparently the Rabbinic tradition quoted by Rashi combines both possible ways to interpret the form pronounced as *lō* into one explanation. This could possibly explain why the *ketīb* variants may have been useful even in the illiterate context of an oral study of the Hebrew Bible: it may have provided material for the midrashic exegesis³²⁾. Note also that Rashi's world is already a literary one and he thus attempts to explain the traditions in such a context. Similar can be said, for example, about the attempts of David Qimḥi or Don Isaac Abrabanel to explain the *qerē/ketīb* variants³³⁾. Clearly, the knowledge of the oral techniques of transmission of the Biblical text must have been lost and replaced by scribal techniques in a relatively short time, and the assumption of the use of a written text within the textual history remained unquestioned up to the present time.

DEUT 32:5

שַׁחַת <לוֹ לֹא> בְּנִיּוֹ מוֹמֵם דֹּר עֲקָשׁ וּפְתִלְתָּל: מ:

31. In the “inner” text of masoretic codex where the consonants stand and not in the margin (“outside”) where the *masora parva* stands.

32. For a similar phenomenon, midrashic treatises based on the masoretic notes, see Keller 1966 and Contreras 2005.

33. See above chapter 4.1, p. 31.

Ancient Versions

Q: × || 𐤇: בני מום <לו לא> שחתו || S: <لا لبنا> حننا وفسادنا || T^O: <לא ליה> בניה || T^N: <עובדיהון טביא> בניה חביביא אשתכח מומא בהון || P^J: דפלחו לטעותא חבלו <קודמוי> בניה חביביה || G: ἡμάρτοσαν <οὐκ αὐτῶ> τέκνα μωμητά || B: peccaverunt <ei non> filii eius in sordibus

I'd like to mention another interesting case, not directly connected to the *qerē/ketīb* variants, but showing an interesting case of homophony of לָא /לוּ . First, note that in some ancient versions (S, G) the words in question have an opposite meaning to the MT: לָא instead of the masoretic לוּ . Apparently, these variants are based on an oral shape of the Hebrew Bible in which both words are homonymous. Also, the T^O and T^N contain, apparently, a conflate reading of both possibilities. This seems to be reflected in the accentuation, as well:

שַׁחַת לֹוּ לָא בְנֵי מוּמָם

Figure 20: DEUT 32:5: Homophony of לָא/לוּ .

Clearly, the only plausible explanation of the division following the accents in this verse is one that views the לָא as an elliptic expression, accompanied by an explanation not expressed in Hebrew but thought when this word was recited. Such an explanation fits well into our thesis which sees the function of the Hebrew accents to be (among others) a synchronization device between the MT and its *targūm*, as we will argue later (see chapter 5.4, p. 73). It therefore seems, that most of the ancient versions mentioned show either a variant going back to either an oral version of the text (which doesn't *per se* differentiate between לָא and לוּ) or to phenomena typical for an oral transmission, such as the “double-readings”³⁴). Apparently only a few remaining versions follow the written text closely, such as the 𐤇 or B³⁵).

Another peculiar case of homonymous *qerē/ketīb* variants occurs in EZEK 14:4:

-
34. Interesting is the version of P^J which apparently understands the words in question very freely. Most probably this is a result of some midrashic discussion about what the words meant, done presumably in an oral manner.
35. Hieronymos' choice may have been done on the basis of theological considerations, though.

EZEK 14:4

אִישׁ אִישׁ מִבֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יַעֲלֶה אֶת־גְּלוּלָיו אֶל־לְבוֹ וּמְכַשׁוֹל עֲוֹנוֹ יִשִּׁים נֶכַח פָּנָיו וּבָא אֶל־הַנְּבִיא
אֲנִי יְהוָה נַעֲנִיתִי לוֹ <בה> בְּרֹב גְּלוּלָיו

Kt: <בה> || Qr: <בא>

Masoretic Comments

OkI: (Frensdorf §43; = Esteban §44) י"ח לא מפקין ה"א בסוף תיבו "18 words without a *mappiq* in ה in final position"

Ancient Versions

Ⲙ: × || Ⲛ: אֲנָא יוֹי מִשְׁתְּאִיל לִיָּה <בְּמִימְרֵי דְאֲתִי לְמַחְבֵּעַ || Ⲛ: אֲנִי מִן קְדָמִי > וְאִף עַל גַּב דְּמַעְרָב בְּסִגְיָ פְּלַחֲן טַעֲתִיָּה
Ⲙ: εἷς ὅς ἐνέχεται < > ἐν οἷς ἐνέχεται || Ⲛ: respondebo ei in < > multitudine inmunditiarum suarum

Ancient and Mediaeval Commentaries

דד"ק

"בה written with *hē* but read with *'alef*, because the letters אהו"י interchange. And the interpretation [is]: because he went (בא) with the multitude of idols I will answer him so that he can find (לגלות) the understanding of his heart and this is what he says further (v. 5)."

בה: כתי' בה"א וקרי באל"ף כי אותיות אהו"י מתחלפו'
ופי' בעבור שבא ברוב גלוליו אענה לו כדי לגלות צפון
לבו וזהו שאמר אחריו

This verse is not completely clear and its interpretation presents some difficulties. Even though the consonantal בה may reasonably be explained (i.e. in the sense of "I will answer against these"³⁶), where בה, "against these" refers to what is described in the first part of the verse), for most of the ancient translators this word presents a *crux interpretuum*. See, for example, the Septuagint and Vulgate which left it out completely. We see, on the other hand, that the word in

36. See the ענה with the preposition א in similar meaning in: GEN 30:33; NUM 35:30; 1 SAM 12:3; 2 SAM 1:16; MICAH 6:3; RUTH 1:21, cf. KBL.

question is reinterpreted in the Targum (“I, the Lord, will ask him in my word to come to seek for an instruction, even though he got involved with the multitude of idolatry”) and in Peshitta (“I, the Lord, will be for him what he will bow to, in [the time] of big fears.”). It is not surprising therefore, that even the “*qerē* tradition”, which reads אָבָּ , “coming”, presents a reinterpretation of its own. The reading itself is rather enigmatic and ambiguous, and can be understood in two ways. The first one would associate the verb אָבָּ with the following בָּרַב גְּלוּלָיו , see e.g. Qimḥī's comments above³⁷). In my opinion, such an interpretation doesn't explain the verse very well, and the last clause (אָבָּ בָּרַב גְּלוּלָיו) would actually be superfluous and would not provide any significant information.

There is, however, another way to read these words, if we understand the syntactic division of the verse in slightly different way: if the words אָבָּ לֹא are considered to be an asyndetic relative clause, “(I will answer with) what he deserves”. Such a reading would be in accordance (opposite to Qimḥī's interpretation) with the division that follows from the masoretic accentuation of this verse:

אָנִי יְהוָה נֶעֱנֵיתִי לֹא אָבָּ בָּרַב גְּלוּלָיו :

Figure 21: *EZEK 14:4 qerē and masoretic accents.*

We can see that the words אָבָּ לֹא נֶעֱנֵיתִי have only one disjunctive accent closing the whole cluster. This means that no distinction is made, according to the accents, between the possibility of reading אָבָּ לֹא as a relative clause³⁸) and simply having a verb with two prepositional phrases. In other words, the division of this verse, as attested by the accents, makes the above mentioned *qerē* reading (with relative clause אָבָּ לֹא) perfectly possible, as it is true for the *ketīb* variant בָּה (in the above proposed sense of “against these”). This could indicate that in this particular case the accents may be older than the vocalization change reflected by the *qerē*/*ketīb* variants, i.e. that through this change the accents did not need to be adjusted accordingly.

37. It seems that for the Jewish tradition the second part of our verse is interpreted positively, see already the Targum Onkelos.
 38. Such a reading is, however, still very plausible, due to the fact that both words (prepositions with suffix) are very short. Otherwise we would expect נֶעֱנֵיתִי to have a disjunctive accents and the cluster be broken into two smaller ones.

Even more interesting is the material known to us from the masoretic lists. In the collection of masoretic lists *'Oklā we-'Oklā* we find a list (see above) of cases where a final ה in a word is not marked with *mappīq*, even though one would perhaps expect one to be there. Among these cases³⁹⁾ our verse is also listed, although our form (the *qerē* variant) isn't written with ה but in a semantically correct way with א .

Also, this masoretic list counts rather disparate forms. For example, עֲתָה קָצִין in JOSH 19:13 is obviously a regular and correct form (with *cohortative hē*⁴⁰⁾ exactly as קָדְמָה מְזַרְחָה and גָּתָה חֲפָר—considered regular—have in the same verse); similarly to JUDG 1:31 (חֲלִבָּה) and EZEK 39:16 (הַמּוֹנָה) which are just normal feminine proper names and no *mappīq* would ever make sense if placed in their final ה . In EZEK 16:44 (בְּאִמָּה בְּתָה) a variant with *mappīq* is theoretically possible but makes less sense in the context (comparing *her* mother with *her* daughter, i.e. a grandmother with her granddaughter is surely not what the text intended here). Similarly: EZEK 24:6 (אֲשֶׁר חֲלִאֲתָהּ בָּהּ וְחִלְאֲתָהּ לֹא יִצְאָה) and EZEK 47:10 (לְמִינָה).

On the other hand, there are cases where the masoretic reading emerged most probably in response to some *crux interpretuum* in the text. See בְּבֹאָה רְגִלֶיךָ, וְהוֹצִיא אֶת־הָאָבֶן הַרְאֲשָׁה (ZECH 4:7), הָעִירָה (1 KGS 14:12) or perhaps וְרַחֲמֶה הָרַת עוֹלָם (JER 20:17). There is also another case important for our discussion: וְעַל־אֲדוּם בְּלֹא⁴¹⁾ where not even the consonantal text contains the letter ה⁴²⁾!

This shows clearly that our masoretic list from *'Oklā we-'Oklā* is based primarily on the oral shape of the text and not on the consonants. The list actually counts all forms that *sound* similar, i.e. end with *-ā*; more precisely the cases catalogued in this list are those which may sound unfamiliar in their context. Given the fact that in EZEK 14:4 both the *qerē* note in the *Codex Leningradensis* and the list from *'Oklā we-'Oklā* attempt to describe the same phenomenon from different points of view, it becomes apparent that our *qerē* form cannot also present some vari-

39. The listing contains: EXOD 2:3; 9:18; NUM 15:31; JOSH 19:13; JUDG 1:31; 1 SAM 20:20; 1 KGS 14:12; ISA 21:2; 30:32; JER 20:17; EZEK 14:4; 16:44; 24:6; 36:5; 39:16; 47:10; ZECH 4:7; JOB 31:22. For other occurrences of this masoretic tradition cf. Dotan 1994, p. 9*.

40. See also 1 SAM 20:20.

41. See p. 184.

42. Actually, the reason for this form to be read without a *mappīq* is most probably due to an assimilation of the oral tradition to the consonantal text.

ant collated from a dissenting manuscript but has its roots in an oral tradition and thus reflects a particular pronunciation of our form.

4.1.3 *Qerē/Ketīb* in Manuscripts with Palestinian Pointings

An important witness for the development of the *qerē/ketīb* phenomenon (and the Masoretic text in general) are manuscript fragments with Palestinian pointing, especially those written in “shorthand” notation (see below).

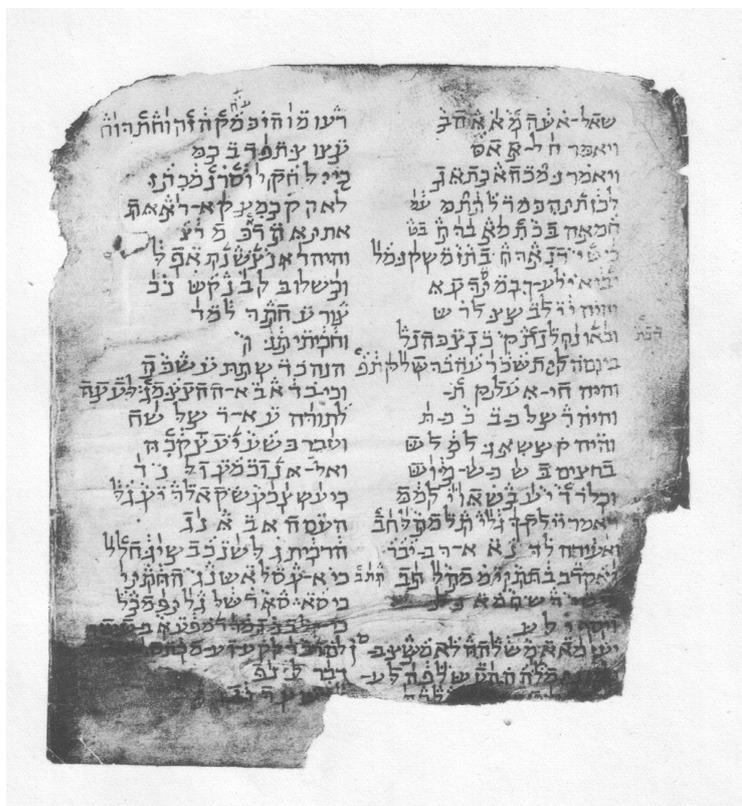


Figure 22: A manuscript with shorthand notation. (Kahle 1930, fol. 11)

Most notably the development of *qerē/ketīb* notation can be shown on these fragments. Some of these were published by Manfred Dietrich and on their basis Dietrich briefly describes the general

development of *qerē/ketīb* notation in one of the introductory chapters of his edition⁴³. Here I'd like to summarize Dietrich's findings:

In the simplest variant of the *qerē/ketīb* notation (as represented by the ms. CB 7, according to Dietrich's enumeration), a word in question is written according to the *ketīb* variant (as known from the later masoretic codices) with a dot above. This occurs twice in the fragments (נחתי in EZEK 16:18 and עשיתי in EZEK 16:31). In another case (EZEK 16:18) such a form is not marked with a dot at all. On the other hand, in other cases the form is unmarked and agrees with the *qerē*, most notably this is the case in EZEK 28:3, היית (near another already marked *qerē/ketīb*; see above). As Dietrich notes, a possible further development can be seen in EZEK 16:55 where two dots (") are marked at the margin, most probably pointing to the form תשבנה, written in the Masoretic codices as תִּשְׁבְּנָה. Clearly this form in the standard Masoretic text should be seen as a sort of *latent qerē* where the orthography of the consonants doesn't precisely match its vocalization. The form written in the CB 7 is that of *qerē* while the dots in the margin (possibly added by another hand) point to a *ketīb* variant. Note that there are no other Masoretic notes in this manuscript.

The above-mentioned double dot also appears in other fragments in the margin. Alternatively a simple dot is used in some other manuscripts, instead. A further step in the development is the use of a line resembling the final letter *nūn* (ן)⁴⁴. In some fragments (CB 8) this is even combined with the double dot (ן"). Finally, in the last stage the appropriate *qerē* variant is noted in the margin as well. Even later the sign noting such a variant is replaced by ק̇ as known from the complete Masoretic codices and editions of the Hebrew bible.

Note that these observations bring us interesting evidence about the phenomenon of *qerē/ketīb* itself. For example, sometimes a *ketīb* (and not the *qerē*) was marked in the margin (see above EZEK 16:55). Also note that in the oldest development stages no (*qerē*) form is written in the margin, there is only a sign that notes the variant. Clearly this is not surprising if we assume

43. Dietrich 1968, p. 94-96

44. Dietrich assumes that this sign is to be understood as an abbreviation for נוסחא, "a variant". He doesn't, however, explain why this sign would be a final letter-form and never written as a regular נ. The proposal of Kahle who sees it as an abbreviation of קן seems therefore more plausible, but, as Dietrich mentions, normally the Hebrew abbreviations are made of the first letters of the abbreviated word and of the last one. I'm personally not convinced that this sign must necessarily be seen as a letter *nūn*.

that *qerē* represented the oral tradition. On the other hand, in the above-mentioned example of EZEK 16:55 the *ketīb* is marked at the margin but no form is written. This would mean that the *ketīb* form was also known from another source, possibly learned orally.

4.1.3.1 The Manuscript Cb 1 (M. Dietrich)

In this section I would further like to discuss one manuscript from the Cairo *genizah*, written with the Palestinian pointing, also published by Manfred Dietrich⁴⁵. Today this manuscript exists in three fragments found in the Taylor-Schechter Genizah collection of the Cambridge University Library: Mss T.-S. K 25 and T.-S. N.S. 249. It represents the so-called “shorthand” notation⁴⁶ (סירונין) in which the first word (or two) of each verse is written, followed by single letters (or two) each standing for a whole word or sometimes even a cluster of words. Each word (or a letter representing a word) has an accent sign attached to it. Some of these letters are occasionally vocalized. Each verse is written on a new line. For example, LEV 13:26-27 reads as follows:

| | |
|-----------|--|
| LEV 13:26 | ואם'אֵלֶּן בְּעֵבֶל לִי נִמְעַה רְה |
| LEV 13:27 | וראָהוּ הָא-פִשׁׁהּ נְ-רָ [הֵ] |
| LEV 13:28 | ואם־תָּה ל-עֲאֹוֹהָ טָהָ כ-צִרְמֹ |
| LEV 13:29 | ואישׁ כ-נִבְנָגָ בְּרֵאָק' [ס] |
| LEV 13:30 | וראָה הָנָגָ אֶמְבֵּעַ הָדָמָתָ הָנָה רָר. |

Figure 23: LEV 13:26-27—in “shorthand” notation (Dietrich, CB 1)

Clearly, this notation would only be only useful to someone already having a good knowledge of the biblical text, as without it, it makes little sense. If we marked the above cited letters on the Hebrew texture of the biblical text we would get:

45. Dietrich 1968, p. 36*-50*, 32-42.

46. See also Neubauer 1894 and Revell 1974. For shorthand manuscripts with Babylonian punctuation see Yeivin 1962.

13 ²⁶ וְאִם יִרְאָנָה הַכֹּהֵן וְהִנֵּה אֵין־בְּבִהָרְתָּ שְׁעָר לָבֶן וּשְׂפִלָּה אֵינָנָה מִן־הָעוֹר וְהוּא כֹהֵה וְהִסְגִּירוּ
 הַכֹּהֵן שְׁבַעַת יָמִים:
 13 ²⁷ וְרָאָהּ הַכֹּהֵן בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׂבִיעִי אִם־פָּשָׁה תִּפְשָׁה בְּעוֹר וְטָמֵא הַכֹּהֵן אִתּוֹ נִגְעַ צָרְעַת [ה]וּא:
 13 ²⁸ וְאִם־תַּחֲתִיָּהּ תַעֲמֹד הַבִּהָרְתָּ לֹא־פָשְׂתָהּ בְּעוֹר וְהוּא כֹהֵה שְׂאֵת הַמַּכּוֹה הוּא וְסִהְרוּ הַכֹּהֵן
 כִּי־צָרְבַת הַמַּכּוֹה הוּא:
 13 ²⁹ וְאִישׁ אֹ אִשָּׁה כִּי־יִהְיֶה בּוֹ נִגְעַ בְּרָאשׁ אֹ בְזִקּוֹ:
 13 ³⁰ וְרָאָה הַכֹּהֵן אֶת־הַנֶּגַע וְהִנֵּה מִרְאֵהוּ עַמְקַ מִן־הָעוֹר וְכֹ שְׁעָר צָהָב דָּק וְטָמֵא אִתּוֹ הַכֹּהֵן נִתְקַ
 הוּא צָרְעַת הָרָאשׁ אֹ הַזִּקּוֹ הוּא:

Figure 24: LEV 13:26-27—in “shorthand” notation: a reconstruction

As can be seen in this example, the choice of the marked consonants seems rather haphazard, and, generally speaking, they don't match the disjunctive accents (as is the case in other groups of the shorthand manuscripts). Sometimes, apparently, a phrase of more than one word is marked on the first word, having a conjunctive accent (e.g. יִרְאָנָה הַכֹּהֵן in LEV 13:26), and not on the last word with a disjunctive. Sometimes two words connected with the *maqṣef* are marked on the first of them (לֹא־פָשְׂתָהּ in LEV 13:28), in other cases on the second word (אֵין־בְּבִהָרְתָּ in LEV 13:26) and sometimes even on both of them (מִן־הָעוֹר , LEV 13:26). Usually only an accent is marked on a particular letter (mostly the one having the word-stress), but sometimes also vocalization signs are present. See also יִרְאָנָה (LEV 13:26) where two letters are written, presumably to show a vocalization feature (the gemination of נ) together with an accent on א. Note that some words and even larger clusters of words are not marked at all (see e.g. repeatedly וְהוּא כֹהֵה). Interestingly, this happens a couple of times at the end of the verse (הָרָאשׁ אֹ הַזִּקּוֹ הוּא in LEV 13:30 or שְׁבַעַת יָמִים in LEV 13:26).

These observations can be explained most plausibly by assuming that only those words are marked which are crucial for the memorizing of the text, while others, which can be more easily learned, are omitted. This fragment must therefore have served as some sort of *aide-mémoire*, possibly for the needs of a study house where the text was memorized. It seems, on the other hand, unlikely that this would serve as a guide for the *naqdān* to help with the “accentuation” of the consonantal text. (Note, that the fact that letters are marked mostly with accents and only

occasionally vocalized fits well with the assumption that the Hebrew accents served primarily as a mnemonic device⁴⁷.)

If we observe the *qerē/ketīb* in CB 1⁴⁸) some interesting features can be shown. Firstly, there are two sets of *qerē/ketīb* variants used in this manuscript. The first set of variants are included inside the text and marked with an abbreviation “י”, which is included within and as part of the text as well. The other set of variants are marked in the margin.

If we look at the former cases we can see that in the text the consonants of the *ketīb* are vocalized according to the *qerē* form. For example in EZEK 35:9 we find in the text: תִּישׁ־י . Apparently the consonants match the *ketīb* as found in the Masoretic codices (תִּישׁב־נָה) while the vocalization matches the *qerē* (תִּשְׁבֹּנָה), however no consonants thereof are written. The only exception can be found in EZEK 36:14 where the text reads: הַכְּשִׁלִי י תִּשְׁכֹּ . Clearly, the difference between the *qerē* and *ketīb* is a result of a metathesis in this case and it is therefore impossible to mark such a variant by using a different vocalization of the consonants.

In the other cases the text itself contains a *qerē* variant but is not followed by י inside the text. In the margin, however, a note (apparently by a second hand) is written and marked with the ם abbreviation, standing, apparently, for *ketīb*, “written”. Additionally some seven more *qerē/ketīb* cases, known to us from the complete Masoretic codices, are not marked in this manuscript at all, all corresponding to the standard *qerē* version⁴⁹.

These facts seem to be rather puzzling, but, in my opinion, there seems to be a plausible solution to this problem: it appears that the text is based on the oral shape of the Hebrew tradition (this seems obvious if we return to what has already been said, namely that clearly the shorthand notation is meant for someone who already knew the text well by heart). However, if the *qerē* differs from the *ketīb* the latter is written and not the former. This shows, in my opinion, that the “*ketīb* cases” were memorized together with the rest of the orally transmitted text of the Hebrew Bible, and when this oral tradition was written down, the *ketīb* was used for the consonants while the basic variant (i.e. the *qerē*) was only used for the vocalization. Apparently not all such cases were recognized and memorized (as some oral meta-textual tradition), and that may be the reason

47. See chapter 5.2, p. 64.

48. As summarized by Dietrich in: Dietrich 1968, p. 37.

49. Dietrich's interpretation that the manuscript included them “as *kethīb*” seems wrong to me.

why such *ketib* cases were only marked in the margin later. In any case, the *ketib* comments seem, to represent the original form of such variants, and these cases were most probably memorized as an integral part of the oral Hebrew text, rather than stand-alone “lists”.

In this point I disagree with E. J. Revell⁵⁰ who has analysed a similar manuscript also written in a kind of shorthand notation. He concludes that, rather than an *aide-memoire*, the manuscript he refers to might have been “intended as a handbook or guide for a *naqdān* or a cantor.” According to Revel “all the ‘shorthand’ manuscripts seem to have had the same intention—to present the accent system and a small amount of other information along with it”. However, if we understand the accents not as a mere melody attached to the text for aesthetic reasons, but rather as a mnemonic device, this makes little sense. It seems to me much more likely that the accents are written in the “shorthand” manuscripts in order to make it easier to recollect the memorized text. Only when an unusual form appears, which is difficult to remember, does it also become also vocalized. This can also explain why certain manuscripts, like the CB 1 (according to Dietrich) presented above don't mention certain word clusters at all: it seems that these were considered to be so easily remembered that they never needed to be noted in the manuscript. Also note that in some cases a cluster of words is marked by a letter taken from the first word in the cluster (i.e. from a word being accentuated with a conjunctive accent) and not from the last one (having a disjunctive accent). Apparently the first word was considered to be more typical and easier to remember than the last one. Note, however, that another group of shorthand manuscripts exists (and among them the one analysed by Revell) where only letters with disjunctive accents are noted. The notation of these manuscripts is much more regular and completely lacks word clusters which are not marked in the manuscript. It is doubtful, though, whether we can infer from the regularity of this group of the “shorthand” manuscripts that they were written with a distinct goal and for a different *Sitz im Leben* than the more irregular ones.

To sum up, “shorthand” biblical manuscripts (with Palestinian pointing) apparently represent an oral tradition of the biblical text. Most probably such manuscripts were used in the context of the study of the Hebrew Bible at the time when the transition from oral techniques of transmitting and studying the texts started to shift to more literary means. The fact that additional

50. Revell 1974.

marginal notes were made, presumably by another hand, seems to indicate that these still represented a collectively owned and used manuscript rather than private notes. It would seem that the version analysed agrees with the *qerē* forms unless the *qerē/ketīb* phenomenon is explicitly marked in the manuscript, in which case the *ketīb* form is written. It seems therefore that this was based on the memorized text combined with an oral tradition concerning *ketīb* variants, presumably memorized together with the actual oral version of the Hebrew Bible. This agrees with the conclusion mentioned before⁵¹⁾ that the primary concern of the *qerē/ketīb* variants is the *ketīb* form, from the point of view of someone who knew the text by heart. Maybe this was an attempt to bring the written tradition to those who might not have been able to read (a written text) or at least had no easy access to it. Apparently only some of the *qerē/ketīb* cases were memorized (and written down) initially and these were then later supplemented, as we have seen above.

Only later when the oral tradition was combined with the written text of the Hebrew Bible and started to be copied by the scribes, the logic of the *qerē/ketīb* notes was presumably reverted, and the notes became a hint on the reading tradition rather than on the written form.

Finally I'd like to point out even more evidence which seems to strengthen my interpretation: among the *Genīza* fragments, besides the “shorthand” of the Hebrew Bible, analogous manuscripts of the Targum were found as well, as pointed out by Klein⁵²⁾. Unfortunately Klein didn't include the accents and vowels in his publication of these fragments, so that a more thorough analysis of these fragments would require the manuscript evidence to be reexamined. Such a new analysis remains a *desideratum* and could shed a new light on the problem.

4.1.4 Further Evidence

4.1.4.1 Evidence from the Targumic Masora

As with the Masoretic notes accompanying the Masoretic Hebrew text, a similar phenomenon is found in some of the manuscripts containing the Targum Onkelos. Michael L. Klein published⁵³⁾ a

51. See p. 39.

52. Klein 1992.

53. Klein 2000.

collation of targumic masoretic notes from various manuscripts, most notably the Vat. Ebr. 448⁵⁴ and Rome Angelica Or. 7. These Masoretic notes are mostly concerned with counting unusual translations of a particular Hebrew form, for example:

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>אָבִי which is translated אַבוֹהוֹן [occurs] five [times] in the Torah: יֶבֶר (GEN 10:21), מוֹאָב (GEN 19:37), אָדוֹם (GEN 36:9), עֵשָׂו (GEN 36:43) and בְּנֵי־עִמּוֹן (GEN 19:38).</p> | <p>אבי דמתרג אבוהון ה באורי עבר מואב אדום עשו בני עמון</p> |
|---|--|

Figure 25: Targumic masora magna on GEN 10:21.

Interestingly, the term קרי, “*qerē*” is frequently used in the targumic Masora, but it doesn't denote a variant reading⁵⁵ as in the Hebrew text, but points to the biblical text itself, and its counterpart is not the כתיב (which doesn't, to my knowledge, exist in the targumic Masora at all), but to מתרגמין, “It is translated”, for example:

| | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <p>כִּי which is read but not translated [occurs] twice in the Torah: ...</p> | <p>כי דקרי ולא מתרג ב באור...</p> |
|---|-----------------------------------|

Figure 26: Targumic masora note on GEN 3:1.

Clearly this can easily be explained if we consider the Biblical *qerē* to represent the original orally transmitted biblical text, and the *ketib* the written text as copied by the scribes. The term קרי would then denote the same oral version of the Bible in regular and targumic Masora. It also shows nicely how the (apparently orally transmitted) Targum was paired with the memorized Biblical text, and not with the written Bible as copied by the scribes.

4.2 Evidence from Biblical Quotations

LITERATURE: Murtonen 1958, p. 67

54. Containing both the MT and the Targūm in a verse-by-verse manner.

55. Actually there do exist specific notes marking a variant: אִתְּ דַּמְרִין for אֹד (“and some say”) or for אִתְּ דַּמְתְּרַגְמִין (“some translate”) and נֶאֱמַר for נֹסְחָא אַחְרִינָא (“another version”), see Klein 2000, p. 13, 26. Interestingly, these notes have about the same frequency in the whole Torah (unlike the other notes which are attached to the first occurrence of the form in question in the Torah and whose frequency decreases gradually in the later parts of the Torah).

Another way to approach the problem of the existence of an established oral version of the Hebrew Bible is to analyze biblical quotations as found in the (early) manuscripts of the rabbinic and cognate literature. As this task is out of the scope of the present work, I'd like to show here one example only.

In 1958 A. Murtonen published fragments of Psalms and liturgical poems (the so-called *piyyuṭim*) found in the Cairo *genīza* and vocalized with the Palestinian punctuation. Because the *piyyuṭim* contain some passages “which are apparently intended to be relatively exact quotations from the Bible”⁵⁶, Murtonen briefly describes those quotations and their relationship to the Masoretic text⁵⁷. As Murtonen states, there are several observations which lead to the conclusion that the text was written down from memory: 1) the frequent *plaene* spelling where the Masoretic text has a *defective* (the opposite being very rare); 2) interchange of the Tetragram with אדני and even the appearance of the cluster יהוה אלהים where the Masoretic text has אדני יהוה or even אדני צבאות⁵⁸; 3) the style of the quotation where only a few words from the beginning of the passage are cited.

No less interesting are the variants deviating from the MT. In LAM 3:20 the *piyyuṭ* reads ותשוח which corresponds to the masoretic *qerē* (וְתִשְׁחַח), which strengthens the theory that *qerē* corresponds to the orally transmitted Hebrew biblical text.

In ZECH 7:13 the text has והיה (which, as Murtonen notes, makes better sense) instead of the masoretic וְיָהִי and in PROV 7:24 the initial וְעָתָה is missing. In DEUT 32:4 the masoretic הוּא is spelled in the *piyyuṭ* as הוּ. All these cases can be reasonably explained by assuming that the Biblical text was transmitted orally prior to being incorporated into the *piyyuṭ*: והיה is an example of a harmonization to the nearest context, which is one of the textual changes typical for an oral context. The same applies to וְעָתָה at the beginning of the verse, which can easily be omitted without changing the structure and meaning of the verse itself. The orthography הוּ for הוּא also suggests that the text was not copied from an existing manuscript but was written down from memory.

56. Murtonen 1958, p. 67.

57. Idem.

58. It seems than צבאות was understood as a form equivalent to *'adōnay* (i.e. the Tetragramm), see idem.

Murtonen further points to variant reading (MICAH 7:19) כַּל־הַטְּאוּתָנוּ for כָּל־הַטְּאוּתָם in MT. This actualising reading is attested also by the LXX, Symm and VUL⁵⁹). Moreover it is followed in the *piyyuṭ* by a “lengthy addition” (for Murtonen it resembles the style of old Palestinian targums and Samaritan Pentateuch): וְכַל־הַטְּאוּתָ עַמְדָּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמִקוֹם אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִזְכְּרוּ וְלֹא יִפְקְדוּ וְלֹא יַעֲלוּ עַל לֵב . Both variants can possibly be explained by assuming that they have an oral origin; note, however, that the character of the variant in MICAH 7:19 can also go back to a scribal error (ג- × ם-).

To sum up, the example from Murtonen's edition of liturgical poems shows how the biblical quotations included in these *piyyuṭim* appear to be based on the memorized text of the Hebrew Bible and not copied from manuscripts. This seems to attest the existence of an independent orally transmitted version of the biblical text.

It has been noted that the Targum agrees in the vast majority of the cases with *Qerē*⁶⁰) and it is to be expected that oral characteristics would be found in biblical quotations present in the Rabbinic literature, as it is well-known that the Rabbinic literature itself was memorized and studied in an oral manner. Such an analysis is, however, outside the scope of the present work.

4.3 The *Qerē* as a Reinterpretation of the Consonants?

If, as argued above, the *qerē* variants represent the oral tradition we should ask whether there are any traces of some tendency to reinterpret the consonantal shape of the text. The vast majority of the *qerē/ketīb* variants present only a minor change, mostly of a single letter and they can be a result of several text-critical phenomena: a scribal error of Kt⁶¹), a scribal error of a *Vorlage* of Qr (or maybe rather an error in a manuscript according to which the *qerē* was “corrected”), dialectal differences⁶²) or they may show different stages in the development of the Hebrew. However, there

59. This shows that different Jewish reading traditions existed before the emergence of masoretic “master codices” which could have preserved older readings. Further material for such variants preserved in rabbinic literature can be found e.g. in Aptowitz 1970.

60. See e.g. Houtman 2005, p. 8 (with regard to the Targum of the Prophets).

61. E.g. most of the cases where the *qerē* and *ketīb* differ in the letters *wāw/yōd*.

62. E.g. cases in which the Kt has a *mātres lectionis* ך while in Qr we find the *qāmeṣ* vowel (whether *qāmeṣ gadōl* or *qāmeṣ qatān*), see e.g. Kt=ותלוש , Qr=ותלִּישׁ in 2 SAM 13:8, Kt=אוניות , Qr=אֲנִיּוֹת in 2 CHR 8:18 or Kt=אשקוטה , Qr=אֲשַׁקְטָה in ISA 18:4.

are some categories of *qerē/ketīb* which can be attributed to certain kinds of reinterpretation done on the level of the oral tradition:

1. **Euphemism:** In couple of case the *qerē* reads as a completely different word to the *ketīb*. All of these variants are euphemisms concerning either the sexual sphere (Kt= $\sqrt{\text{שגל}}$, Qr= $\sqrt{\text{שכב}}$, see DEUT 28:30; ISA 13:16; JER 3:2; ZECH 14:2) or the thematics of “excretions” and related issues (Kt= $\sqrt{\text{חרא}}$ in 2 KGS 6:25; 10:27; 18:27; ISA 36:12; Kt= $\sqrt{\text{שינ}}$ in 2 KGS 18:27; ISA 36:12; Kt= $\sqrt{\text{עפלים}}$, Qr= $\sqrt{\text{טחרים}}$, “haemorrhoids” in DEUT 28:27; 1 SAM 5:6,9,12; 6:4,5). These euphemisms do not, actually, change the meaning of the original text but rephrase it in a way acceptable for public reading. See e.g. Kt= $\sqrt{\text{שיניהם}}$, “urine” (2 KGS 18:27; ISA 36:12) rendered as $\sqrt{\text{מימי רגליהם}}$, “the water of their legs” by the *qerē*. This reading doesn't intend for any other meaning but is referring to exactly the same object as the original version; the target audience knows very well what the euphemism is pointing to—differing only in the use of acceptable language. The same applies to the other mentioned forms as well. Interestingly, such euphemistic *qerē/ketīb* variants occur only within the Torah (twice in DEUT 28) and in the Prophets (13^{x63}). This may indicate that these euphemisms emerged chiefly in the context of the public synagogal biblical readings⁶⁴ rather than from a context of the study of the biblical text. This may, on the other hand, only be by chance, as the words in question occur in the first two parts of the Jewish canon only.

Moreover, two of the above mentioned euphemistic *qerē* variants have their parallels in the ancient Hebrew versions: in the MT, DEUT 28:30, Kt= $\sqrt{\text{ישגלנה}}$ is read as $\sqrt{\text{ישכבנה}}$ and similarly $\sqrt{\text{ישכב}}$ has $\sqrt{\text{ישכב עמה}}$. Analogously, $\sqrt{\text{חשגלנה}}$ in ISA 13:16/MT is read by the *qerē* as $\sqrt{\text{חשכבנה}}$ and apparently the same reading is also attested to by 1QIsa^a ($\sqrt{\text{חשכבנה}}$). This may indicate that the oral tradition as reflected by the *qerē* variants may have its roots already in the time of the Qumrān scrolls—or at least in the way offending words were handled in context of the oral study (or liturgical reading?) which was already established in the times of 1QIsa^{a65}. The euphemistic *qerē* readings are also already quoted by a *tosēfta* which indicates their early origin:

63. Note, however, that only once, in ZECH 14:2 this passage happens to be read in the modern synagogal liturgy as a *haftarā*.

64. They must stem from the time before the *haftarōt* passages became standardized, then.

65. More detailed study about the relationship of 1QIsa^a and the oral study of the biblical text should be done.

Every case that is written as “an insult” should be read as “a praise” ... Every place *ישגלנה* is written, it is read as *ישכבנה* ... in every place *בעופלים* is written, it is read as *בטחורים* ... And Rabbi Yehoshua ben Qeraḥ says *וישמהו למחראות* is read as it is written because it is [intentionally] an insult.

כל המקראות הכתובות לגנאי קורין אותן לשבח
... כל מקום שכתוב ישגלנה קורין אותו ישכבנה ...
כל מקום שכתוב בעופלים קורין אותו בטחורים ... רבי
יהושע בן קרחה אומר וישימם קורין אותו ככתבו מפני
שהוא גנאי.

Figure 27: Euphemistic *qerē* cases. (TMEG 3:20)

2. **Word division.** In a couple of cases the *qerē* divides the Hebrew text in a different way to the *ketīb*. Clearly, some of them are insignificant or there may even be no real variant at all:

| verse | <i>ketīb</i> | <i>qerē</i> |
|-----------|--------------|-------------|
| EXOD 4:2 | מזה | מה־זֶה |
| 1 SAM 9:1 | מבן ימין | מבנִי־מִין |
| JER 18:3 | והנהו | והנֶה־הוא |
| EZEK 8:6 | מהם | מה־הֵם |
| LAM 1:6 | מן בת | מבַּת־ |

Table 7: *Qerē* having two words, but insignificant.

See especially EXOD 4:2 and JER 18:3 which actually both sound the same when pronounced and the *qerē* note of the masoretic codices should, therefore, be regarded as explicative only⁶⁶. Other examples, on the other hand, show a tendency where the *qerē* can be described as some sort of reinterpretation of the *ketīb*:

66. See above, chapter 4.1.1, p. 35.

| verse | <i>ketīḇ</i> | <i>qerē</i> |
|-----------|--------------|------------------|
| GEN 30:11 | בגד | בָּא גָד |
| DEUT 33:2 | אשדת | אֵשׁ דָּת |
| JER 6:29 | מאשתם | מֵאֵשׁ תָּם |
| Ps 10:10 | חלכאים | חֵיל כָּאִים |
| Ps 55:16 | ישימות | יְשִׁי מוֹת |
| NEH 2:13 | המפרוצים | הֵם פְּרוּצִים |
| 1 CHR 9:4 | בנימן | ...בְּנֵי מֶן... |
| ISA 44:24 | מי אחי | מֵאֲחִי |

Table 8: *Qerē* having two words, representing possibly an (re-)interpretation.

Note, that also here the pronunciation of the form in question may (originally) have differed only very slightly whether it was conceived as one or two words. It seems that in some cases the *qerē* has two easy-to-understand words whereas the *ketīḇ* represents a *crux interpretuum* (see e.g. DEUT 33:2; NEH 2:13). In other cases the *ketīḇ* is possible, but the *qerē* is to be easily understood in the context (e.g. GEN 30:11⁶⁷). It seems therefore, that the *qerē* indeed can be seen as a sort of reinterpretation of the *ketīḇ* (if we are not dealing with scribal errors as may possibly be the case e.g. in NEH 2:13). However, it is clear that the reason for such a reinterpretation lies primarily in the textual difficulties and not in any sort of “midrashic creativity” or an ideologically motivated attempt to change somehow the utterance of the text.

3. **Additions.** In some other cases (known as *qerē we-lā ketīḇ*⁶⁸): “read but not written”) a word not included in the consonantal text is added as a “*qerē*”:

67. We interpret the *ketīḇ* בגד to consist originally of the preposition -בָּ together with גָד (i.e. to be understood as “with a luck”). It doesn't make much sense to assume that the *ketīḇ* reflected the $\sqrt{\text{בגד}}$, “to betray”.

68. The complementary phenomenon, *ketīḇ we-lā qerē*, “written but not read” (2 KGS 5:18; JER 38:16; 39:12; 51:3; EZEK 48:16; RUTH 3:12) doesn't seem to have implications for the interpretation of these verses and represents thus only insignificant variants.

| verse | <i>ketib</i> | <i>qerē</i> |
|-------------|---------------------|---|
| JUDG 20:13 | בנימן | בְּנֵי בְנִימָן |
| 2 SAM 8:3 | נהר | בְּנְהַר־פְּרָת |
| 2 SAM 16:23 | כאשר ישאל | כַּאֲשֶׁר יִשְׁאַל־אִישׁ |
| 2 KGS 19:31 | יהוה | יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת |
| 2 KGS 19:37 | ואדרמלך ושראצר הכהו | וְאֲדִרְמֶלֶךְ וְשִׂרְאֲצָר בְּנֵי הַכְּהוֹ |
| JER 31:38 | הנה ימים | הֲנֵה יָמִים בָּאִים |
| JER 50:29 | אל יהי פלטה | אֶל־יְהִי־לָהּ פְּלִטָה |
| RUTH 3:5 | כל אשר תאמרי | כָּל אֲשֶׁר־תֹּאמְרִי אֵלַי |

Table 9: The *qerē we-lā ketib* as an interpretive addition.

Basically, two explanations seem to be possible for these cases: either the *ketib* omitted the word in question (presumably as a result of a scribal error) or the word is being added by the *qerē* as some sort of explication of the original consonantal text. While the former possibility cannot be ruled out, and there are indeed some examples which seem to be possibly explained in this way (see e.g. JER 31:38 above), it seems that most of the cases present an explicative addition of a word in the text, resembling to a great degree the phenomenon of “targumic additions”. Some such cases only complete a sentence or phrase, which can be perceived as elliptical in its consonantal shape (see e.g. JER 31:38 or JER 50:29) and in doing so the *qerē* variant actually points to the same meaning as shown by the consonants. In other cases, however, the *qerē* adds some new idea not present in the original text, e.g. 2 SAM 8:3 the Kt=נהר, “river” is rendered by the *qerē* as בְּנְהַר־פְּרָת, “the Euphrat river” in a way typical for a midrashic or targumic exegesis. It is thus possible, that a significant number of these cases are actually “targumic additions” which slipped into the biblical text.

4. **Other cases.** In some other (rather rare) cases, a *qerē* (differing from the *ketib* in only a small detail) can be suspected to represent some sort of reinterpretation of the consonantal *ketib*. E.g. a several times the *ketib* מדונים (“(of) strife”) is rendered by the *qerē* as מְדִיָּנִים, “Midianites” which resembles a known ancient Jewish exegetical technique of identifying an enemy in the

biblical text. Other candidates may be ISA 52:5, Kt=מי לי פה , Qr=מה-לי-פה or 1 CHR 25:1, Kt=הנבאים, Qr=הנבאים .

To sum up, we occasionally find *qerē* variants which can be seen as some sort of reinterpretation of an older tradition as reflected by the consonantal text, i.e. by the *ketīb*. However, given the fact that there are some 800-1300 marked *qerē/ketīb* variants (depending on the manuscript) and yet more “latent *qerē*” cases⁶⁹), the interpretive *qerē* variants present only a small fraction of them. Moreover, a significant number of them can be explained as being the result of some textual problem. A reading which can be attributed to some midrashic interpretation or being induced by some theological consideration are very exceptional.

69. See chapter 7.2.2, p. 198.

Chapter 5

The Hebrew Accents

One of the puzzling phenomena of Tiberian Masoretic text are the so called Hebrew “accents” (טעמים, “flavours”, “senses”, נגינות, “melodies”, or נעימות, “ornaments”, “embellishments”). How did they emerge, what exact function did they have and why are they one of the textual elements present in the masoretic codices (and consequently in our modern editions of the Hebrew Bible¹⁾?

The accepted view among the scholars sees three basic functions²⁾ of the טעמים: a) they mark the position of the word stress (thus their English name “accents”), b) they reflect the syntactic structure of a verse to some degree and can therefore sometimes point to a particular meaning of otherwise ambiguous text, c) they have musical values and describe (or prescribe) how the text is to be liturgically sung (“cantillated”) in the Jewish synagogal services.

We can see that the function first described, i.e. טעמים as a stress-position markers, although frequently referred to in the Hebrew grammars, is clearly of a secondary nature. This can be shown by the fact that in the Palestinian and Babylonian punctuation the טעמים don't, generally speaking, indicate the word accent, and that this feature is consistently found only in the Tiberian system.

Also, nowadays it is clear that the second mentioned feature of the accents, namely their ability to point out to a particular syntactic division of the text, doesn't represent their primary goal. Even if up to the 19th century the scholars (especially the Christian hebraists) tended to view

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1. There seems to exist a lot of misunderstanding and misconceptions about the accents. Many, and particularly western Christian scholars (or secular scholars influenced through Christian biblicists) take them to be a mere “diacritics” of some sort. So, for example, the Oxford Hebrew Bible project (“OHB”; see <http://ohb.berkeley.edu/>), which strives to prepare a new eclectic critical edition of the Hebrew Bible, adds the masoretic accents, as found in the Codex Leningradensis, to a newly reconstructed text which tries to be as close to the old Hebrew original, as possible. Sometimes, words are added or removed according to the old textual witnesses, such as the Septuagint, or due to other text-critical considerations. In doing so, however, the accents remain *exactly* the same as in L (newly added words have no accents marked). I do not dispute the effort in reconstructing a text as close as possible to its original, but the use of masoretic accents in OHB is simply nonsensical and completely misses their character, function and strong dependence on the accentuation of adjacent words (besides other factors).
 2. See e.g. Yeivin 1980, §178, p. 158.

the accents as a kind of diacritics that defined the correct meaning of the text, it is clear that the accents show far too many irregularities, which is incompatible with the idea of a grammatic or syntactic system of division. Alone the great number of accent signs used in a comparable function and position in the verse, clearly shows that their primary objective is to be sought elsewhere.

Today, the consensus among the scholars is that the primary function and the *Sitz im Leben* of the Hebrew accents is the synagogal liturgy and the cantillated reading of the Biblical text. For example, Israel Yeivin speaks in aesthetic terms when he describes the primary function of the accents and the dependence of the other functions thereupon: “This chant enhanced the beauty and solemnity of the reading, but because the purpose of the reading was to present the text clearly and intelligibly to the hearers, the chant is dependent on the text, and emphasizes the logical relationship of the words.”³⁾

5.1 The Prosodic Nature of the טעמים

LITERATURE: Drescher 1994

In 1994 Bezalel Elan Drescher published an article⁴⁾ in which he analyses the Hebrew accents on the basis of modern prosodic theories. He comes to the conclusion that the Tiberian accentual system is constructed in terms of units comparable to the modern prosodic hierarchy. The cardinal argument Drescher brings into the discussion about masoretic accents is that the hierarchic structure as expressed by the accents may to some degree reflect the syntactic division of the verse, but when it deviates from the syntax it does so in ways that are characteristic for prosodic representations. According to his analysis and comparison with modern prosodic models he concludes that “the hierarchical structures indicated by the Tiberian accents have striking points of contact with some contemporary research into hierarchich prosodic structures”⁵⁾.

Drescher admits, however, that phenomena do exist which can only be explained in musical terms, such as a substitution of certain accents with other ones, in specific circumstances. For example, the accent *pashtā* (◌◌) becomes replaced by *jetiv* (◌◌) when it would be due on a mono-

3. Yeivin 1980, §178, p. 158.

4. Drescher 1994.

5. See Drescher 1994, p. 28.

syllable.⁶ As both accents, however, have the same disjunctive value their interchange cannot be explained on prosodic basis (and obviously not on syntactic one).

By contrast, other phenomena can be observed in which the phonology and morphology is influenced by the accentuation, and can therefore only be explained on prosodic basis⁷. The accents can, for example, have influence on the spirantization of כפ"ת בג"ד, gemination (see the so-called *conjunctive dagesh*) or rhythmic stress shift ("*nesiga*").

In other words, the masoretic accentual system shows both prosodic and musical features. It seems therefore that the musical or aesthetic element is also not the primary one. Clearly, the text was liturgically sung in antique Judaism⁸ as done right up to the present day. It doesn't, however, represent "music for its own sake"⁹ but the musical element of the accentuation is very tightly bound to the text itself and its prosodic structure.

5.2 The Accents as a Mnemonic Device

One important fact about the Hebrew accentuation is that the phenomenon of a (liturgical) chant of the Bible is not unique to Judaism and its TeNaK. Usually Christian Syriac accent signs¹⁰, and maybe the byzantine *ekphonic neumes* (and consequently the eastern and western Christian liturgical chant in general) are given as examples of parallel phenomena. However a much broader repertoire of historical parallels existed: apart from the Islamic chanting of the *Qurʾān* (albeit without a written notation system) similar systems were in use in the Armenian, Coptic and Ethiopian Christian tradition¹¹, and even beyond. Egon Wellesz notes that the same phenomenon can be observed on the Manichean as well as Christian fragments written in the Soghdian script¹², and that even in India, China and Japan similar "musical" signs appear in old manuscripts¹³

6. Dresher 1994, p. 48.

7. Dresher 1994, p. 48.

8. Revell 1971.

9. Dresher 1994, p. 6.

10. All Syriac systems of vocalization and accentuation and their development is best described in Segal 1953.

11. Wellesz 1923, p. 30, 95ff.

12. Wellesz 1923, p. 32-36.

13. Wellesz 1923, p. 64-65.

Moreover, David Carr notes the use of music in many of the ancient Near Eastern cultures in connection with the study (i.e. memorizing) and public performance of a particular text¹⁴). I would, therefore, argue that the chant (together with the accent signs as its written representation) doesn't have its primary *Sitz im Leben* in the liturgy (i.e. its function is not primarily an aesthetic one either) but in the context of an oral study of texts. Therefore I'd like to propose that the Hebrew accents (as well as similar phenomena in ancient cultures) were primarily *mnemonic devices* intended to facilitate the memorization of a particular text and ease its recitation. Of course, in the synagogue they were also used liturgically and they obviously have a certain aesthetic value as well, but this is only of secondary importance. Actually, as I argued before, I would propose regarding the liturgical reading as a ritualized study of the holy text. Clearly, after literacy became more widespread, it was no longer necessary to use the chant as a mnemonic device and its knowledge was largely lost¹⁵) and was preserved only in a liturgical context (being conservative in the best sense).

Excursus: The Byzantine *ekphonic neumes*

A phenomenon comparable to the Hebrew accents also existed (among others) in the Byzantine church. Manuscripts of lectionaries are extant in which “musical” signs, the so-called *ekphonic neumes*¹⁶) have been added to the Greek text. As opposed to later notation systems of both the Eastern and the Western Christianity, these signs don't mark a direct musical value (i.e. don't function as ordinary notes) but resemble much more the Hebrew accents, in that they mark a particular musical figure which is sung with a certain phrase. Differences between the two systems do, however, exist: the *ekphonic neumes*, for example, are not marked on each word, but at the beginning and end of a particular phrase¹⁷), and also no counterpart of “conjunctive ac-

14. Carr 2005, p. 28, 95ff, 124, 181, 289.

15. Note that this may not be true for some communities, like the that of the Yemenite Jews living in an Islamic environment which preserved many of the oral techniques for a long time.

16. For the description of the *ekphonic system* see Høeg 1935 and Engberg 1995. For a discussion about the relationship between the *ekphonic neumes* and the Masoretic accents see Engberg 1966 and Revell 1979.

17. Note, however, that some type of phrases may have an auxiliary sign written in the middle of the phrase.

cents” is found in the *ekphonic* system. Interestingly, the pericopes for the weekdays of lent are taken from the “Old Testament” and therefore allows a direct comparison with the Hebrew accentuation.

The following example can, in my opinion, shed a little more light on the nature of the *ekphonic neumes* and the underlying chant of the Biblical text:

GEN 6:13:¹⁸⁾ καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ | καταφθείρω αὐτο ὕς καὶ τὴν γῆν +
 EXOD 14:17:¹⁹⁾ καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ | στερεω τὴν καρδίαν Φαραῶ
 GEN 6:17:²⁰⁾ ἐγὼ δὲ | ἰδοὺ ἐπάγω τὸν κατακλυσμὸν | ὕδωρ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν

Figure 28: The structure of GEN 6:13,17; EXOD 14:17 according to the chant of the Byzantine lectionaries.

Clearly the division in GEN 6:13 and EXOD 14:17 doesn't really fit the Greek syntax: if a meaning of “see me” was intended, καὶ ἰδοὺ με would be translated here instead of καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ. In the current text, however, the ἐγὼ would (according to the Greek syntax) rather be connected with the following verb (καταφθείρω, στερεω) contradicting the division of the *neumes*. It is only in GEN 6:17 that the *neumes* match the Greek syntax. The neumatic division of GEN 6:13 and EXOD 14:17 can, however, be explained if we assume a “semitic background” to be reason for this division: both the Hebrew וַיִּהְיֶה and maybe also וַיִּהְיֶה וַיִּבְרָא (and their Aramaic/Syriac counterparts) can be the source of the division found in the byzantine lectionaries. The division according to the Greek *neumes* doesn't apparently match that of the Hebrew accents, though:

18. MMB I/3, L 15b, p. 207.

19. MMB I/1, L 2b, p. 58.

20. MMB I/3, L 15b, p. 207.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| GEN 6:13: | וְהִנֵּי מִשְׁחִיתֶם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ: |
| EXOD 14:17: | וְאֲנִי הִנֵּי מְחִזֵּק אֶת־לֵב מִצְרַיִם |
| GEN 6:17: | וְאֲנִי הִנֵּי מְבִיא אֶת־הַמָּבּוּל מִיָּם עַל־הָאָרֶץ |

Figure 29: The structure of GEN 6:13,17; EXOD 14:17 according to the Masoretic accentuation.

But if we compare our verses with the *targumim*, we can see that at least in the case of GEN 6:13 the unusual division of the Byzantine lectionaries may be seen as direct translation of the *targūm*, especially if taken as a word-for-word translation²¹:

| verse | Ⲯ ⁰ | Ⲯ ¹ | Ⲯ ^N | Ⲅ |
|------------|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| GEN 6:13 | ... וְהָא אָנָּא מְחַבְּלָהוֹן ... | ... וְהָא אָנָּא מְחַבְּלָהוֹן ... | ... וְהָא אָנָּא מְחַבְּלָהוֹן ... | ... ⲛⲟⲩⲁ ⲛⲟⲩⲁ ⲛⲟⲩⲁ ... |
| EXOD 14:17 | ... וְאָנָּא הָאָנָּא מְתַקִּיף ... | ... וְאָנָּא הָא אָנָּא אֲתַקִּיף ... | ... וְאָנָּא הָא מְתַקִּיף ... | ... ⲛⲟⲩⲁ ⲛⲟⲩⲁ ⲛⲟⲩⲁ ... |
| GEN 6:17 | ... וְאָנָּא הָא אָנָּא מִיִּתִּי ... | ... וְאָנָּא הָאָנָּא מִיִּתִּתָּא ... | ... וְאָנָּא הָא אָנָּא מִיִּתִּי ... | ... ⲛⲟⲩⲁ ⲛⲟⲩⲁ ⲛⲟⲩⲁ ... |

Table 10: The Aramaic versions of GEN 6:13,17; EXOD 14:17.

In EXOD 14:17, the division of the *ekphonic neumes* can be seen as being dependent on the targumic wording, if we assume that the Greek version may have omitted the first *וְאָנָּא*, perhaps for stylistic reasons. Alternatively, the wording and cantillation of EXOD 14:17 may simply be a result of some inner-Greek harmonization process (assimilating towards the version found in GEN 6:13). Furthermore we can also see that the Peshiṭta version is very close to that of the *targumim*, differing only in that it puts the word *ⲛⲟⲩⲁ* (“I”) after the participle. Most probably this follows an inner-Syriac development aimed at matching the usual Syriac syntax better.

To sum up, we have seen an example of a division of the Biblical text as reflected in the liturgical chant of byzantine lectionaries, which can plausibly be traced back to a semitic *Vorlage*. It shows that these cantillation techniques were able to preserve textual features (such as the prosodic structure) over a long period of time. Moreover, it seems to imply that at least at some point in the transmission the chant must have been used with both the Greek and a particular

21. See below, p. 78.

Semitic version simultaneously (see below chapter 5.4, p. 73). This could, in my opinion, only happen within the framework of some sort of oral study of the Biblical text.

5.3 Accents in the Whole Hebrew Bible

Further evidence for the primary use of the accents in the context of memorizing and study of the Biblical text is simple fact that the masoretic codices contain the whole Hebrew Bible, i.e. all of The Torah—The Prophets—and The Writings, marked with accents, even if not all of the parts of the TeNaK received the same attention in the context of the “liturgical reading”. Even if the Pentateuch has probably been read since earliest times as a whole (see the Babylonian annual and Palestinian triennial cycles²²⁾, the Prophets were already only read selectively in the rabbinic times (which in the end lead to the establishment of a fixed prophetic reading system - the *haftarōt*²³⁾). It should however, be mentioned that some passages were already excluded from the *haftarōt* readings in early rabbinic times²⁴⁾. The readings from the Writings were even less systematic and more sporadic²⁵⁾, and even if some passages or books were read on various occasions, it is hard to imagine that the whole Hebrew Bible would be read liturgically in such a systematic manner that it would allow the creation a well-established reading tradition. It seems more likely that some sort of institutionalized memorizing (and study on an oral basis) of the Biblical text must have existed in the rabbinic period. Most probably professional Bible “readers” must have existed at least as part of the rabbinic academies.

I would like to suggest, therefore, that the primary *Sitz im Leben* of the Hebrew accentuation belongs to such an institutionalized study of the Hebrew Bible (see also chapter 2.5, p. 21) which would obviously also be the basis for public “reading” as part of the synagogal services. A liturgical explanation of the existence for the Masoretic accents in the whole TeNaK doesn't seem plausible: there are no parts of the Hebrew Bible which would show a significantly differ-

22. Mulder 2004, p. 138-143.

23. Elbogen 1931, §26.4, p. 177.

24. See e.g. Mulder 2004, p. 144.

25. Elbogen 1931, §27, p. 184-186.

ent accentuation than the Torah and traditional *haftarōt*. On contrary, the irregularities (such as doubly accented words²⁶⁾) and some rather peculiar features of the vocalization, which seem to be connected with the recitation of the Biblical text (such as the pausal forms²⁷⁾ or the *nesiga*²⁸⁾), are to be found in the whole TeNaK.

5.3.1 The Accentuation of the “Poetical Books”

There is, however, one exception from the above statement: the “poetical books”, namely Psalms, Proverbs and Job, do have their system of accentuation, distinct from the rest of the Hebrew Bible. Traditionally this special accentuation system is attributed to the “poetical” character of these books. This is usually shown with the example of the book of Job which has its introductory and final narratives (JOB 1-2; 42:7-17) accentuated with the usual system (of the so-called “prosaic books”), while the main discourse has the special accentuation of “the three books”.

However, is this really the reason for the existence of this second accent system? How much more “poetical” are Psalms, Proverbs or Job than the Song of Songs, Lamentations or prophetic books? How much different is the Proverbs from Qohelet that the former should need a specific accentuation? And why don't even those special “songs” (such as the שירת הים, “The Song of the Sea” in EXOD 16, שירת האזינו, “The Song of Moses” in DEUT 32, “The Song of Deborah” in JUDG 5 or “The Song of David” in 2 SAM 22), which are traditionally written in a specific form²⁹⁾, use the accentual system of the poetic books?

It may be suggested that the main difference between the two systems lies in the typical structure and, what is more important, in the length of the verse: the “prosaic” system is built upon the division of the verse into two main parts (the first being closed by the accent *'atnāḥ*, while the second by the final *sillūq*) and only rarely do we find a verse so short that it has no *'atnāḥ*. In the “poetic” system, on the other hand, the verse has no major binary division and the system is thus more suitable for texts with shorter verses. However, even if we accept this

26. See below p. 86.

27. See e.g. the list published by E. J. Revell on the Pericope-project web page (http://www.pericope.net/Assets/pericope_texts/Pausal_Forms_Revell/PausalTNK.pdf, retrieved on 2011/08/19).

28. See Revell 1983, p. 39.

29. As prescribed by SOF 1:10.

kind of argumentation, there still remain enough other texts with relatively short verses and thus suitable to be accentuated with the “poetical” system.

If we compare the two accentuation systems we can see that the “poetic” one seems to be more complicated. First and foremost the accentuation of Job, Proverbs and Psalms contains more compound accent signs whose graphical representation comprises two different signs:

| accent name | appearance | composed of |
|---|------------|--|
| “prosaic” books | | |
| <i>mūnaḥ legarmēh</i> (“ <i>legarmēh</i> ”) | דְּבַרְךָ | <i>mūnaḥ</i> (C) + <i>pasēq</i> |
| <i>šalšelet</i> (R) | דְּבַרְךָ | <i>šalšelet</i> (see below) + <i>pasēq</i> |
| “poetic” books | | |
| <i>ʾazlā legarmēh</i> | דְּבַרְךָ | <i>ʾazlā</i> (C) + <i>pasēq</i> |
| <i>mahpak legarmēh</i> | דְּבַרְךָ | <i>mahpak</i> (C) + <i>pasēq</i> |
| <i>šalšelet gedolā</i> | דְּבַרְךָ | <i>šalšelet qeṭanā</i> (Po,C) + <i>pasēq</i> |
| <i>ʾolē wejōrēd</i> | דְּבַרְךָ | <i>ʾolē</i> (U) + <i>merka</i> (C) |
| <i>revīaʿ mugraš</i> | דְּבַרְךָ | <i>gereš</i> (Pr,D) + <i>revīaʿ</i> (D) |

* C=“conjunctive”, D=“disjunctive”, Pr=“prosaic”, Po=“poetic”, R=“rare”, U=“unique”.

Table 11: *The compound accents of the “poetic books” compared to the “prosaic” ones.*

As we can see, in the prosaic system practically only one accent (the *mūnaḥ legarmēh* which is a disjunctive one) is composed of another accent (*mūnaḥ*, a conjunctive) together with the additional *pasēq* sign. The function of such a compound accent seems to be clear: an accent which normally serves as a conjunctive is made into a disjunctive one by adding a sign which, when used on its own, denotes a pause between words. Most probably this pair of a disjunctive and a conjunctive accent had (at the time the signs were invented) the same, or a very similar, melody but each served a different function. The *šalšelet* is a very rare accent in the prosaic books (occurring only six times) and is probably borrowed from the poetic system.

In the poetic system, on the other hand, three compound accents serving as disjunctives and made up of a conjunctive accent and the *pasēq* sign exist. Moreover, two other accents composed of two different accent signs exist in this system.

Moreover, even if the way both systems function is basically similar, the poetic system is more complicated³⁰. The most peculiar phenomenon represent the “disjunctive accents after *atnāḥ*”³¹. Whereas in the system of prosaic books (and in the rest of the poetic system) the division hierarchy proceeds backwards from the accent with the highest disjunctive rank, i.e. “to the right” of the respective accent, within the poetic system there is an exception: if an *’atnāḥ* occurs in the verse (which is not necessarily the strongest disjunctive accent within the verse of the poetic system), all other disjunctive accents following *’atnāḥ* (i.e. “to the left” of *’atnāḥ*) are attached to *’atnāḥ*. Moreover, these accents proceed “from right to left”, i.e. in the opposite direction to the rest of the system and within the prosaic books (actually only one *revī’a mugraš* or *šalšelet gedolā* followed by one *mahpaḳ legarmē* may occur after *’atnāḥ*, all the other accents in this part of the verse being conjunctives).

Furthermore, some accents can possess multiple functions depending on their position in the hierarchy of the accents, most notably the *revī’a* which can have three different functions (plus the above-mentioned compound *revī’a mugraš*), but *pazēr* and *mahpaḳ legarmēh* also have multiple functions³²

In the poetic books there are also a relatively large number of words having two accents, sometimes in rare combinations³³. Also the disjunctive accent *šinōr* has an variant (called *šin-norīt*³⁴) appearing as the first accent in a combination with *mehuppaḳ* on a single word (e.g. *בְּיַכְלֵי* in Ps 11:4) and therefore considered a conjunctive accent. We will discuss this problem later³⁵.

How can we interpret these irregularities of the poetic system? Traditionally, this complexity is attributed to the fact that these accents are attached to poetic texts which themselves possess a higher grade of syntactical complexity. Furthermore, poetical texts are assumed to be performed more solemnly in public reading, being sung with more complicated melodies. However, as we

30. See e.g. Yeivin 1967, p. 281ff.

31. See M. Breuer 1988, p. 214.

32. See e.g. M. Breuer 1988, p. 212ff.

33. See Yeivin 1980, §374, p. 273.

34. Yeivin 1980, §374, p. 273.

35. See p. 90.

have argued before, there are a number of other apparently poetic texts accentuated with the prosaic system, which do not show any significant accentuation deviation or any complex exceptional patterns.

Considering the above-mentioned deviations in the poetic system, we rather got the impression that we have here some sort of mixture of two disparate cantillation systems, or we can at least assume that the poetic accentual system was heavily influenced by another tradition. Some of the phenomena described (e.g. the compound accents) can perhaps even be the result of an adaptation of the signs created to serve the prosaic system, to the chant of the poetic books (we have no exact knowledge of how the accents were pronounced at the time of the Masoretes and cannot be sure that the same sign, apparently having several functions, really represented exactly the same melody in all its variants, or whether some slight differences were discernible that could differentiate between the distinct functions of this particular accent).

I would, therefore, propose a hypothesis that the accentuation system of the poetic books has its roots in a distinct context of the study of these books. Whether the poetic cantillation has its origin in a different geographical area, a distinct Jewish grouping or sect³⁶⁾ or just in a different institution of the study of Biblical text, is hard to decide, nor is it clear when these two systems merged into one “masoretic” tradition. From the fact that all the Masoretic manuscripts have the division of the accentuation of the book Job into the poetic and prosaic part already fixed it would seem to have happened possibly long before the transition from an oral tradition to the writing stage.

This proposal, that a different accentuation system for the three “poetic” books points to a distinct context of the (oral) study of these books, can further be supported by the fact that the *targumīm* of Psalms, Job and Proverbs have an unusual form not found in other Biblical books: two (and sometimes even three or four) *targumīm* are given to each verse, the first being basically literal, and the others, introduced by תרגום אחר, “another targum” being haggadic³⁷⁾.

36. Apparently, old Jewish sects and grouping have left their traces for a long time in the rabbinic period, see e.g. the alleged connection between the Karaism and the *Qumrām* sect, see Wieder 2005; Erder 2004.

37. See e.g. Mulder 2004, p. 225.

Interestingly, some fragments of non-biblical³⁸⁾ texts accentuated with the “poetical” system are also extant. Yeivin³⁹⁾ mentions fragments of Ben-Sira which, according to him, “imitate the biblical accentuation” and “are punctilious in it to the smallest details”. Yeivin shows how in SIR 10:2 a *nesiga* occurs on the word כְּשׁוֹפֵט and the accentuation follows closely the laws of the accent *mūnah* before *sillūq*. Yeivin further mentions a leaf⁴⁰⁾ from the Geniza (T.-S. H 3.59) which he describes as an “Introduction on the 613 commandments in the style of Proverbs”⁴¹⁾. A full vocalization and accentuation is also marked here. This fragment also shows some unusual accentuation (e.g. לְרַעֲיָה where *dēhī* occurs together with *ge‘āyā*) and vocalization (הַמְדַבֵּר). Some unusual accentual issues (*gereš* instead of *revī‘a mugraš*) have parallels in a couple of Biblical manuscripts.

In my opinion, this would speak more for an oral study of these texts rather than an attempt to imitate the Biblical accentuation. Note, in the first place, that the phenomena mentioned by Yeivin are all typical examples of how the oral performance of the text influences the exact shape thereof. It therefore seems much more probable that both the works mentioned were memorized using the “poetic accents” known from the Masoretical text of the Bible. Note that the book of Ben-Sira would fit nicely with the three Biblical books in question—two of which belong to the wisdom literature, exactly as Ben-Sira does. It seems very plausible that Ben-Sira was studied, i.e. memorized, together with the other three books in some Jewish circles (perhaps that of the Hellenistic Judaism?). The second mentioned fragment is, obviously, much younger and it is most probably only an imitation of the book of Proverbs. But given the peculiar accentuation and vocalization features this fragment shows, it seems that the text was really still being learned and memorized using this accentuation system, and that this system was productive even at such a late stage.

38. For other non-biblical texts with an accentuation see chapter 5.5, p. 103 and chapter 5.6, p. 105.

39. Yeivin 1958, p. 49

40. Yeivin 1958, p. 50.

41. Note, however, that in the online database of the “Fridberg Geniza Project” is this leaf categorized as a *piyut*. (Accessible through <http://www.genizah.org/> after registration, no direct link available; retrieved on 2011-09-28)

5.4 The Accentuation of the Targum

The Hebrew accents are not only attested in the realm of the Hebrew Bible, we also find them in some manuscripts and editions of the Targum Onkelos⁴²). Many Genizah fragments with the Babylonian pointing⁴³) are extant, containing the Masoretic text together with the Targum Onkelos. In these fragments both texts are interwoven in a verse-by-verse fashion so that each Hebrew verse is followed by that of Targum. Similarly, in the first printed Rabbinic editions of the Bible, both texts are juxtaposed synoptically in two columns, one next to the other.

An interesting feature of these texts is that both the biblical text and the Targum contain Hebrew accents, and what is more important, in the overwhelming majority of the text, the accentuation of the Targum Onkelos matches exactly that of the Masoretic text. However, some minor deviations still occur from time to time. Here I would like to make some observations about the character of the differences in accentuation between the two versions. My analysis is based solely on a couple of the first chapters of Genesis, as found in the second edition of Bomberg's *Biblia Rabbinica*⁴⁴) and should only be considered a preliminary investigation. Similar conclusions follow from a brief examination of some fragments with Babylonian pointing⁴⁵): the Biblical text and the Targum both have the same accentuation for a particular verse with the targumic accentuation occasional deviating slightly from the biblical one. A more thorough analysis of the fragments with Babylonian pointing should still be carried out, though.

42. See e.g. Medan, col. 406.

43. A comprehensive list of such manuscripts can be found in Yeivin 1983. Yeivin's is primarily concerned, however, with the Biblical text and lists, therefore, such mixed fragments among other biblical texts with the Babylonian punctuation.

44. Venice 1524/25, accessible online: <http://aleph500.huji.ac.il/nml/dig/books/bk001268184.html>, (retrieved on 2011/08/14). Unfortunately, the online edition uses a rather aggressive compression algorithm which makes some of the punctuation disappear or look incorrect. There may be, therefore, some minor errors in the following analysis. Unfortunately, I had no access to the facsimile of ms. Vat. Heb. 448 (Macho 1977), which would be more suitable for such a comparison. Only shortly before finishing this dissertation I was able to briefly check this facsimile and it seemed to confirm my results presented here.

45. I could check some of the fragments accessible through the "Friedberg Genizah Project" (<http://www.genizah.org/>), following the list of manuscripts published by Yeivin (Yeivin 1983). Additionally, I checked some fragments which were published by Paul Kahle (Kahle 1913). In this edition the texts are transcribed, but a couple of reproductions are also attached.



Figure 30: Bible with Targum written using the Babylonian punctuation. (Kahle 1913, fol. 11).

Here I would like to mention an important difference between the Babylonian masoretic tradition (and its pointing) and the Tiberian (and older Palestinian) one. The Babylonian system lacks signs for conjunctive accents⁴⁶ and it seems that not only are the signs missing, but the words in a conjunctive position in the Babylonian tradition do not seem to have had a distinct melody in their musical performance (compare e.g. the Gregorian choral where most of the verse is sung on the same tone). This can be seen in the history of Yemenite Jews whose oldest biblical manuscripts are written with the Babylonian system, but later they accepted the Tiberian tradition: at first, marked in the manuscripts using the Babylonian pointing system and only later also accepting the Tiberian punctuation. However, even their early “Tiberian” manuscripts lack the conjunctive

46. Yeivin 1983, p. 60.

accents⁴⁷⁾, presumably due to the influence of their original oral tradition. For our analysis this means that some phenomena which become obvious in the Tiberian tradition, cannot be observed in the Babylonian tradition at all (most importantly the cases of a “double accentuation” of a particular word, see below!) and this makes the analysis of the Targum of the *Biblia rabbinica* still absolutely necessary.

If we, therefore, compare the accents of the Masoretic text with the accentuated Targum Onkelos as found in the second *Biblia Rabbinica*, we can see that they mostly fit each other. Moreover, some of the differences between the two version are very minor. For example, the accent *pašṭā* (whose graphic representation is classified as being a *post-positivus*, i.e. written to the left of the actual word) occurs sometimes in the Hebrew Bible on a word with the stress on the *paenultima*. In such a case the *pašṭā* is written twice: once above the stressed syllable and once top-left of the whole word. In the Targum the appropriate Aramaic word is only marked with a single *pašṭā*, on the top-left of the word:

| verse | Onkelos | MT |
|---------|---------------|--------------|
| GEN 3:7 | אִתְּפַתְּחָא | וּתְפַקְחָהּ |

Table 12: *Pašṭā* on the *paenultima* and the targumic accentuation.

This shows that the accentuation of the Targum follows the Aramaic stress position (on the *ultima*) and the accentuation as found in the Rabbinic Bible seems to reflect an actual pronunciation (i.e. it is not just the work of a scribe placing the same signs he finds in the Masoretic text on Targum). A similar phenomenon can be observed with the interchange of the accents *pašṭā* and *yetīb*. These two accents present a musical variant with the same disjunctive value⁴⁸⁾. The *yetīb* is used whenever the stress falls on the first syllable of the word, otherwise *pašṭā* occurs. Again, in these cases where the MT has a form where the first syllable is stressed (this occurs, most notably with the *segolata* nouns) and therefore carries *yetīb*, the Targum, being stressed on the *ultima* gets *pašṭā*:

47. Morag 1961, p. 17-24.

48. See e.g. Yeivin 1980, §248, p. 198f.

| verse | Onkelos | MT |
|----------|--|---------------------------|
| GEN 1:11 | <עִשְׁבָּא > דְּבַר־זִרְעִיהּ מִיזְרַע | <עֵשֶׁב > מִזְרִיעַ זֶרַע |
| GEN 2:23 | <גְּרָמָא > מִגְרָמִי | <עֵצִים > מִעֵצָמִי |

Table 13: Interchange of accents between the MT and \mathfrak{S}^O due to the word stress position.

Moreover, cases are found where a cluster of words, which in the MT are connected together using the *maqṣef* sign, represent separate “words” in the Targum, having a conjunctive accent added to the first word instead:

| verse | Onkelos | MT |
|----------|--|---|
| GEN 2:8 | <גִּנְתָּא בְּעֵדֹן > מִלְקַדְמִין | <גִּנְבְּעֵדֹן > מִקְדָּם |
| GEN 2:22 | וְאִייתִיהּ <לֹת אָדָם >: | וַיְבֵאֶהָ <אֶל־הָאָדָם >: |
| GEN 2:24 | עַל־כֵּן <יִשְׁבּוֹק גְּבַר > בֵּית־מִשְׁכְּבֵי אָבוּהִי | עַל־כֵּן <יַעֲזֹב־אִישׁ > אֶת־אָבִיו |
| GEN 3:3 | וְלֹא תִקְרְבוּן בֵּיהּ <דִּלְמָא תִּמּוּתוּן >: | וְלֹא תִגְעוּ בּוֹ <פְּוֹת־תִּמּוּתוּן >: |
| GEN 3:4 | <לֹא מִמֶּת > תִּמּוּתוּן: | <לֹא־מֹת > תִּמּוּתוּן: |
| GEN 3:23 | <מִגִּנְתָּא דְּעֵדֹן > | <מִגְו־עֵדֹן > |

Table 14: The interchange of *maqṣef* and conjunctive accent in the MT and in \mathfrak{S}^O .

Note, that in all these cases the Aramaic version has more syllables (the only unusual form is יַעֲזֹב־אִישׁ in GEN 2:24 which seems to have the same number of syllables as the Aramaic יִשְׁבּוֹק גְּבַר —apparently the *ḥātef pataḥ* doesn't represent a “full syllable”, which would affect the way word clusters connected with *maqṣef* are built). We can, therefore, conclude that here again, the difference between the accentuation of both texts can be explained on the basis of phenomena connected with the oral performance of the text. It stands to the reason, therefore, that the Targum as preserved in the *Biblia rabbinica* must have been recited orally.

Even more interesting are those cases where the MT and Targum have a text consisting of different numbers of words, which is usually, due to the so-called “targumic additions”⁴⁹. In the overwhelming majority of such cases these additions in the Targum Onkelos (as opposed to the

49. I will use this term whether denoting a short addition or a lengthy one, like those known from the Pseud-Jonathan Targūm.

more “free” Palestinian Targumim⁵⁰) are fairly short containing usually only one or two more words than the Masoretic text. There are basically two ways this is reflected in the accentuation. The first possibility is that these additional words are connected to one of the original words (which has its corresponding counterpart in the MT and therefore usually its own accent) through the *maqṣef* sign:

| verse | Onkelos | MT |
|----------|---|---------------------------------------|
| GEN 1:2 | וְרוּחָא <מִן־קִדְמֵי־יְיָ> מְנַשְׁבָּא | וְרוּחַ <אֱלֹהִים> מְרַחֵף |
| GEN 1:10 | <וּלְבֵית־כְּנִישׁוֹת> מֵיָא קְרָא יַמְמִי | <וּלְמִקְנֶה> הַמַּיִם קְרָא יַמְמִים |
| GEN 1:11 | עִשְׂבָא <דְּבִרְזִיעִיה> מִיזְדָרַע | עֵשֶׂב <מִזְרִיעַ> זָרַע |
| GEN 1:11 | דִּי <בְּרִזְעִיה־בִּינָה> | אֲשֶׁר <זֶרְעוֹבוֹ> |
| GEN 3:20 | אִימָא <דְּכָל־בְּנֵי־אִינְשָׂא>: | אִם <כָּל־חַיִּי>: |
| GEN 2:9 | וְאֵילָן <דְּאִכְלֵי־פִירוֹה־יַחֲכָמִין> <בֵּין־טֶבֶב> לְבִישׁ: | וְעֵץ <הַדְּעַת> <טוֹב> וְרֵעַ: |

Table 15: Targumic additions With a *maqṣef*-connected cluster

In these cases the text is basically extended and there are no other changes to the accentuation. We can see that such a use of *maqṣef* may even apply to a cluster which in the MT already has another *maqṣef*, so that the targumic accentuation subsequently builds up an even longer block of words with only one accent at the end (see e.g. GEN 3:20). Such a cluster may become longer than usual within the accentuation of the Biblical text (see GEN 2:9). In GEN 2:9 an intriguing phenomenon can also be observed: we can see that two adjacent Hebrew words are each expanded in Targum and become a larger cluster whose components are connected through *maqṣef*. It seems (at the first sight) that the Targum Onkelos was not only a “word-for-word” translation (as is proposed by some scholars when considering the *targūmīm*⁵¹) but rather a “cluster-for-cluster” one, where the “clusters” are defined in terms of the accentuation. We shall return to this point later.

Another common way that a “targumic addition” may affect its accentuation is that a new conjunctive phrase is created in the Targum in place of a single word in the MT, for example:

50. See e.g. Mulder 2004, p. 218ff.

51. See e.g. Shinan 1991, p. 139.

| verse | Onkelos | MT |
|----------|---|---|
| GEN 3:6 | <לְאִסְתַּכְלָא בְיָה> | <לְהַשְׁפִּיל> |
| GEN 3:7 | <וְחִטְיִטּוּ לְהוֹן> טְרַפֵּי תְאֲנִין | <וַיִּתְפָּרוּ> עָלָה תְאֲנָה |
| GEN 3:9 | וַאֲמַר לִיה <אַן אַתְּ>: | וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ <אֵיכָה>: |
| GEN 2:17 | וּמְאִלָּן <דְּאִכְלִין פִּירוּהִי חֲכָמִין>] בִּין־טַב לְבִישׁ לָא תִיכּוּל מִינְיָה | וּמַעַן <הִדְעַת> טוֹב וְרָע לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ |
| GEN 4:1 | קִנְיַתִּי גִבְרָא <מִן־קִדְּם יִי>: | קִנְיַתִּי אִישׁ <אֶת־יְהוָה>: |

Table 16: Targumic additions within a conjunctive phrase

This often happens near the major division of the verse (see GEN 3:6,9; 4:1), but not always (GEN 3:7). Note that the same addition may sometimes appear as a unit connected through *maqquf* and sometimes as an independent conjunctive phrase (compare דְּאִכְלִי־פִירוּהִי־חֲכָמִין in GEN 2:9 with דְּאִכְלִין פִּירוּהִי חֲכָמִין in GEN 2:17). However, there doesn't seem to be any obvious rule which would determine which of the two possibilities is used.

Then again it may also happen that a cluster connected with *maqquf* in the Masoretic text is reduced to a single word in the Targum:

| verse | Onkelos | MT |
|---------|---------|-------------|
| GEN 3:9 | לְאָדָם | אֶל־הָאָדָם |

Table 17: A Reduction of a cluster connected by *maqquf* in Σ^0 .

Similarly there may also be a reduction of complete conjunctive phrases in the MT. Most notably this occurs with the translation אֲשֶׁר > -דְּ (or כִּי > -דְּ):

| verse | Onkelos | MT |
|----------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| GEN 3:12 | אִיתְתָּא <דִּיהֲבַת> עָמִי | הָאִשָּׁה <אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה> עָמָדִי |
| GEN 3:19 | <דְּמִינָה> | <כִּי מִמְּנָה> |
| GEN 3:23 | <דְּאִיתְבְּרִי> מִתְּמִן: | <אֲשֶׁר לָקַח> מִשָּׁם: |

Table 18: A loss of a conjunctive accent in Targum.

Interestingly, sometimes the targumic additions don't have any accent signs at all:

| verse | Onkelos | MT |
|----------|--|-----------------------------------|
| GEN 2:24 | עַל־כֵּן יִשְׁבּוֹק גְּבֵר <בֵּית־מִשְׁכְּבֵי> אָבוֹהֵי | עַל־כֵּן יַעֲזֹב־אִישׁ אֶת־אָבִיו |
| GEN 3:15 | הוּא יִהְיֶה־דֹכֵר לְךָ <מֵה־דְּעַבְדָּתְךָ> לִי־הִמְלִקְדָּמִין | הוּא יִשׁוּפֶךָ רֹאשׁ |

Table 19: Targumic additions without any accent sign.

This may just be a scribal error in the second *Biblia Rabbinica* (or those manuscripts it is based on), but it may also mean that these additions were “pronounced” without a particular melody of a conjunctive accent, however not in a manner perceived by those who wrote down the Targum as suitable to be expressed with a *maqquf* sign. This may possibly be a remnant of Babylonian tradition where apparently no conjunctive accents existed (i.e. the words in a position of a Tiberian conjunctive accent had no special melody, see above p. 75).

Occasionally a word accented with two accents (usually one conjunctive and one disjunctive) occurs in the Masoretic text. Sometimes in such a case we can find two words in the corresponding targumic text, each having one accent only:

| verse | Onkelos | MT |
|----------|--------------------|----------------|
| GEN 3:16 | תְּהִי תֵאוֹבָתְךָ | תִּשְׁוֹקְתֶךָ |

Table 20: Targumic additions and doubly accentuated words in the MT

This is very interesting, because it would mean that the emergence of some targumic additions may be somehow connected with the accentuation or *vice-versa*. If we, however, consider that the addition of תְּהִי in our verse seems to be influenced by the fact that וְאֶל־אִישׁוֹ תִּשְׁוֹקְתֶךָ was perceived as too “elliptic” by the *meturgeman*, it seems clear that it was not the accentuation that affected the *targūm* in this verse but that the Targum must have been the reason for the double accentuation of תִּשְׁוֹקְתֶךָ. We will return to this point later. Note, however, that such a case is rather rare in the text we have analysed, and the targumic counterparts of words with two accents in the Masoretic text are usually marked with one accent only (the disjunctive one):

| verse | Onkelos | MT |
|----------|-----------------|---------------------|
| GEN 2:7 | מִן־אֲדָמָה | מִן־הָאֲדָמָה |
| GEN 2:9 | מִן־אֲרֻעָא | מִן־הָאֲדָמָה |
| GEN 3:19 | לְאֲרֻעָא | אֶל־הָאֲדָמָה |
| GEN 4:1 | וְאָדָם | וְהָאָדָם |
| GEN 4:12 | יִתְאֲרַעָא | אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה |
| GEN 7:21 | וּבְחֵייתָא | וּבְחַיָּיהָ |
| GEN 8:19 | לְזִרְעֵיתָהוֹן | לְמִשְׁפַּחְתֵּיהֶם |

Table 21: Doubly accented words in the MT corresponding to only one accent in the \mathfrak{S}° .

Alternatively, the Targum may have both accents on the same word, exactly as in the MT:

| verse | Onkelos | MT |
|----------|------------------|------------------|
| GEN 3:7 | וַיִּדְעוּ | וַיִּדְעוּ |
| GEN 3:23 | יִתְאֲדָמָתָא | אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה |
| GEN 4:18 | יִתְמַתּוּשָׂאֵל | אֶת־מִתּוּשָׂאֵל |
| GEN 5:29 | דִּין | יָיִן |

Table 22: Words doubly accented in both, the MT and \mathfrak{S}° .

Interestingly, we can also find a couple of verses where both the Masoretic text and the Targum have basically the same number of items, but they don't match each other with respect to the division of the verse by the accents:

| verse | Onkelos | MT |
|----------|--|-------------------------------|
| GEN 2:19 | וְאֵייתִי לְוַת־אָדָם | וַיִּבֵּא אֶל־הָאָדָם |
| GEN 3:11 | בְּדִיל־דְלָא־לְמִיכַל מְנִיה | לְבַלְתִּי אֶכֶל־מִמֶּנּוּ |
| GEN 4:2 | וְקִיזוּ הָוָה גְּבַר־פִּלַח בְּאֲרַעָא: | וְקִיזוּ הָיָה עֲבָד אֲדָמָה: |

Table 23: MT and \mathfrak{S}° : syntactic versus prosodic structure

| | |
|------------------|---|
| MT: | הוּא יְשׁוּפֶךָ רֹאשׁ וְאַתָּה תְּשׁוּפֶנּוּ עֵקֶב: |
| T ^o : | הוּא יְהִידְכִיר לְךָ מֵהֲדַעְבְּדָתָ לִיהִמְלֻקְדָמִין וְאַתָּה תְּהִינְטֶר־לִיָּה לְסוּפָא: |

Figure 32: GEN 3:15, the accentuation of the MT and the Targum.

As we can see here, even a disjunctive accent is added in the Targum. If we analyse this verse more in detail, though, we can notice that a single disjunctive phrase in the Masoretic text (יְשׁוּפֶךָ רֹאשׁ) is translated in the Targum with two lengthier disjunctive phrases. We can also see that both of these clusters are actually separate translations of both Hebrew words (i.e. יְשׁוּפֶךָ > לְךָ יְהִידְכִיר and רֹאשׁ > מֵהֲדַעְבְּדָתָ לִיהִמְלֻקְדָמִין). It seems therefore, that the divisions of the Masoretic accents correspond to the character of the translation itself, in that this translation is carried out on a “word-for-word” basis. I would, however, argue that, based on our observations, we should preferably call this a “cluster-for-cluster” translation, where a “cluster” either refers to a word or words joined together in one disjunctive phrase or, alternatively on a lower level, a word(s) having one accent. Let’s see more examples:

| verse | Onkelos | MT |
|----------|--|---|
| GEN 3:21 | לְבוּשֵׁי־דִיקָר עַל־מִשְׁדְּבִשְׂרֵהוּן וְאַלְבִּישִׁנּוּ: | כְּתָנֹת עוֹר וַיְלַבֵּשֵׁם: |
| GEN 3:22 | הָא אָדָם הָוָה יְחִידִי בְּעֵלְמָא־מִינִיָּה [לְמִידַע טָב וּבִישׁ] | הֵן הָאָדָם הָיָה כְּאֶחָד מִמֶּנּוּ [לְדַעַת טוֹב וְרָע] |
| GEN 4:7 | הֲלֹא אִם־תוֹטִיב־עוֹבְדֶךָ יִשְׁתַּבַּח־לְךָ [וְאִם לֹא תוֹטִיב עוֹבְדֶךָ לְיוֹס־דִּינָא חֲטָאָד נְטִיר דְּעֵתִיד לְאִיתְפָּרַע־מִינְךָ [אִם־לֹא־תִתְּנוּב וְאִם־תִּתְּנוּב יִשְׁתַּבַּח לְךָ:] | הֲלוֹא אִם־תִּיטִיב שְׂאֵת [וְאִם לֹא תִיטִיב לִפְתַּח חֲטָאת רַבִּץ [וְאֵלֶיךָ תְּשׁוּקָתוֹ וְאַתָּה תִּמְשַׁל־בוֹ:] |

Table 25: The Targum as a “cluster-for-cluster” or “word-for-cluster” translation.

In GEN 3:21 we can see yet another example of how a single word in the Masoretic text is translated into a whole phrase (כְּתָנֹת > לְבוּשֵׁי־דִיקָר and עוֹר > עַל־מִשְׁדְּבִשְׂרֵהוּן). In GEN 3:22, however, it seems that הָוָה מִמֶּנּוּ becomes בְּעֵלְמָא־מִינִיָּה, but the translation actually takes place on a

higher level (*יְחִידֵי בְּעֵלְמָא־מִינִיָּה* > *כְּאַחַד מִמֶּנּוּ*) even if the “low-level” constituents also correspond to each other too (*יְחִידֵי* > *כְּאַחַד* , *בְּעֵלְמָא־מִינִיָּה* > *מִמֶּנּוּ*)⁵²⁾

Much more interesting is GEN 4:7 where an unusually lengthy addition (in the terms of Targum Onkelos) is found. Here again most of the targumic additions are only small additions to a single word or a small cluster of words (as we saw in the previous examples) and this is also reflected in a relatively exact way by the accents (*אִם־תִּיטִיב־עוֹבְדָךְ* > *אִם־תִּיטִיב* , *שְׂאֵת* > *יִשְׁתַּבַּח־לְךָ* , *וְאֵלֶיךָ תִּשְׁוֹקֶתוּ* > *וְאֵלֶיךָ תִּשְׁוֹקֶתוּ* , *וְאִם־לֹא־תָתוּב* > *וְאִם־לֹא־תָתוּב* , *וְאִם־לֹא־תָתוּב* > *וְאִם־לֹא־תָתוּב*). However in the last part of the verse the translation deviates completely from the Hebrew original. Nevertheless even here, if we follow the division as shown by the accentuation of both texts, we can see that each cluster in the Hebrew text is replaced by another (even if completely textually unrelated) cluster from the Targum (*וְאֵלֶיךָ תִּשְׁוֹקֶתוּ* > *וְאֵלֶיךָ תִּשְׁוֹקֶתוּ* , *וְאִם־לֹא־תָתוּב* > *וְאִם־לֹא־תָתוּב* , *וְאִם־לֹא־תָתוּב* > *וְאִם־לֹא־תָתוּב*). Note that each of the clusters in the Targum shows at least some remote resemblance to that of the Hebrew Bible (e.g. *וְאֵלֶיךָ תִּשְׁוֹקֶתוּ* and *וְאִם־לֹא־תָתוּב* both contain the letters א – ל – ת at key positions). It seems, therefore, that the text of the Targum (at least in its final stage) was probably already translated in such a way as to match the accentuation clusters.

Finally I'd like to point out an interesting feature, namely the existence of a *pasēq* sign in the same verse in both the MT and the corresponding \mathfrak{S}^0 :

| verse | Onkelos | MT |
|----------|--------------------------------------|---|
| GEN 3:14 | וְאָמַר יְיָ אֱלֹהִים לְחַיִּי אֵל | וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶל־הַנָּחָשׁ |

Table 26: The *pasēq* sign in the MT and in \mathfrak{S} .

It seems that the *pasēq*'s function here is to “avoid irreverent use of the divine name” (as formulated by I. Yeivin⁵³⁾), or more precisely to avoid misinterpretation of the Hebrew אֵל which could also possibly be understood not as a mere preposition (“to”) but rather as “god” or “deity”. This may erroneously render the phrase as “YHWH, the God, the god of the snake”. Interestingly, this problem doesn't exist in the Targum, as it has the short preposition -לְ instead. In this case,

52. For the possibility to understand the Targum against the accentuation shown above—i.e. *מיניה* belonging to the second part of the verse see Kogut 1996, p. 41f; 160f.

53. Yeivin 1980, §284/iv, p. 217.

therefore, the Targum can be said to “blindly” follow the Hebrew accentuation, or more precisely a pause in the recitation marked by the *pasēq* sign.

To sum up, from the comparison of the accentuation of the Hebrew Masoretic text with that of Targum Onkelos, attached to the former in the Rabbinic editions of the Hebrew Bible, we can firstly see that in many cases the Targum doesn't follow the Hebrew accentuation exactly but deviates from it slightly. Such deviations can be mostly explained by prosodic or musical phenomena. Thus it stands to reason that the accentuation of the Targum is not just a “scribal exercise” done mechanically by the copyists, but reflects an actual recitation of both texts in parallel, i.e. most probably in a verse-by-verse manner.

Furthermore, it seems that the accentuation most probably affected the process of translation (or at least the final shape thereof) in that it provided the division “principle” according to which the Biblical text was made into small clusters, and the translation itself was then mainly carried out on a “cluster-by-cluster” basis. Interestingly, even in cases where the Targum deviates significantly from the Hebrew text (see GEN 4:7 above) such a “clusterization” is still observable.

This would indicate that the common accentuation of the Masoretic texts and the corresponding Targum is not a late feature but rather something that emerged before the texts were written down by “the Masoretes”. If we were considering the Masoretic accents primarily as a mnemonic device (as I suggested above⁵⁴) this would further mean that the text of the Hebrew Bible and its Targum were memorized in a verse-by-verse manner (and consequently performed in such a way during the synagogal services), but it seems plausible this was already the way that the Targum had been translated.

One further indication of this dual oral transmission of the Masoretic text and its *targūm* side-by-side (or rather verse-by-verse) can be found in places where the need for a cluster-by-cluster translation contradicts the usual Aramaic syntax, for example in GEN 2:5:

54. See chapter 5.2, p. 64.

| version | text |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| MT | כִּי לֹא <הַמְטִיר> יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים עַל־הָאָרֶץ |
| Onkelos / ed. Sperber | אֲרִי לֹא <אֲחִית> יוּי אֱלֹהִים <מְטִרָא> עַל אֲרֵעָא |
| Onkelos / Bomberg 2 th ed. | אֲרִי לֹא <אֲחִית־מְטִרָא> יוּי אֱלֹהִים עַל־אֲרֵעָא |
| Onkelos / var. ⁵⁵⁾ | אֲרִי לֹא <אֲמִטֵר> יוּי אֱלֹהִים עַל אֲרֵעָא |

Table 27: GEN 2:5: The accentuation of Targum as the reason for its textual variants.

As we can see, the Hebrew $\sqrt{\text{מטר}}$, *hif.* (“to let rain”) is translated in the Targum using two words (אֲחִית מְטִרָא). However As מְטִרָא is the object, it tends to be placed after the subject (as Aramaic is basically a V-S-O language). This, however, breaks the cluster-by-cluster translation scheme as enforced by the accents. As we can see, both variants (i.e. the V-S-O order breaking the accentuation and the V-O-S order breaking the usual syntax) are attested. Moreover, in the Complutensian Polyglot a variant is found which solves this problem by simply using a verb in *’af*, without an object at all. This is the most exact translation of the Hebrew $\sqrt{\text{מטיר}}$, but it may be a *calque*. Maybe the occurrence of both variants—those that break the accentuation and those conforming to it—can indicate, that the *targumim* were sometimes memorized together with the Biblical text but that on other occasions they may have been transmitted independently. In any case, it seems that the discrepancies between the accentuation structure enforced by the Masoretic text and the natural word order can be the reason from the existence of some of the variant readings in the Targum.

Excursus: Words with Double Accentuation and the Text of the *Targumim*

Above we have mentioned an example in which one word of the Hebrew text marked with two accents corresponds to two words in the Targum (in GEN 3:16, see table 20, p. 80). As the analysis has shown, it seems that the targumic addition of תְּהִי is a result of the Hebrew text being somewhat elliptic at this place. Thus it is clear that the double accentuation of the Hebrew תְּשׁוּקֹתֶיךָ should be seen as being influenced by the Targum and not *vice versa*. Note that this double accen-

55. =the Complutensian Polyglot.

tuation is found in all the usual Masoretic codices such as the Codex Leningradensis and is not specific to the editions of the *Biblia Rabbinica*. In my opinion this can be fairly well explained if we assume that the Hebrew accents served not only as a mnemonic device to ease the memorizing of the Hebrew text, but also as a synchronization device between the Masoretic text and its *targūm*. While, in most cases, the accentuation of the Targum is supplied by the accents of the MT, sometimes the opposite may also be true and the wording of the Targum may have influenced the masoretic accentuation.

Unfortunately, places where a targumic addition in the Targum Onkelos corresponds to a doubly accentuated word in the Hebrew Masoretic text are rather rare. We can, however, find substantially more such cases in which a doubly accentuated word in the MT can be traced back to a wording of some other *targūm*, see the following (rather randomly chosen) examples (the accentuation of the *targumīm* is my reconstruction):

| verse | targums | MT |
|-------------|---|--|
| GEN 5:29 | \mathfrak{T}^N : דִּין יִנְחַם יִתְּן מִן־עֲבָדֶינָן <בישׁ> \mathfrak{T}^P : דִּין יִנְחַם יִנְגָּא מִפְּלַחֲנָנָא <דלא־מצלחא> | יְהִי יִנְחַמְנוּ מִמַּעֲשֵׁנוּ |
| GEN 7:21 | \mathfrak{T}^N : וּבַחֲתִיָּהּ <כל> חֵיתָא | וּבַחֲתִיָּהּ |
| GEN 9:23 | \mathfrak{T}^N : <והוון> מֵהַלְכִין לַבְּתֵרָהוֹן | וַיִּלְכּוּ אֶת־רֵיחֵית |
| GEN 9:23 | \mathfrak{T}^N : וַאֲפִיֵּהוֹן <הפיקו> אֶף־לַבְּתֵרָהוֹן | וַפְּנֵיהֶם אֶת־רֵיחֵית |
| EXOD 16:15 | \mathfrak{T}^P : <והוון־תמהוין> וַאֲמַרְיָן אִינְשׁ לַחֲבֵרִיָּהּ | וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ אֶל־אָחִיו |
| EXOD 25:21 | \mathfrak{T}^P : וּכְגוֹן אַרְוֵנָא תִּיתֵן יַת־לוֹחֵי <סהדוּתָא | וְאֶל־הָאָרֶץ תִּתֵּן אֶת־הַעֲדוּת |
| NUM 20:1 | $\mathfrak{T}^N \mathfrak{T}^G$: כָּל־עָם <כנישתא מדברא־דצין | כָּל־הָעֵדָה מִדְּבַר־צֹן |
| LEV 23:21 | \mathfrak{T}^N : בְּכָל־אַתְרָא <בית>־מְדוּרֵיכֹן | בְּכָל־מוֹשְׁבֵיכֶם |
| ISA 28:4 | \mathfrak{T} : וַיְהִי <דיהיב> מִצַּנְפָּתָא לְרִשְׁעָא [דבית־מקדשא תשבחתיה] | וַיְהִי־הָיָה צִיצֵת נֹבֵל צְבִי תִפְאָרְתּוֹ |
| PS 9:10 | \mathfrak{T}^Ps : וַיְהִי <מימרא> דִּיהוּהָ תִקְוָה לְמַסְכִּינָא | וַיְהִי יְהוָה מְשׁוּבַּ לְדָדָּ |
| PS 10:14 | \mathfrak{T}^Ps : לִיאוֹת וּרְגִז <על־רשילעא > | עָמְלָ וְכַעַס |
| PS 19:5 | \mathfrak{T}^Ps : נִפְקָ מִתַּח <עיניניוהוּן> | יִצָּא קוֹם |
| PS 19:14 | \mathfrak{T}^Ps : <ואהי> זַכִּי מִחוּבֵי־רָבָא: | יְנַלְמֵתִי מִפֶּשַׁע רָב: |
| PS 31:19 | \mathfrak{T}^Ps/var : תִּתְּפַקֵּן סִיפּוֹן <דמללן> שִׁיקְרָא... | תִּתְּאֲלַמְנָה שִׁפְתֵי שִׁקְרָא... |
| PS 57:8 | \mathfrak{T}^Ps : מִכּוֹז לְבִי <לאורינדן> יְהוּהָ | נִכְזֹן לְבִי אֱלֹהִים |
| PS 118:26?? | \mathfrak{T}^Ps : יִבְרַכּוּן־יִתְּכּוּן <מן־בית־מקדשא...> | יְבָרְכּוּכֶם מִבַּיִת יְהוָה: |
| PS 135:21 | \mathfrak{T}^Ps : בְּרִיד יְהוּהָ מִצִּיּוֹן דַּאֲשֵׁרִי <שכינתיה> בִּירוּשָׁלַם | בְּרִיד יְהוָה מִצִּיּוֹן שִׁכְנֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם |
| JOB 6:18 | \mathfrak{T}^b : <מטול> דִּמְקַלְקֵלֵן אֲסִרְטֵי אֹרְחֵיהֶוֹן | יִלְפָתוּ אֲרָחוֹת דְּרַכְכֶם |
| PROV 1:31 | \mathfrak{T}^Pr : <ויין־עולא> דַּאֲרַחַתְהוֹן שִׁבְעוּ: | וּמִמַּעֲצֵתֵיהֶם יִשְׁבְּעוּ: |
| RUTH 2:11 | \mathfrak{T}^Rt : וַאֲזַלְת־לַאֲתֵיגִינְרָא וּלְמִיתָב <בין־עם דלא אשתמודע | וַתֵּלֶכֶי אֶל־עָם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדַעְתָּ |
| QOH 1:7 | \mathfrak{T}^{Qoh} : וּלְאֲתָרָא דִּנְחֵלָא אֲזַלִּין <ונגדין> | אֶל־מְקוֹם שֶׁהִנְחֵלִים הַלְלִים |

* all accentuation (and vocalization) of targumic texts in this table is a reconstruction of mine! The angle brackets mark targumic additions.

Table 28: Doubly accentuated words in the MT corresponding to additions in some targumim.

First, note that the above examples are taken from the whole TeNaK⁵⁶ and are not constrained to those books which are systematically read liturgically. See, in the first place, the book of Psalms of which, even if some psalms are part of the Jewish liturgy, we have no indication that they were read together with a *targūm*. Furthermore, it is evident that if the (Tiberian) Masoretic text was indeed memorized together with a *targūm*, it was none of the *targumīm* known to us today. It seems, however, that this *targūm* was quite close to the Neofyti and to a lesser degree to the Pseudo-Jonathan. This would strengthen the assumed Palestinian provenance of these *targumīm*.

Moreover, note that the above reconstruction attempts to interpret the existing targumic text, but in some cases more meaningful reconstruction would be possible, if we assumed the existence of further targumic additions, not found in existing *targumīm*. See, e.g. EXOD 25:21 where two words in the Masoretic text are doubly accentuated but a corresponding targumic addition is only known for one of them. In my opinion, it would make a good sense to assume that הָאֲרוֹן also had more than one word in the original “Tiberian” *targūm*. It is not difficult to guess that הָאֲרוֹן, “the Ark”, would possibly have been translated as אַרְוֹן קַיִמָּא* (= אַרְוֹן הַבְּרִית, “the Ark of covenant”). See also Ps 135:21 where also only the second doubly accentuated Hebrew word can be traced back to an addition in a *targūm*. It is, however, quite possible the Masoretic יְהוָה יְהוָה could also have been extended to match the benediction phrase בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, frequently used in the Jewish liturgy and beyond.

On the other hand in RUTH 2:11 the “Tiberian” *targūm* was probably simpler than the existing one. The addition of לַאֲתִיגִירָא וְלִמִּיתָב seems already to be a conflate reading of two versions of the *targūm* and we can expect that the “Tiberian” *targūm* originally either only had וְאִזְלָת לַאֲתִיגִירָא* or וְאִזְלָת לִמִּיתָב*. The fact that the Masoretic text has only two accents for this cluster (the *mūnah* and *zaqēf* on וְתִלְכִי) would support this assumption.

If we look closer at the examples, we can observe some more phenomena. First, the addition must not always mean that the corresponding Hebrew word receives two accents, sometimes the whole structure of a larger portion of the verse is changed and another word receives the double accentuation. See e.g. GEN 5:29 (both Neofyti and Pseudo-Jonathan), PS 57:8 or QOH 1:7.

56. As stated before, the choice of examples is rather haphazard and the fact that an example is not given for other books doesn't mean that such examples cannot be found.

Sometimes, as in Ps 19:14, *ge'ayā* placed in an unusual position can also be suspected of being the result of additions in the *targūm*. Note also that in GEN 5:29 two alternative additions are found in the Neofyti and Pseudo-Jonathan but the clustering remains the same.

In the above table I have also included three examples from the Psalms where a *šinnorīt* occurs. This accent (which always appears as a first accent in a doubly-accentuated word while the second one is a conjunctive) is itself usually classified as a conjunctive accent, although it has the same shape as *šinnōr*, which is a disjunctive. This is because it is not reasonable to assume that a word having two accents could have a disjunctive as the first one. However, given that *šinnorīt* can be relatively often related to a targumic addition, I propose also interpreting this accent as a result of influence from the targumic additions on the accentuation of the Hebrew Masoretic text⁵⁷.

As we have seen, therefore, it seems plausible that words in the Masoretic text having a double accentuation are remnants of a (now lost) *targum*, which accompanied the oral study of the Hebrew Bible and was synchronized with the Masoretic text through the accentuation of both texts. But not every targumic addition is reflected by a double accentuation of the Hebrew text; as we have seen above, there were apparently other ways of adapting the accentuation of the Targum itself to that of the Hebrew text. On the other hand, there are still a relatively large number of cases where no such targumic addition can be found, even if the Masoretic text has a doubly-accentuated word. While alternative reasons for doubly accentuated words cannot completely be ruled out, it seems to me that even in many cases where no targumic additions actually exist in one of the known *targumīm*, there is a plausible reason for expecting their existence in some “lost *targūm*”.

For example, as mentioned above⁵⁸, I have found 12 cases of doubly accentuated words in the first couple of chapters in Genesis. Only one of them has a targumic addition in the Onkelos (GEN 3:16) and two more could be found in the Targum Neofyti⁵⁹ (GEN 5:29; 7:21). However, among the cases not having corresponding additions in the Targum (see the table 21, p. 80 and table 22, p. 81) the Hebrew הָאֲדָמָה occurs five times in the Masoretic text (GEN 2:7,9; 3:19,23; 4:12).

57. For the doubly accentuated words among the “three books” (ת"מ) see also Yeivin 1967, p. 282ff.

58. See p. 80.

59. One of which has yet another addition in the Pseudo-Jonathan as well, see above table 28, p. 87.

Additionally, וְהָאֲזִים in GEN 4:1 has two accents as well. Note that הָאֲדָמָה is not translated uniformly in the Onkelos, nor in other *targumim* but varies between אֲדָמָתָא and אֲרַעָא (in four of these cases, in GEN 2:7,9; 3:23; 4:12 a variant is even found among the manuscript of Onkelos!) which makes it plausible that some other *targum* joined both possibilities into a conflate reading (such as *אֲדָמָתָא וְאֲרַעָא). However, other sources of targumic additions are certainly possible too, see for example Ibn Ezra on GEN 2:7 who explains the word הָאֲדָמָה saying: . היא ארץ ישראל . Similarly, David Qimḥi comments on the same word in GEN 2:9: “מֵאֲדָמַת הַגֵּן” . It is surely possible that these comments directly reflect some tradition having its roots in the “Tiberian” *targūm*. As for GEN 4:1 וְהָאֲזִים יָדַע אֶת־חַוְוָה אֲשֶׁתּוֹ , note that 𐤏 and 𐤏^J translate the word יָדַע as ידע while 𐤏^N and 𐤏 as חכם (سجمن) which also makes a double reading in the “lost Tiberian” *targūm* plausible.

If my assumption is correct that words having two accents in the Masoretic text had indeed two (or even more) corresponding words in its *targum*, and since it is generally assumed⁶⁰ that no *targumim* existed for the Aramaic parts of the Hebrew Bible (i.e. in parts of the books of Daniel and Esra), we would expect there to be no such doubly accentuated words in these passages of the Bible. This is not, however, true and we can find 66 such cases, according to the text of Codex Leningradensis. If we look at them more closely, though, we can see that the vast majority of them occur where a targumic addition would typically be expected.

Several of these doubly accentuated words can be categorized as archaic Aramaic terms typical for the milieu of the Persian court occurring typically in chains of such terms (such as the lists of high officials or musical instruments) in the text of Daniel (and to lesser degree in the book of Esra):

60. See e.g. Mulder 2004, p. 224.

| verse | MT |
|-----------|--|
| DAN 3:2 | לְאַחַדְרַפְנֵיָא סַגְנִיָא וּפְחֻתָא אֲדַרְגֻזְרִיָא <גְּדַבְרִיָא> דְּתַבְרִיָא תַּפְתִּיָא וְכֹל שְׁלֹטְנֵי מְדִינְתָא |
| DAN 3:3 | אֲחַשְׁדַּרְפְּנֵיָא סַגְנִיָא וּפְחֻתָא אֲדַרְגֻזְרִיָא גְּדַבְרִיָא <דְּתַבְרִיָא> תַּפְתִּיָא וְכֹל שְׁלֹטְנֵי מְדִינְתָא |
| DAN 3:5 | קַל קַרְנָא מְשֻׁרוּקִיתָא קַתְרוֹס סַבְכָא פְּסַנְתְּרִין <סוּמְפְנִיָה> וְכֹל זַנֵּי זְמָרָא |
| DAN 3:7 | קַל קַרְנָא <מְשֻׁרוּקִיתָא> קַתְרוֹס שְׁבַכָא פְּסַנְטְרִין וְכֹל זַנֵּי זְמָרָא |
| DAN 3:10 | קַל קַרְנָא מְשֻׁרוּקִיתָא קַתְרוֹס שְׁבַכָא פְּסַנְתְּרִין <וּסוּפְנִיָה> וְכֹל זַנֵּי זְמָרָא |
| DAN 3:15 | קַל קַרְנָא מְשֻׁרוּקִיתָא קַתְרוֹס שְׁבַכָא פְּסַנְתְּרִין <וּסוּמְפְנִיָה> וְכֹל זַנֵּי זְמָרָא |
| DAN 5:7 | <לְאַשְׁפִּיָא> כְּשִׁדְאֵי וּגְזָרִיָא |
| EZRA 5:6 | אֲפֹרְסָכִיָא |
| EZRA 7:24 | כָּל-כְּהֵנִיָא וְלוֹיָא <זְמָרִיָא> תַּרְעִיָא <נְתִינִיָא> <וּפְלֹחֵי> בֵּית אֱלֹהֵא דְנָה |

Table 29: Double accentuation in BA: archaic lexemes.

Only one of these lexemes is known in either Jewish-Babylonian or Jewish-Palestinian Aramaic⁶¹: in Jewish-Palestinian Aramaic a *plural* מְשֻׁרוּקִין is documented in a similar sense as in BA (DJBA: “musical pipe”). In Babylonian Aramaic, however, the word מְשֻׁרוּקִיתָא means “hissing”. It would be easy to imagine that, if in the dialect of the *meturgeman* this word more likely meant “hissing” or “whistling” than denote a kind of musical instrument, it would be only natural to add an explicative word such as “the instrument of whistling” (perhaps מְנִין דְּמְשֻׁרוּקִיתָא*) or similar. In the other cases we would simply expect the word in question to be paraphrased using two words.

Moreover, the parallel “chains” in DAN 3:2-3 shows very interesting feature. Both chains in the Masoretic text contain exactly the same words and their accentuation corresponds exactly to the same structural division (even if they differ in the principal disjunctive accent, מְדִינְתָא versus מְדִינְתָא, and consequently in the whole chain of preceding accents):

| | |
|----------|---|
| DAN 3:2: | ... אֲדַרְגֻזְרִיָא <גְּדַבְרִיָא> דְּתַבְרִיָא תַּפְתִּיָא וְכֹל שְׁלֹטְנֵי מְדִינְתָא ... |
| DAN 3:3: | ... אֲדַרְגֻזְרִיָא גְּדַבְרִיָא <דְּתַבְרִיָא> תַּפְתִּיָא וְכֹל שְׁלֹטְנֵי מְדִינְתָא ... |

Figure 33: The parallel structure of chains in DAN 3:2,3.

61. According to DJBA and DJPA.

The only difference between these two chains is that in DAN 3:2 it is גְּדַבְּרִיָּא that receives the double accentuation whereas in DAN 3:3 it is דְּתַבְּרִיָּא . It is therefore clear that the reason for the accentuation of these two words cannot depend on the words themselves or on the prosodic structure of the verse. On the other hand, if we assume that this peculiar accentuation is based on a cantillation of a *targūm* transmitted parallel to the Masoretic text, and that this *targūm* had a word added in between our two words in question, then that could explain this phenomenon nicely.

Another specific group of doubly accentuated words in BA includes places which in the original Biblical Aramaic text are somewhat elliptical. In other words, where the way to express these utterances contains “gaps”⁶²), it is typical for the *targūmīm* (as well as for the whole midrashic approach of the Jewish exegesis) to try to fill such gaps.

62. If we may borrow the terminology of the literary approach to the Biblical text, such as used by Meir Sternberg (Sternberg 1987, ch. 6, p. 186ff.).

| verse | MT | what's "missing"? |
|-----------|---|---|
| DAN 2:41 | וּמִן־נִצְבָתָא דִּי <פְּרִזְלָא> לְהוּא־בֵּה | "something of": <i>what exactly?</i> |
| DAN 3:12 | <לֹא־שָׁמוּ> עָלֶיךָ מִלְכָּא טַעַם | "didn't put": <i>what exactly?</i> |
| DAN 3:19 | לְמִנָּא לְאַתּוּנָא <חֲדָ־שִׁבְעָה> עַל דִּי חֲזָה לְמוּזָה | "one–seven": <i>what does it mean?</i> |
| DAN 4:9 | עָפִיָּה שְׁפִיר וְאַנְבָּה שְׁגִיָּא וּמְזוּן <לְכֹל־אֲבָה> | "everyone": <i>every what?</i> |
| DAN 4:18 | עָפִיָּה שְׁפִיר וְאַנְבָּה שְׁגִיָּא וּמְזוּן <לְכֹל־אֲבָה> | "everyone": <i>every what?</i> |
| DAN 5:19 | כָּל עַמְמֵיָּא אָמִיָּא <וְלִשְׁנֵיָּא> | "tongues": <i>what does it mean?</i> |
| DAN 5:21 | עִס־חִיּוּתָא שְׁזִיּוּ וְעִס־עַרְדֵּיָּא מְדוּרָה עֲשָׁבָא כְּתוּרִין <יְטַעֲמוּנָה> | "they will feed him": <i>whom?</i> |
| DAN 6:6 | לָהֶן <הַשְׁפַּחְנָה> עֲלוּהִי בְּדַת אֱלֹהָה | "we found": <i>what exactly?</i> |
| DAN 7:8 | וּתְלַת מוֹן־קַרְנֵיָּא <קוֹדֶמֶתָא> אֲתַעֲקֵרָה מוֹן־קוֹדֶמָה | "three horns": <i>not mentioned before!</i> |
| DAN 7:16 | קַרְבַּת עַל־חַד מוֹן־קַאֲמֵיָּא < | "standing": <i>who, where?</i> |
| EZRA 4:14 | וְעֵרוֹת מִלְכָּא לֹא <אַרְיָד> לְנָא לְמַחֲזָא | "long" ⁶³ : <i>of what?</i> |
| EZRA 4:14 | <עַל־דִּנְהָ> שְׁלַחְנָא וְהוֹדַעְנָא לְמִלְכָּא | "because of this": <i>of what?</i> |
| EZRA 4:15 | <עַל־דִּנְהָ> קִרְיָתָא דִּךְ הַחֲרָבַת | "because of this": <i>of what?</i> |

Table 30: Double accentuation in BA: elliptic expressions.

It can be expected that most of these "gaps" can be filled with a single word added to the sentence, such as $\text{לֹא־שָׁמוּ} > \text{לֹא־שָׁמוּ לְבָא}^*$ ("they did not pay attention"), $\text{לְכֹל חִיּוּן בֵּה} > \text{לְכֹל־אֲבָה}$ or $\text{עַל־דִּנְהָ} > \text{עַל פְּתִגְמָא דִּנְהָ}^*$.

A special category of such gap-filling is presented by those cases where a subject is missing in a sentence (originally denoting some anonymous group of actants) giving an opportunity for the *meturgeman* to supplement a more specific one:

63. "Long" is the basic meaning of אַרְיָד in both, the Jewish-Palestinian and Jewish-Babylonian Aramaic. In Jewish-Babylonian Aramaic, however, a second meaning, "proper, fit", which is apparently also the original meaning in the text of Esra, exists (see DJBA). It would thus seem, that a Palestinian *meturgeman* did not understand the original meaning of this word and tried to explain its basic sense "long" through extending it by another word. Cf. DJPA, DJBA and HALOT.

| verse | MT |
|------------------------|---|
| DAN 5:29 | בְּאֲדָנָן אָמַר בְּלִשְׁאֲצָר וְהַלְבִּישׁוּ לְדָנְיָאֵל ... <וְהַכְרִזוּ> עָלָיוּהִי... |
| DAN 6:17 | בְּאֲדָנָן מֶלֶכָּא אָמַר וְהִתְיוּ <לְדָנְיָאֵל> |
| ... and possibly also: | |
| DAN 3:9 | עֲנֹ <וְאָמְרִין> לְנְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר מֶלֶכָּא |

Table 31: Double accentuation in BA: missing subject.

On the other hand, we can also find two cases where a proleptic **בַּה** occurs. It is known, that such textual elements, which could be considered “pleonastic” were a motive for a particular category of haggadic interpretation of the biblical text, classified under the *ribbūy* rule⁶⁴, one of the 32 *middot* (exegetical rules) of Rabbi Eliezer, attributed traditionally to the school of Rabbi Aqiba. It therefore stands to reason that a similar interpretation could also explain the presumed double-translation of a double-accented word in our text:

| verse | MT |
|----------|--|
| DAN 5:12 | הַשְׁתַּכַּחַת בַּה <בְּדָנְיָאֵל> |
| DAN 5:30 | בַּה <בְּלִילִיָּא> קָטִיל בְּלִשְׁאֲצָר |

Table 32: Double accentuation in BA: “pleonasm”.

The following double-accented words which can each presumably be read as two separate words are yet another type:

| verse | MT | other versions |
|-----------|------------------|--|
| DAN 5:17 | וּנְבֻזַבְיַתָּד | Ⓞ: και τὴν δωρεὰν τῆς οἰκίας σου = *נְבֻזַבְיַתָּד |
| EZRA 7:12 | אֲרַתְחַשְׁתָּא | |

Table 33: Double accentuation in BA: expressions that can be read as two words.

64. See e.g. Stemberger 1996, p. 92.

See firstly **וַיְבַבְיָתָד** for which a Greek tradition is attested in Theodotion's translation (see above) rendering it as two words; it is thus plausible that the same exegetic tradition as that of Theodotion was also the basis for our presumed *targum* connected with the Tiberian Masoretic tradition.

Another category of targumic (and midrashic) additions often occur as a response to a specific content, which provokes the “midrashic imagination”. This can be, for example, particularly vivid or drastic scenes in the original Biblical narrative:

| verse | MT |
|----------|--|
| DAN 2:12 | <לְהוֹבִיָּה> לְכָל חַכְמֵי בָבֶל |
| DAN 6:25 | דִּי־שְׁלֹטוֹ בְּהוֹן <אַרְיוֹתָא> וְכַל־גְּרַמְיָהוֹן הִדְקוּ |
| DAN 7:5 | וְכֹן אָמְרִין לָהּ <קוּמִי> אֲכָלִי בְּשָׂר שְׂגִיָּא |
| DAN 5:6 | <וְאַרְכְּבָתָה> דָּא לְדָא נְקֻשָׁן |
| DAN 6:20 | <וּבְהַתְּבַהֲלָהּ> לְגַבְּא דִּי־אַרְיוֹתָא אֲזַל |

Table 34: Double accentuation in BA: drastic or vivid scenes.

or some apocalyptic symbolics whose interpretation is only hinted at in the original text, and which, therefore, needs to be explained more explicitly:

| verse | MT |
|----------|--|
| DAN 2:40 | וּמְלָכוֹ <רְבִיעָאָה> תְּהִיָּא תְּקִיפָה כְּפָרְזֻלָּא |
| DAN 7:6 | וְאַרְבַּעַה רֵאשִׁין <לְחִיּוֹתָא> |
| DAN 7:19 | אַדְיוֹן צְבִית לִיעֲבָא עַל־חִיּוֹתָא <רְבִיעֵיתָא> |
| DAN 7:23 | כֹּן אָמַר חִיּוֹתָא <רְבִיעֵיתָא> מְלָכוֹ רְבִיעָאָה |

Table 35: Double accentuation in BA: explanation of symbolics in the MT.

In the same way we sometimes find theologically important or even provocative passages among the doubly accentuated words:

| verse | MT |
|----------|---|
| DAN 2:11 | אֱלֹהֵינוּ דִּי <מְדַרְהוֹן> עַם-בְּשָׂרָא לֹא אִיתְּוּהִי |
| DAN 6:27 | דִּי בְּכָל-שְׁלֹטֹן מַלְכוּתֵי לְהוֹן זִיעִין <וְדַחֲלִין> מִזְקָדָם אֱלֹהֵהּ דִּי-דִנְיָאֵל |

Table 36: Double accentuation in BA: theological considerations.

Interestingly, there are also certain terms or names which tend to be repeatedly the subject of targumic additions. Often such words are important theological terms:

| lemma | verse | MT |
|-------------|-----------|-----------------|
| יְהוּדָאִי | EZRA 4:23 | עַל-יְהוּדָאִי |
| | EZRA 5:1 | עַל-יְהוּדָאִי |
| יְרוּשָׁלַם | EZRA 4:20 | עַל-יְרוּשָׁלַם |
| כְּנָת | EZRA 4:17 | כְּנֹתָהוֹן |
| | EZRA 5:6 | וּכְנֹתָהּ |
| | EZRA 6:6 | וּכְנֹתָהוֹן |
| מַלְכוּ | DAN 2:44 | וּמַלְכוּתָהּ |
| עָלָם | DAN 2:20 | וְעַד-עָלְמָא |
| | DAN 6:27 | לְעֵלְמִין |
| | DAN 7:18 | עַד-עָלְמָא |
| שְׁלֹטֵן | DAN 2:48 | וְהַשְׁלֹטָהּ |
| | DAN 6:25 | דִּי-שְׁלֹטֵן |
| | DAN 7:27 | שְׁלֹטְנֵי |
| | EZRA 4:20 | וְשְׁלִיטִין |

Table 37: Double accentuation in BA: important terms.

Interestingly, the name יְרוּשָׁלַם appears with two accents all over the Hebrew Bible (except in the Torah where the name doesn't occur at all): out of 669 occurrences of יְרוּשָׁלַם (or Aramaic יְרוּשָׁלַם) 84 are accentuated with double accentuation, i.e. in about 12,5% of the cases. This can presumably be explained as a result of some *epitheton* being added to the name or, alternatively, יְרוּשָׁלַם may

have even been completely paraphrased, such as עיר קדוש* or עיר שלום*. Similarly, the word עֲלָם could have pointed to the rabbinic הבא העולם, “the world to come”, or maybe to some augmented עלמא דעלמין. As for the word מְלִכּוּתָהּ (DAN 2:44), note that in this very same verse a “kingdom” can be identified with the “eternal kingdom” (מְלִכּוּ דִּי לְעֻלְמִין לָא תִתְחַבֵּל) and the “God of heaven” in the nearest proximity to מְלִכּוּ may also evoke the idea of the “heavenly kingdom”. Interestingly, we find a double accentuation twice more, together with a word derived from מלך√ in the TaNaK, namely וּמְלִכְתָּהּ in 2 SAM 3:21 and 1 KGS 11:37, and in both cases a future kingdom is promised (to David and to Jeroboam), so this can be interpreted in a mesianic sense.

Summarising, we have seen that the majority of cases where double accentuated words occur in the Aramaic portions of the Hebrew Bible, most of them can be identified with some problem or feature of the Masoretic text which would typically induce some haggadic addition (or similar phenomena) in the *targumim*. Out of 66 such cases of words with more than one accent, we only found ten which did not have an obvious explanation, suggesting that they would typically be translated by using two (or possibly more) words in some kind of a “*targūm*”. Even then, in a couple of them some further speculations can be made which would link them to the targumic additions:

| verse | MT | reason for a targumic addition |
|----------|--|---|
| DAN 2:10 | עֲנוּ כְּשִׁדְאֵי קֳדָם-מְלִכָּא וְאַמְרִין | addition of: וְאַמְרִין לָהּ* |
| DAN 2:46 | וּמְנַחָה <וְנִיחָחִין> אָמַר לְנִסְכָּה לָהּ | halachic considerations ? |
| DAN 6:21 | וּכְמִקְרָבָהּ לְגִבָּא <לְדַנְיָאֵל> בְּקֵל עֲצִיב זְעֵק | haggadic elaboration: Daniel and angel? |
| DAN 6:24 | בְּאַדְרָן מְלִכָּא שְׂגִיא טְאָב עֲלוּהִי <וּלְדַנְיָאֵל> | haggadic elaboration: Daniel and angel? |
| EZRA 6:4 | <וְנִפְקֻתָּא> מִן-בֵּית מְלִכָּא תִתְיָהֵב: | confusion of the <i>meturgeman</i> |

Table 38: Double accentuation in BA: other suggested interpretations.

In DAN 2:10 one could think about לָהּ being added after וְאַמְרִין to be the reason for the double accentuation of this word. The reason for this addition can lay in the fact that in Jewish-Palestinian Aramaic the preposition קֳדָם just meant “before”⁶⁵, whereas in Jewish-Babylonian Aramaic (as

65. See DJPA, art. קודם .

was the case in the Imperial Aramaic dialect of the books of Daniel and Esra) it could, in connection with the verb $\sqrt{\text{אמר}}$, express also “to say to XY”⁶⁶). Therefore if $\text{ענו כשדאי קדם מלכא}$ originally meant “The Chaldeans answered to king” it may have been understood by the Palestinian *qarā* and *meturgeman* as “The Chaldeans answered before the king”. In such a case an addition of לה seems to be a natural way of making this understandable to someone speaking this dialect and may therefore explain the two accents on וְאָמְרִין in the MT.

In EZRA 6:4 the form וְנִפְקְתָּא may not have been understood as a noun (“the expenses”) but misunderstood by the *meturgeman* as a verbal form: “it came out”. It would, then, need another word to specify what exactly “came out”.

In DAN 6:21,24, the proper name “Daniel” occurs twice with double accentuation. Perhaps can this be explained as a result of some *haggadic* interpolations which (based on v. 23) assumed that there actually were two “persons” in the den: Daniel and the angel. The presumed “Targum” may have, therefore, read “Daniel and his angel” instead.

In DAN 2:46 both the word in question גִּיּוֹחִין and the preceding one מְנֻחָה are cultic terms and may be of *halachic* interest. Therefore, even if they actually refer here to an offering that the Babylonian king tried to make to Daniel, some *halachic* discussion may have arisen which eventually led to an addition of some more specific word(s) to the “targūm”.

However, as stated above, the reconstruction of these five verses remains highly hypothetical and is only to illustrate the possibility that even here the presumed “targūm” of these verses may quite possibly have received a “targumic addition”.

To sum up, the overwhelming majority of the doubly accented words in the Aramaic portions of the Hebrew Bible can be attributed to some of the phenomena typical for targumic additions, and in other cases the same can be claimed with a lesser degree of probability. This seems to indicate that there was indeed a “targūm” even to the Aramaic parts of the Bible and that it was learned (i.e. memorized) together with the oral “Masoretic text” in a verse-by-verse manner. Presumably after the “Masoretic” oral tradition was “written down” (in a form of vocalization and accentuation of the Masoretic codices) such a *targūm* was lost.

66. See DJBA, art. קודם , 2.

If our assumption that a *targūm* on the whole Hebrew Bible existed is correct, it would change to some degree our understanding of what a *targūm* actually was. Rather than a “translation” in our modern sense it should be seen rather as some sort of continuous commentary, aimed at explaining the meaning of the memorized text. Therefore, it should not be surprising that a *targūm* existed even for the same language it was “translating”⁶⁷), as we have shown in case of the Aramaic portions of the Bible. The reason for the existence of such a *targūm* may not only lay in the fact that certain words and expressions of the BA were no more longer used by the time of their translation (see above table 29, p. 91), but more as a result of the need to explicate the meaning of the text.

The oral setting of the *targūm* (which inevitably follows the hypothesis of a synchronization with the original text through the accents) can, in my opinion, well explain its very existence as a sort of commentary on its “parent” Hebrew text: if a text is written it can be stored in the library and forgotten. A memorized text, on the other hand, will always be provoking new questions and must be constantly repeated or it is forgotten. Actually a commentary in the form of a “*targūm*” can itself be considered a mnemonic device, as the understanding of a text helps one to memorize it. In this sense, it can be said that the oral study provides a more holistic approach to the text and combines several aspects which are separate and specialized in the literary approach (commenting, analysing, translating and transmitting the text, i.e. copying). Obviously the targumic approach was not the only way that the Biblical text was studied. It may be compared to the art of the *midrašīm* which (except for the more complicated ones, such as the homiletic *midrašīm*) present a basically similar technique but are only commenting on selected words or phrases. Individual comments, on the other hand, can be longer and more elaborate than the targumic explanations⁶⁸). A more detailed comparison of these two techniques from the point

67. One should also consider whether, in turn, a “Hebrew *targūm*” may have existed for some of the Hebrew texts of TeNaK and whether some extant “Biblical” manuscripts could possibly represent such a “*targūm*” (or be based on it). Some Qumran scrolls, such as the 1QIsa^a or even more free “para-biblical” texts, could be good candidates for further research.

68. As we will see below (p. 105), it seems that the *midrašīm* were sometimes transmitted having different accentuation for the biblical quotation and for the actual text of the *midraš*. This would present a different editorial technique from the targumic one, for which the accentuation, however, doesn't play a constitutive role.

of view of an oral study of the Biblical text is out of scope of the present work and remains a *desideratum*⁶⁹).

As noted before, the hypothesis that the *targumim* may have been memorized and studied orally together with the original Hebrew text using the accents as a synchronization device, agrees well with the observations some made by scholars on the *targumim* and their translation technique. Avigdor Shinan⁷⁰) treats two basic types of a *targum*: a “word-for-word” and an “expanded” translation containing more lengthy additions. When speaking about the former one he states that it “is convenient for memorization and facilitates the oral presentation of the Targum”⁷¹). He also claims that “the biblical verse served as a mnemo-technical device”, as a result of which it “offers ... a text that was more or less equal in length to the biblical verse.” This agrees very closely with our findings; the only small difference being that we claim that the mechanism allowing such a “word-for-word” translation was the Hebrew accents, i.e. the “chant” of these texts.

A similar claim has also been made for the Septuagint. Albert Pietersma, for example, who was one of the translators of the “New English Translation of the Septuagint”, came up with a theory of an “interlinear” origin of the Septuagint⁷²), in which he claimed that the LXX and its translation technique resembles a text written in an inter-linear fashion, where each word of the original text is annotated by a word (or more) in the target language. Later, though, after a criticism⁷³), he somewhat reformulated his thesis to make clear that the concept of “interlinearity” did not necessarily mean physically text written interlinearly (the lack of evidence for any manuscript written in such a way was one of the points criticised by Pietersma's opponents). I would like to propose a hypothesis here that the text of the Septuagint may indeed have its roots in a similar model, differing only in that the “interlinearity” was not produced in a written way but through

69. Very important for such a comparison is the fact that Pseudo-Jonathan adds to a “word-for-word” translation, as known from other *targumim*, lengthier additions which resemble the *midrašim*. Perhaps this was an attempt to join the targumic and midrashic traditions into one *opus*? Avigdor Shinan (Shinan 1991, p. 149-150) assumes that, in contrast to other *targumim*, Pseudo-Jonathan was created by a scribe and not meant for oral transmission and performance.

70. Shinan 1991.

71. Shinan 1991, p. 139-141.

72. Pietersma 2002.

73. Muraoka 2008; Pietersma, Response.

a chant, i.e. in the same way as we have seen with the *targumīm*. This explanation is even compatible with a competing theory of a “liturgical” origin of the LXX, if we consider the synagogal liturgical reading to be basically a special (ritualized) case of an oral study of the biblical text. The “liturgical” translation could actually differ from a “study” one mainly in regard to the selection of particular pericopes. I’m not claiming, though, that all the Greek translations of TeNaK must have necessarily been created this way. A much broader scale of configurations between a solely oral and a solely literal translation are possible. For example, a translation may have been the result an oral study of a written copy of the original text and then memorized; or, on the other hand, a written translation may have been based on memorized text without a written *Vorlage*. The whole scale of possible oral—written interactions should be considered in further research.

If we now only consider the possibility that the accents served to “synchronize” the Biblical text with its *targūm* (in whatever language it be), this provides a very flexible technique. It would allow for chanting the text in a verse-by-verse manner, as suggested above. It may, however, also be possible to recite the parallel texts on a word-by-word (or cluster-by-cluster) basis. This would presumably happen during the translation process itself, during teaching or more thorough study. On the other hand, a text memorized in such a way would be easy to perform independently from its counterpart, i.e. the *targūm* alone, or the “Masoretic” text alone. Actually a similar effect can be achieved in writing using only a synoptic layout. It may also be possible to add a further text in another language, to be chanted together with the biblical text and its *targūm* (compare biblical fragments, mostly pointed with the Babylonian punctuation, having the Hebrew text together with Targum Onkelos and the Arabic translation of Rav Saadya Gaʿōn, alternating in a verse-by-verse manner⁷⁴).

To conclude, the evidence provided by the Masoretic accents fits well with modern findings about the character of ancient “translations” of the text of the Hebrew Bible and shows, that most probably the Hebrew accentuation served (apart from being a mnemonic device for memorizing the Hebrew text itself) as a synchronization tool between the Hebrew text and its *targūm*-like translations. Such a synchronization may possibly also be reflected in the following passage from the Yerushalmi:

74. See individual manuscripts as described by Yeivin 1983, p. 99-193.

It was taught: “Two shouldn't ‘read’ the Torah and one ‘translate’”. Rabi Zeira said: “[It is forbidden] because of the benediction.” But was it learned: “Two shouldn't ‘translate’ and one ‘read’ [the Torah]”?—[No! Therefore] you shouldn't say: “because of the benediction”; but [it is] because two voices don't enter the ear.

תני לא יהיו שנים קורין בתורה וא' מתרגם א"ר
זעירה מפני ברכה והא תני לא יהו שנים מתרגמין ואחד
קורא אית לך מימר מפני ברכה אלא מפני שאין שני
קולות נכנסין באוזן

Figure 34: Two voices “don't enter the ear”. *YMEG 4:1, 28A*

Clearly the “aesthetic” interpretation of this saying is not the only possible one, on the contrary, it would make much more sense if we assume that “entering the ear” stands for a more practical phenomenon, such as the effect of memorizing. In any case, it would seem that the strict division of roles between the one who recites the Torah and the *meturgemān* may have been useful, not only in the context of public synagogal liturgy, but also during the study of the biblical text.

5.5 The Accentuation of the Rabbinic Literature

LITERATURE: Yeivin 1958 Revell 1979

Besides the Biblical text a relatively large number of fragments of the Rabbinic literature (Mishna, Palestinian and Babylonian Talmud, Midrash and even some independent halachic material) are extant, having some sort of accentuation. The accentuation signs are the same as, or similar to, their Biblical counterparts, either in some of the Palestinian punctuation systems⁷⁵), in the Tiberian punctuation or in some transitional stage between the two systems⁷⁶). Many of these fragments were described by Yeivin⁷⁷), who admits that possibly many more are yet to be found. E. J. Revell has also analysed some of such manuscripts, particularly those containing Mishna fragments.

75. The accent signs (and to a lesser degree also the vowels) are not uniform even in the Biblical fragments with Palestinian punctuation and show various stages of its development. For a thorough classification and analysis of the Palestinian accentuation of Biblical texts see Revell 1977.

76. Yeivin also mentions one example of a manuscript containing both the Babylonian and the Tiberian punctuation, see Yeivin 1958, p. 167-168.

77. Yeivin 1958.

These systems differ basically from the Tiberian or Palestinian accentuation of the Bible in two aspects: 1) they occasionally have other signs not existing in the biblical manuscripts, 2) the way the accents are used, differs substantially from the biblical systems. Some of the unique accent signs are similar to their counterparts known from the biblical accentuation, for example:

| a “rabbinic” accent | similar to |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| ⊙ _{ss} | ⊙ _s – <i>darga</i> |
| ⊙ _q | ⊙ _q – <i>mahpaḳ</i> |
| ⊙ _s | ⊙ _q – <i>mahpaḳ</i> |
| ⊙ _v | ⊙ _v – <i>segoltā</i> |

Table 39: Examples of accents specific to the accentuation of the Rabbinic literature.

We can see that some of the additional signs are a graphical duplication of an existing Tiberian accent. Such a phenomenon is well-known from the Tiberian biblical system itself, e.g. the accents *geršāyim* (⊙_{ss}, a duplication of *geres*, ⊙_s) or *merkā kefulā* (⊙_q, a variant of *merkā*, ⊙_q). Similarly the *qarnē para* (⊙_{ss}) seems to be a combination of *telīša gedolā* (⊙_s) and *telīša ketanā* (⊙_v). It stands to reason that such accent signs were most probably chosen to reflect similarities in the melodies of the accents in question, which must have been similar to a large degree. Similarly we can expect that the accent signs of the Rabbinic literature shown above were chosen because their melodies were similar to their “single” counterparts known from the Biblical accentuation.

What is even more important, the inner logic of the accentuation of Rabbinic texts differs fundamentally from the Biblical accentuation. As Revell shows⁷⁸, the basic difference in the two systems lies in the fact that, whereas the basic unit of the Biblical accentuation is a relatively short verse (in the prosaic system divided into halves by *atnāḥ*), the Rabbinic accentuation has a “paragraph” as its smallest self-contained unit. This paragraph corresponds to the rabbinic *sugiyā* containing one closed discussion. As a result of this basic structural difference, the inner structures of both systems differ substantially.

To sum up, both above-mentioned features of the accentuation of Rabbinic texts clearly show that such accentuated fragments of the Rabbinic literature didn't strive to imitate the Biblical

78. Revell 1979, p. 151ff.

accentuation, but rather represented an independent “chant” system of this literary corpus. As we have no records of the Rabbinic literature being systematically part of the Jewish liturgy, this can only mean that these texts were sung in the process of their regular study. This would strengthen our assumption that the accentuation represented originally a mnemonic device used as a basic technique for memorizing the texts and their oral study, and that their liturgical use was only secondary.

Furthermore, some accentuated fragments of rabbinic texts containing direct biblical quotations (e.g. *midrashim*) show an interesting feature: the biblical quotations are, in contrast to the rest of these texts, accentuated according to the standard Biblical tradition with regular accents. On other fragments, on the other hand, the Biblical quotation are accentuated with the Rabbinic system, though⁷⁹). Both cases fit well with the assumption that the accents served primarily as mnemonics: the former cases can be explained by assuming that the Biblical text is quoted exactly as memorized using its original accents (note that one such example quoted by Yeivin is a *midrash!*), whereas in the latter cases the Biblical text had already become part of the new text and was memorized as its integral part using the “rabbinic” accentuation.

5.6 The Accentuation of Other Texts

Some fragments of other texts, besides the Bible, the Targumim and the Rabbinic literature, were also annotated with the accents⁸⁰. Such texts don't have their own system of accentuation but use the Biblical one. Among these texts are fragments of Ben-Sira⁸¹ and some other late works, among them a couple of writings of Rav Saadya Gaon.

It is no less interesting to mention Saadya's autobiographic⁸² book ספר הגלוי , “The Book of the Exile” which Saadya wrote originally in Hebrew, divided into verses and provided with accents⁸³. His adversaries, however, accused him of trying to make his book seem more important by preparing it in the form that resembles the Bible. As a response Saadya translated his work into Arabic

79. Revell 1979, p. 156.

80. See Yeivin 1958, p. 47-51.

81. See above p. 72 where I discuss the “poetic” accentuation system.

82. Steinschneider 1986, p. 62.

83. Yeivin 1958, p. 48.

(under the name “الطارد”) and in the foreword he argued against his critics' accusations. Saadya maintained that such a use of accents was quite usual in other books and was not constrained only to the Bible. He gives as an example Ben-Sira⁸⁴ or *midraš* Megilat Antiochus⁸⁵). He also notes that “men of Kairouan” have reportedly written a short book in which they described their persecution, which they also divided into verses and provided with accents. As Yeivin notes, this book no longer exists, but some fragments from a comparable composition (מגילת מצרים written 1012 C.E.) containing vocalization and accents have survived⁸⁶.

More interestingly, Saadya claims that his use of accents was aimed at “easing the reading and to make it possible to memorize”—ליכון אסהל לקראתה ואמכן לחפטה⁸⁷. Note that the root he uses for “memorizing” (حفظ) is the same one used in Islam to denote the memorizing of the *Qurʿān*. If we consider that the Geonic era was the period in which the transition from a prevalently oral culture into the literate one took place (the clearest indication of this is the fact that only during the Gaonic period books of individual authors, having clear structure, start to appear, replacing the “traditional literature” based on constant reformulating of, or commenting on, previous traditions) it becomes apparent that Saadya must still have known some of the techniques of oral study—and among them the accents, whose meaning was most probably already lost to his critics.

This shift from orality to literacy can also reasonably well explain why fragments of accented non-Biblical texts are among the oldest mediaeval written documents, but no are known from later periods (as opposed to the vocalization being used up to our times): we can assume that use of the accentuation for non-biblical writings could only have occurred in the transitional stage, where writing was becoming more common but the techniques of oral study were still to some degree known.

Yet another interesting topic is the accentuation of the *piyutīm*. Yeivin mentions this problem only briefly at the very end of his article on the accentuation of the Rabbinic literature⁸⁸). As Yeivin notes, the accentuation of the *piyūt* seems to show more “musical” features than other

84. See p. 72.

85. Strack 1982, p. 302.

86. Yeivin 1958, p. 50. Unfortunately none of the publications of these fragments preserved the vocalization and accentuation.

87. Yeivin 1958, p. 48.

88. Yeivin 1958, p. 229-231.

accentuation systems, especially the frequent use of the *šalšelet* sign which perhaps indicates more complicated melismatic melodies. Compare this to the development of the Christian chant, where the liturgical “poems” represent one step towards the western music as we know it today. At any rate I must agree with Yeivin that the accentuation of the *piyutīm* is worth further research⁸⁹.

5.7 Disagreement of the Vocalization with the Accents

LITERATURE: Y. Breuer 1992 Revell 1984 Revell 1983 M. Breuer 1979

Another unusual phenomenon connected to the Hebrew accents is the occasional disagreement between the vocalization and the accentuation. This was noted for example by Mordechai Breuer⁹⁰, E. J. Revell analysed this problem by focusing on the pausal forms⁹¹, but similar discrepancies could be shown on the phenomenon of *nesiga* (a retraction of an accent) which Revell addresses in another article⁹². Here, I would like to discuss the article⁹³ by Yoḥanan Breuer⁹⁴ who has analysed some interesting cases of the disagreement between the vocalization and the accents, and sorts them basically into four categories:

First, Yoḥanan Breuer points out cases where a syntactic division following the *status absolutus/status constructus* forms (evident from the vocalization) disagrees with the division of the accents, for example⁹⁵:

EXOD 28:11:

מַעֲשֵׂה הַרֶשֶׁת אֶבֶן

Figure 35: Disagreement between the vocalization and the accents: *st. cs./st. abs.*

Clearly the form *הַרֶשֶׁת* is in the *status constructus* (in contrast to *מִלְאֲכַת הַרֶשֶׁת*, ExOD 35:35, for example) and should therefore be better connected with *אֶבֶן* (i.e. the whole phrase would be understood

89. Idem.

90. M. Breuer 1979.

91. Revell 1984.

92. Revell 1983.

93. Y. Breuer 1992.

94. The son of prof. Rabbi Mordechai Breuer, mentioned above.

95. Y. Breuer 1992, p. 194

as “as the work”—“of a stonemason”). The accents, however, suggest a different division, as seen above, (with the meaning: “as the work of a craftsman”—“[namely as] a [precious] stone”). As Breuer notes, the accentuation agrees with the Pseudo-Jonathan (עובד אומן יהויין מרגלייתא), Neofyti (עובד אומן תהוי אבניה) and Peshittā (ܚܘܒܐ ܘܡܢܐ ܬܗܘܝܐ ܐܒܢܝܗ).

The second category comprises those examples concerning a definite article occurring with a word after the preposition *-בְּ*, *-לְ*, *-כִּי*, such as the following example⁹⁶:

Ps 105:41 הִלְכּוּ בְּצִיּוֹת נְהָר

Figure 36: Disagreement between the vocalization and the accents: the definite article.

As Y. Breuer shows, the division of the accents corresponds to the midrashic tradition which understands *צִיּוֹת* in this verse as a plural of *צִי*, “a ship” and not of *צִיָּה*, “the wilderness”. According to the former interpretation, *צִיּוֹת נְהָר* would be understood as a genitival construct in which, however, the first item shouldn't be determined. But this is exactly the opposite of how the word *בְּצִיּוֹת* is vocalized, showing that the vocalization disagrees with the accents.

A further group of disagreements is represented by cases of pausal forms not corresponding to the accentual division of the verse. Breuer further divides this group into two basic phenomena: a) a disagreement which shows some exegetical considerations, b) disagreement based solely on the variability of the accentual system. One of the examples Y. Breuer gives for the former possibility is to be found in LEV 5:18⁹⁷:

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| LEV 5:18 (<i>accents</i>): | עַל שִׁגְגַתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר־שָׁגָג וְהוּא לֹא־יָדַע וְנִסְלַח לּוֹ: |
| | |
| LEV 5:18 (<i>vowels</i>): | עַל שִׁגְגַתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר שָׁגָג וְהוּא לֹא יָדַע וְנִסְלַח לּוֹ |
| | |

Figure 37: Disagreement between the vocalization and the accents: pausal forms.

96. Y. Breuer 1992, p. 205.

97. Y. Breuer 1992, p. 214.

In the first two examples, one could take the last two consonants יה- to be either an ending belonging to the lexeme or a short form of the Tetragamm known, for example, from the compound word הללו־יה¹⁰⁰. In the latter, case which is indicated by the accents in our two examples, one would, however, have expected the *hē* to have had a *mappiq*. Note, that we already mentioned the last example above when dealing with the double accentuation¹⁰¹.

Y. Breuer concludes his article and maintains that the disagreements mentioned between the vocalization and the accents may point to two distinct traditions which were mixed into one “conflate”¹⁰². As an alternative interpretation, however, he offers the possibility that not two traditions of vocalization (each having its own accents) existed, but that existing vocalization was “reinterpreted” by the accentuation and no mixture of traditions ever happened¹⁰³. As Y. Breuer mentions in a footnote¹⁰⁴, the accents sometimes contradict the basic Hebrew syntax:

DEUT 33:24: יְהִי רְצוֹן אֲתֶיךָ

Figure 40: *Disagreement between the accents and the Hebrew syntax.*

I'd like to add a similar example where a simple change of consonants (and their vocalization) could fit well with the present accentuation, but, as with the present form, the accents contradict the Hebrew grammatical rules:

GEN 6:17: וְאָנֹכִי הַנְּנִי מִבְּיָא אֶת־הַמְּבֹל מִיָּם עַל־הָאָרֶץ

Figure 41: *Disagreement between the accents and consonants (with vowels).*

Clearly, if we had *את מבול המים here instead of *... את המבול , the accents would fit well with the basic meaning of the Hebrew text.

100. E.g. Ps 104:35; 105:4; 106:48; 113:9, etc.

101. See table 33, p. 95.

102. Y. Breuer 1992, p. 237

103. Y. Breuer 1992, p. 238.

104. Y. Breuer 1992, note 137, p. 238.

If we take, as I'm suggesting, the accents to primarily represent a mnemonic device, it does not seem completely clear how the first explanation of this disagreement, presented by Y. Breuer, i.e. a mixture of different traditions, could have taken place. While this possibility cannot be completely ruled out, it seems to me improbable that the accents, which were aimed at protecting the memorized text from *lapsus memoriae*, would be confused in such a way between different traditions. It seems to me, therefore, that the second explanation is the correct one for the majority of cases, i.e. that the accents “reinterpret” the text, sometimes even against the vocalization. Moreover, given the agreement of the accentuation with (some of the) *targumīm* as we have seen in some of the above examples, I would suggest interpreting this disagreement as yet another result of my thesis, presented above, that the accentuation served as a synchronization device between the Masoretic text and its *targūm*, and that sometimes the accentuation was adapted to the text of the *targūm*¹⁰⁵). Further research should be done to prove or disprove this hypothesis¹⁰⁶).

105. See above chapter 5.4, p. 73. Note that again the Pseudo-Jonathan (and to a lesser degree Neofyti) agrees most with the Tiberian accentuation.

106. Clearly, not only doubly accented words, as suggested above, should be checked, but also other anomalies of the accentuation such as verses having one of their “halves” very short.

Chapter 6

Masoretic Notes

The accepted scholarly view is that the Masoretic notes presented a scribal device introduced in order to preserve the Biblical text as accurately as possible¹. As such it marks words having some unusual (or even problematic) orthography and indicates to the scribe, who produces his copy from the “master codex”, not to change or correct such a form. For example, Israel Yeivin states²:

The purpose of the Masoretes was not merely to preserve those unusual features of the textual tradition discussed above³, but to preserve the whole text, that is to say every letter of every word, and also—after the introduction of the vowel and accent signs—each one of these signs as well.

Figure 42: *I. Yeivin on the Masoretic accents.*

This presumed goal of Masoretic notes would agree nicely with some of the evidence: most notably, the custom of the Masoretes only to note unusual or rare forms, (and especially the *hapax legomena* which is probably the most frequent note in the *masora parva*) but ignore phenomena occurring frequently or regularly. However, under more thorough scrutiny, some facts appear which can, in my opinion, question this accepted view and show, surprisingly, that the origin and primary *Sitz im Leben* of the Masoretic notes may have been other than that usually assumed.

6.1 An Example: The *Masora parva* of JOSH 1

I would, therefore, like to present some phenomena based on the comparison of the *masora parva* notes of the first chapter of the book Joshua⁴ in four masoretic manuscripts: the Codex of the

1. See Yeivin 1980, §63ff, p. 34ff, Mulder 2004, p. 106ff, Kelley 1998, p. 2, Tov 2001, p. 72ff, Fischer 2009, p. 46ff.

2. Yeivin 1980, §110, p. 64

3. Yeivin refers to phenomena like *qerē/ketīv*, *tiqqunei sofrīm*, *al-tikrī*, *sevirīn* etc. See Yeivin 1980, §§88-110, p. 49-64.

4. I chose the beginning of the *former prophets* because this part is preserved both in the Aleppo codex (most of the Torah was destroyed during riots in the 20th century) and the Cairo codex.

Prophets from the Karaite Synagoge in Cairo (C)⁵, being the oldest dated (if we are to believe its colophon⁶) masoretic codex, the Leningrad Codex (L)⁷, the Aleppo Codex (A)⁸ and the much later Madrid codex M1⁹, written reportedly in 1280 C.E.¹⁰ and serving apparently as “master codex” of Madrid or even the whole of Spain. All the Masoretic notes analysed below can be found in appendix B, p. 210.

If we compare the occurrence of each note we can see that they do not always appear in all the manuscripts. Obviously some of the notes do:

| verse | text | Masora |
|----------|-------|-------------|
| JOSH 1:8 | וְאָז | A L C M1: ך |

Table 40: Notes found in all four mss.

Other notes, however, are found in some, but not all the analyzed manuscripts:

| verse | text | Masora |
|-----------|---------------------|--|
| JOSH 1:1 | מֹשֶׁה עֶבֶד יְהוָה | A L: יד בסיפ M1: יד בספ |
| JOSH 1:3 | לְכֶם נִתְּתִיו | A L C: ל |
| JOSH 1:10 | שֹׁטְרֵי | C: כל לשנ חס ו ב מ א M1: כל ליש חס בר מן א |
| JOSH 1:14 | יֵשְׁבוּ | A C M1: כ |

Table 41: Notes found only in some of the mss.

Sometimes we can even see a masoretic note unique to a particular manuscript:

5. Yeivin §32, p. 20. I had no access to the facsimile (Cairo Codex 1971) and used the edition of the CSIC in Madrid (Castro 1980), instead.
6. Which some scholars take as not being authentic, see Lehman 1974 and Yeivin 2001, p. 18.
7. Yeivin 1980, §30, p. 18.
8. Yeivin 1980, §26, p. 16. I used its online facsimile edition at <http://www.aleppocodex.org/> [retrieved on 2011/09/03].
9. Fernández-Tejero 2009.
10. See del Barco 2003-2006, vol. 1 (2002), p. 109-112.

| verse | text | Masora |
|----------|------------------------|----------|
| JOSH 1:2 | וְעַתָּה קוּם | A: ג |
| JOSH 1:2 | אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן הַזֶּה | L: ו |
| JOSH 1:2 | עָבַר | M1: ו חס |

Table 42: Masoretic only notes found in one ms.

Clearly, the manuscripts differ greatly as to which notes do they mention in a particular verse. It seems that the marginal Masoretic notes cannot be traced back to one “*master codex*” which they would copy from: such a level of variations hardly seems explainable if the notes are taken to be (written) text copied from one codex into another. On the other hand, the notes usually agree in content and mostly also in formulation. However, if we compare the same note occurring multiple times in our chapter we will see that whether a particular note occurs in a particular verse of a particular manuscript seems to be completely haphazard¹¹:

| verse | text | Masora |
|-----------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| JOSH 1:1 | מֹשֶׁה עֶבֶד יְהוָה | A L M1: יד בסיפ |
| JOSH 1:13 | מֹשֶׁה עֶבֶד־יְהוָה | M1: יד |
| JOSH 1:15 | מֹשֶׁה עֶבֶד יְהוָה | L: יד בסיפ M1: יד בפס |

Table 43: Variation of the same Masoretic note in different places (note on משה עבד יהוה in JOSH 1:1,13,15).

Note, also, the slight deviations in how the notes are formulated, e.g. in JOSH 1:13 the constraint בסיפרא, “in this book” is missing.

This leads us to the next observation: the formulation of the Masoretic notes varies frequently in various manuscripts or in various verses of the same version. Firstly, the notes vary greatly in their orthography:

11. There are, however, possibly some regularities which occur frequently. For example, in A the note occurs mostly only the first time the particular phenomenon is found in the Hebrew Bible. This resembles the Babylonian *Masora* where this is the principle for sorting the Masoretic notes within the Biblical canon.

| verse | text | Masora |
|-----------|---------------------|--|
| JOSH 1:1 | מֹשֶׁה עֲבַד יְהוָה | A L: יָד בַּסֵּף M1: יִד בַּסֵּף |
| JOSH 1:2 | מֹשֶׁה | A [L] [C]: גִּרְאָ פֶסֶת M1: גִּרְאֵשׁ פֶּסֶוּ |
| JOSH 1:10 | שִׁטְרֵי | C: כָּל לִשְׁנַיִם חֲסוּ בְּמֵאָה M1: כָּל לִישׁ חֶסֶם בְּרֵמֶן אֶ |

Table 44: Masoretic notes: variations in orthography.

It is evident that both סֵפֶר and סִפֵּר refer to *sifrā* (“a book”), פֶּסֶת and פֶּסֶוּ stands for *pasūq* (“a verse”) or לִישׁ and לִשְׁנַיִם both refer to *lišnā* (“the tongue” > “a meaning”).

The notes may also differ in their exact wording even if it is obvious that they refer to the same thing and are thus actually identical in meaning. Most notably, this can be seen on notes referring to other biblical places using *simanin* (catchwords)—this is the usual way that the *masora magna* is formulated, but it also occurs frequently in *masora parva* if it counts the sum of two occurrences (the current verse and one another):

| verse | text | Masora |
|----------|--------------|---|
| JOSH 1:4 | מִהַמְדָּבָר | A L M1: בָּ C: שֶׁלַח (=1 SAM 25:14) |
| JOSH 1:3 | כָּל-מְקוֹם | L M1: בָּ A: בָּ אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה שָׁם (=ISA 7:23) C: בָּ יִהְיֶה (=ISA 7:23) |
| JOSH 1:7 | מִמְנוֹ | A: וְסִבִּירֵי L: וְסִבְרֵי מִמְנוֹ M1: וְסִבְרֵי מִמְנוֹ וְסִבְרֵי מִמְנוֹ כֹּתֵם (see Mm) |

Table 45: Masoretic notes: variations in the wording.

As we can see, the manuscripts may differ as to whether they include the *simanin* or not. They, however, even sometimes disagree by which words exactly is the other verse quoted (see above JOSH 1:3 whose marginal notes refer to ISA 7:23 quoting either אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה שָׁם or just יִהְיֶה). Similarly the formulation of a *sevirin* (see JOSH 1:7 above) case may vary from a very short to a rather long one.

Moreover, the notes sometimes differ in the interpretation of a particular note:

| verse | text | Masora |
|----------|-------------|---|
| JOSH 1:4 | גְּבוּלְכֶם | L M1: גִּ A: גִּ בְּחֶסֶם וְחֵד מִלְּ C: לְ מִלְּ |

Table 46: Masoretic notes: variations in the interpretation.

In JOSH 1:4, three different Masoretic notes can be found in our codices: while L is apparently only interested in the form as pronounced (orally) and therefore counts three such cases, A repeats this finding, but specifies more closely their orthographical variants, i.e. that out of these three cases one has *plāenē* with the *plāenē* writing and two with the *defectīve* orthography (גְּבֻלָּכֶם¹³) are found in the Hebrew Bible. On the other hand, C considers these cases, not only with regard to their pronunciation, but also to their orthography and concludes accordingly that our form is unique. If we consider that C was (according to its colophon) written in the Year 896 C.E.¹⁴, A presumably in the first half of the 10th century, L reportedly in 1008¹⁵ and M1 in 1280¹⁶, it would seem that we are witnessing a historical development moving from counting the cases according to the orthography towards Masoretic notes based solely on the pronounced form.

If we, however, consider more closely the formulation in A: ג' הַסּ וְחָדַ מִלֵּי, “three times, two of [which are] *defectīve* and one *plāenē*”, we can see that even for A the primary question is the number of occurrences of a word sounding *g^obulkem* and more information about the orthographical variants is only provided as an addition. If the oral form was not the primary goal here, the *masora* would hardly count three cases and would rather begin with the orthography of the word in question itself (and not of other similar cases)—if it considered another spelling at all. It seems, therefore, that the majority of our four manuscripts are primarily concerned with the form as it was pronounced and that the orthographical question played only secondary role. It is only in C that the spelling exclusively reflects the orthography.

However, even if this is the oldest manuscript of the four mentioned (the oldest datable Masoretic manuscript), it does not necessarily represent an older stage of development. Clearly, if we presume that the development of the *Masora* started as a solely oral phenomenon, only later adopted by the scribes and expanded with orthographical questions, it is clear that in C we must already be witnessing the later stage, as it was obviously prepared by Masorets, who not

12. This is our verse, JOSH 1:4.

13. DEUT 11:24; AMOS 6:2.

14. However, some scholars take this colophon for being a late addition and date the manuscript (according to a chemical analysis) into the 11th century, see Yeivin 2001, p. 18.

15. For the dating of the A, C and L see Yeivin 1980, §26, p. 16; §30, p. 18; §32, p. 20.

16. See del Barco 2003-2006, vol. 1 (2002), p. 109-112.

only knew their (presumably oral¹⁷) tradition, but must have mastered the scribal techniques as well. It therefore stands to reason that all the manuscripts only combine already existing traditions, some of which go back to the solely oral form and others (also) having the orthography in mind. Moreover, note that some scholars deny the authenticity of the colophon of C and date the manuscript as 11th century.

In other cases, the variation between two manuscripts could just be the result of a counting error in one of these manuscripts:

| verse | text | Masora |
|----------|-------------|---|
| JOSH 1:2 | וְכָל־הָעָם | A L: זָא וְכָל רֵא פִסּוּ דְכוּ בִּמְגִ C: זָא וְכָל רֵא פִסּוּ דְכוּ בִּמְגִ |

Table 47: Masoretic notes: counting error.

This and similar cases are, however, ambiguous and can be interpreted in several ways. They can be taken basically as counting errors, as suggested, but they can also reflect transmission errors (be it a scribal error or an error of a similar type).

Another relatively frequent phenomenon is confusion in the attachment of a particular note to a corresponding word or words in the Masoretic text (this attachment is represented by the Masoretic *circelus* over the appropriate word or words):

17. See below the further discussion.

| text | Masora | note |
|---------------------------------|---|-------------|
| JOSH 1:9 | | |
| בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר תִּלְדָּה | A L: י | correct |
| בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר | M1: י | wrong (32×) |
| JOSH 1:14 | | |
| נְשִׂיכֶם טַפְּכֶם וּמִקְנֵיכֶם | A: ל | correct |
| נְשִׂיכֶם טַפְּכֶם | L C: ל | correct |
| נְשִׂיכֶם | | 7× |
| נְשִׂיכֶם | M1: ל' ראש' פסוק | correct |
| JOSH 1:12 | | |
| וְלִרְאוּבֵנִי | A: ב' נתתי מן הגלעד (=DEUT 3:16) L: ב' | correct |
| וְלִרְאוּבֵנִי וְלִגְדֵי | C: ב' נתתי מן הגלעד (=DEUT 3:16) M1: ב' אמר יהושע (=JOSH 1:12, sic!) | correct |
| JOSH 1:15 | | |
| גְּבוּרֵי הַחֵיל | A, M1: ה' | correct |
| הַחֵיל | L: ה' | wrong (83×) |

Table 48: Masoretic notes: confusion in the attachment of the note.

Interestingly, sometimes there is more than one possible way of choosing the appropriate words from the Hebrew text, which can be the basis of a particular note. Note that in such cases even the evidence is ambiguous: The omission of a *circelus* may be the result of a scribal error; it may, on the other hand, show that each Masorete had to employ an independently transmitted list of notes on the Hebrew text, and that he misunderstood which word the list was originally referring to.

In other cases, however, the whole wording of a particular note shows signs of confusion:

| verse | text | Masora |
|-----------|------------|----------------------|
| JOSH 1:14 | חֲמִשִּׁים | A M1: ו' וחס C: ב' |

Table 49: Masoretic notes: confusion about the meaning of a note.

Clearly, both notes, i.e. the one stating that the word קָמֵשׁ occurs four times (and *defective*) and the one claiming it occurs twice in the Bible, can be correct, depending on whether cases with the preposition -י are counted or not. This shows, however, a very interesting feature: most probably there was a tradition stating some count for a particular word, but the Masorete of a particular manuscripts (or that of the underlying tradition) thought the note was incorrect and changed it, therefore, into what he thought was more appropriate. If this is correct it brings up another interesting question: How did the Masorete know what is and what is not the correct sum?

We can even witness a confusion in both the placement and meaning of a note:

| verse | text | Masora |
|----------|------------------|---|
| JOSH 1:7 | רק חֶזֶק וְאַמֵץ | A: בְּ לַשְׁלֵשָׁה (=1 CHR 28:20) |
| | וְאַמֵץ | L: בְּ C: בְּ רַק לַשְׁלֵשָׁה (JOSH 1:7; 1 CHR 28:20) |
| | חֶזֶק וְאַמֵץ | M1: בְּ בַעֲנוּת |

Table 50: Masoretic notes: confusion in the placement and meaning of a note.

It seems that originally this note refers to the form קָמֵשׁ (having *pataḥ* in the second syllable, rather than the usual *qāmeš*, קָמֵשׁ ¹⁸) occurring twice in the Bible: besides JOSH 1:6 also in 1 CHR 28:20. This seems to be reflected in the notes of C and L. Interestingly, this form appears only in the phrase חֶזֶק וְאַמֵץ . This seems to be the basis for the note in A but we see that the Masorete of this codex also added the word רַק to the quoted cluster. This may be a simple error, but it can also be the result of the fact that in some dialects *pataḥ* and *qāmeš* were indistinguishable and so חֶזֶק וְאַמֵץ may have been confused with חֶזֶק וְאַמֵץ occurring six more times¹⁹. The note seems to be completely misunderstood by the Masorete of M1, who apparently tried to resolve this conflict by adding בַּעֲנוּת (=“in the context”). Clearly such inconsistencies are easily explainable if we assume that the origins of the marginal notes lay in independently transmitted lists of Masoretic notes. Note that it seems that while applying these notes to the codices, the Masorete apparently made his own interpretation of the evidence and did not just blindly copy them from an existing (written) text. The observation that the marginal Masora is based on independent lists can be

18. DEUT 31:7,23; JOSH 1:6,9,18; 1 CHR 22:13.

19. DEUT 31:7,23; JOSH 1:6,9,18; 1 CHR 22:13.

supported by the following peculiar note which (correctly) counts two forms in the Hebrew Bible, but in its *siman* (“a catchword”) it doesn't refer to the other occurrence but is erroneously quoting itself:

| verse | text | Masora |
|-----------|--------------------------|--|
| JOSH 1:12 | וְלִרְאוּבֵנִי וְלִגְדֵי | M1: בֵּ אִמֵּר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ (=JOSH 1:12) |

Table 51: A peculiar Masoretic note quoting “itself”.

Another interesting feature of the Masoretic notes is that they apparently are primarily based on the orally transmitted shape of the Hebrew Bible and not (or only secondarily) on the written text. This has already been claimed by E. J. Revell²⁰, and for M. Breuer²¹ it is even “well-known that the starting point of the Masorah is the word as it is read and not as it is written”, without even the need to quote which scholars uphold such a thesis. Unfortunately this is seldom reflected²² by the mainstream western text-critical biblical research, as can be shown e.g. in the Masora commentaries of the BHQ²³. This is also evident in several notes in JOSH 1. For example in JOSH 1:4 the Mp of A counts five cases of a word הַחֲתִים :

| verse | text |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| JOSH 1:4 | בְּלִ אֶרֶץ <הַחֲתִים> |
| JUDG 1:26 | וַיִּלְדוּ הָאִישׁ <אֶרֶץ הַחֲתִים> |
| 1 KGS 10:29 | לְכָל־מַלְכֵי <הַחֲתִים> |
| 2 KGS 7:6 | אֶת־מַלְכֵי <הַחֲתִים> |
| 2 KGS 1:17 | לְכָל־מַלְכֵי <הַחֲתִים> |
| LEV 15:3 | אִו־<הַחֲתִים> בְּשֵׁר |

Table 52: A masora parva on הַחֲתִים . (JOSH 1:4)

20. Revell 1993.

21. M. Breuer 1990, p. xxviii.

22. Sometimes an oral transmission of the masoretic notes is assumed in the first phase of an emergence of this phenomenon (see e.g. Kelley 1998, p. 16) but the origin thereof is still assumed to have been in the scribal context.

23. For example, in the first published volume of the BHQ, the *Megillōt*, which I was able to check, numerous comments are found which are completely superfluous if this principle was known or taken seriously by the editors.

Evidently the form הַחֲתִים (LEV 15:3), even though it has the same consonants החתים, was not considered by this list, as it is vocalized differently (and has a completely different meaning). Similarly, in JOSH 1:14 the Masora counts apparently²⁴ five cases of גְּבוּרֵי הַחַיִל:

| verse | form | note |
|-------------|---|------------------|
| JOSH 1:14 | כָּל־גְּבוּרֵי הַחַיִל־ | |
| JOSH 8:3 | אֶלֶף אִישׁ גְּבוּרֵי הַחַיִל־ | |
| 2 KGS 15:20 | כָּל־גְּבוּרֵי הַחַיִל־ | |
| 2 KGS 24:14 | כָּל־גְּבוּרֵי הַחַיִל־ | |
| 1 CHR 12:9 | גְּבוּרֵי הַחַיִל־ אֲנָשֵׁי צָבָא לְמִלְחָמָה | <i>defective</i> |
| JOSH 6:2 | גְּבוּרֵי הַחַיִל־: | <i>in pausa</i> |
| JOSH 10:17 | וְכָל־גְּבוּרֵי הַחַיִל־: | <i>in pausa</i> |

Table 53: Masora parva on JOSH 1:14, גְּבוּרֵי הַחַיִל, "ה" .

Clearly, the *defective* written גְּבוּרֵי in 1 CHR 12:9 is included in the list, while the two pausal forms הַחַיִל in JOSH 6:2; 10:17 are not, even though they do not differ from the phrase in question neither in their consonants nor in their meaning. The most simple explanation would appear to be that the list is based on how the form was pronounced and not on how it was written, nor on any other criteria. Interestingly, some notes are even vocalized, e.g. in JOSH 1:11 on הָכִינוּ Mp of A states: ׀ (=“7× with *qāmeṣ*”). This matches the evidence nicely:

| form | occurs | note |
|-----------|--------|-----------------------------------|
| הָכִינוּ | 7× | (both הָכִינוּ and וְהָכִינוּ) |
| הַכִּינוּ | 7× | (both הַכִּינוּ and וְהַכִּינוּ) |
| הִכְיִנוּ | 2× | (both הִכְיִנוּ and בְּהִכְיִנוּ) |
| הִכְיִנוּ | 2× | |
| הִכְנוּ* | 0× | |

Table 54: Occurrences of the consonantal הכינו .

24. Note, however, that L, in contrast to A, incorrectly puts the *circulus* on הַחַיִל only, which occur 99× in the Hebrew Bible.

It seems that because of several similar forms (all having the same consonants as הכינו) the Masorete wished to emphasize that his note is only dealing with one of them.

Similarly, the Mp of A and M₁ on חמשים (JOSH 1:14) states: ד וחס (“four times, and [all of them] written *defective*”). However, two completely different forms having the consonants חמשים exist:

| form | occurs | note |
|-------|--------|---|
| חמשים | 4× | (also וחמשים and חמשים) |
| חמשים | 155× | (all variants, also with -וּ, -ה, -ב ...) |

Table 55: Masora parva on JOSH 1:14, חמשים : “ד וחס”.

Clearly, the second form, חמשים, was not considered by the Masoretes at all and seems to strengthen the thesis of an “oral basis” of the Masoretic notes. One could argue, though, that the words חמשים and וחמשים not only sound differently but also represent very different meanings and grammatical forms (the former being passive a participle in contrast to a numeral). We also find, however, another case, where two phonetic variants exist having exactly the same meaning (and consonants). In JOSH 1:13 the Mp on מניח has ל (=hapax legomenon) but two examples of the consonantal form מניח exist:

| verse | form |
|-----------|------------------------|
| JOSH 1:13 | יהוה אלהיכם <מניח> לכם |
| QOH 5:11 | איננו <מניח> לו לישון: |

Table 56: Masora parva on JOSH 1:13, מניח : “ל”.

As we can see, both forms mentioned are derived from the נוח, but present non-significant variants. However, here too the Masoretic notes at JOSH 1:13 only refers to one of these forms. It is thus clear, that the pronunciation is deciding here, not the consonantal form, nor the meaning.

Clearly, numerous Masoretic notes exist which comment on the consonantal shape of the biblical text. But in many of them the oral shape represents the basis of the note (and the first information provided) while the observations on the consonants only come as an addition. For

example in the above mentioned example $\dot{\text{ו}}\text{חס}$ on חַמְשִׁים in JOSH 1:14 (see above table 49, p. 118 and table 55, p. 122) clearly $\dot{\text{ו}}$, “four times”, is primary and וחס , “and [all of them] defective” only an addition. Furthermore, as seen in a note in JOSH 1:4 on גְּבוּלְכֶם (above table 46, p. 115) we can trace a development in the Masoretic notes: originally commenting solely on the oral shape, later expanded by an information about the spellings and in some of the manuscripts this addition eventually became the only Masoretic comment noted in the margin. This development would suggest that the originally oral tradition, counting the occurrences of particular forms in the orally transmitted biblical text, started at some point to be written in the margins of the Masoretic codices and reused with the aim of preserving the written text. This also led to new questions which the Masora then tried to answer, namely the issues of *plañe* and *defective* spelling or that of the *qerē/ketīb* (which may, though, already have been addressed orally before to some degree, see above p. 57) and similar. Obviously, we can expect that such a development from an oral tradition to a scribal device already occurred to some extent before the emergence of the oldest Masoretic codices, as their Masoretes were already well trained in the scribal craft and it stands to reason that they had by then a more literary approach than the previous generations.

Finally, I'd like to mention some rather peculiar notes found in JOSH 1. In JOSH 1:16 a Mp of C is commenting on the accentuation:

| verse | text (L) | text / variants | Masora |
|-----------|----------|-----------------|------------|
| JOSH 1:16 | יְהוָה | C: יְהוָה | C: יי ן |

Table 57: A conjecture of the accents in Mp of C.

Apparently, the Masorete (מסרן) did more than just copy notes from a written source. In this case he apparently made a correction of the text written by the punctuator (נקדן). Given the fact that such a correction is quite rare, it seems improbable that the Masorete specially checked this codex against other written sources. It gives us rather the impression that he knew the text by heart and that when writing the marginal notes he noticed that the punctuation in the codex disagreed with the tradition known to him, and hence he spontaneously marked this observation in the margin.

Yet another interesting feature is that in the late ms. M1 masoretic notes are found which have no parallels in the other manuscripts. These notes are of a special kind, they count whole

verses having particular features—most notably such verses containing a certain configuration of “small words”, such as the prepositions (לְ, עַל, עַד ...) with or without the *copula* -וְ. It also follows from the evidence found in the main recensions of the masoretic work *’Oklā ve-’Oklā* that such masoretic notes are indeed a late development of the phenomenon of the Masora, as we see below:

| verse | text | Masora |
|----------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| JOSH 1:4 | וְעַד | M1: יֵד פֶּסוּ וְעַד וְעַד |
| JOSH 1:5 | לֹא (2 nd) | M1: וְפֶסוּק לֹא לֹא לֹא |

Table 58: “Late” masoretic notes in the Mp of M1.

To sum up, it seems that the phenomenon of the Masoretic notes has its origin in the oral study of the orally transmitted text of the Hebrew bible. Apparently the *masora parva* was based on the same lists as presented in the *masora magna* (or—as usual in the Babylonian Masora—transmitted independently of the Hebrew text). In some *masora parva* notes which show symptoms of confusion or even errors, it can be seen that the Masorete had to frequently adapt and interpret his tradition before it was written in the margins of the Masoretic codices. This is also evident from the fact that the occurrence of particular notes vary greatly between individual manuscripts. Given the character of these variations, peculiarities and errors it seems most probable that the Masoretic were are not, at least initially, based on written Masora collections but rather on memorized lists, which the Masorete first had to apply to the particular form. But let us also look at the work of Daniel Mynatt²⁵⁾ who sees the errors in the Mp of the Codex Leningradensis as basically scribal errors. While I believe that many of the examples he gives are ambivalent and may also (or even better) be explained if we assume a Masoretic activity based on the oral tradition, clearly, for some cases scribal errors are the most plausible explanation for the deviations he describes. It would seem, therefore, that the L already has its Masora based (partly or completely) on written sources, as was usual in the later period. This is not surprising given the fact that L (as well as all of the earliest Masoretic codices) already contains the *masora figurata*²⁶⁾, i.e. Masoretic notes

25. Mynatt 1995, summarized in Mynatt 1994.

26. See e.g. Gutmann 1983.

written in the shape of various animals, or decorative elements—a phenomenon that has been interpreted as actually showing a decline in knowledge and the use of the Masoretic notes as a technique for the proper preservation of the Hebrew text.

6.2 The Character of the Masoretic notes of the *’Oklā-ve-’Oklā* Collection

In this chapter I want to further examine a particular tradition of Masoretic notes as preserved in an independent collection of masoretic lists *’Oklā we-’Oklā*. This composition is found in two major manuscript: The ms. Paris (published by Frensdorff²⁷); hereafter quoted as P) and Halle (hereafter H; published by Estéban²⁸) which vary in the number, order and content of masoretic lists. Generally spoken, H has around 150 lists while P includes about 350. Additionally, H has also a second part consisting of various additional material.

The first 70 or so lists represent what is called *collative masora* (מסורה מצרפת), i.e. more elaborated lists of words (mostly *hapax legomena*) mostly grouped into pairs²⁹ or triplets of forms having similar (or antagonic) characteristics, but lists of single items or of items of unequal numbers of words also exist. They are mostly arranged alphabetically (some of the single-item lists even represent nice regular alphabetic acrostics), but some just seem to be sorted according to the biblical canon. Here I would like to base my observations primarily on this *collative masora* and will only refer to the edition of Estéban³⁰ (i.e. that of H) later in this chapter.

27. Frensdorff 1864.

28. Estéban 1975.

29. This is also the origin of the name of this work, due to the fact that the first list starts with a pair of *hapax legomena*, אָקְלָהּ in 1 SAM 1:9 × וְאָקְלָהּ in GEN 27:19 (note that this doesn't match the textual data we know from the Leningrad Codex, see the *ḥātef qāmeṣ!*) which differ only in that one of them has the copula *wav* while the other has none.

30. Estéban 1975.

Most of the second part (H §§71-149) of this book is concerned with the *qerē/ketiv* cases³¹. There are two notable exceptions: §79 listing *puncta extraordinaria* and §146 which counts the suspended letters. It seems, therefore, that these lists treat phenomena typical of the scribal *milieu* and mostly concern the consonantal text. Such characteristics could fit well into the traditional picture of masoretic notes as some sort of aid to the scribe³², intended to help avoid spelling errors and a hyper-correction.

6.2.1 The Oral Characteristics of 'Oklā we-Oklā Lists.

However, if we look at this composition more closely, we find several factors which would seem to put the work into the realm of the oral tradition. In the first place, the very form of this work bears some phenomena typical for the oral context: the frequent use of alphabetic acrostics³³, grouping the words into pairs, triplets or similar structures are all known mnemonic devices. In some of the lists the items are actually forced into “pairs”, even though they actually represent a list of single instances of a particular phenomenon (see §§27-28). Even the art of quoting the biblical passages using סימנים (catchwords) presupposes the knowledge of the text by heart and fits well into the context of an oral study thereof. It can be argued that another system of biblical quotations based on the numbering verses and chapters, only emerged much later and was not available at the time of this work. But actually, this rather shows rather that the ancient system of citing Biblical passages was itself based on an oral culture and needed to be changed when literacy became widespread.

Also, even though some of the lists deal with issues concerning consonants (e.g. words differing in one consonant only), many of the lists treat the vocalization as well (see e.g.: §55, ק- ×

31. There are a few more lists in H: §150 represents a very skillfully composed list of verses having fifteen words, the middle one of which is a *qerē/ketiv* variant being preceded and followed by seven another words. As we can see, both numerals are highly symbolic (15 is the *gematria* of יה!) and this list being the number 150 surely was meant as a symbolic closing of the book (at some point of its textual development). There are, however some notes thereafter: §§151-154 are concerned with the spelling of God's name's and the final §§155-170 are concerned with verses structured by various combinations of prepositions לְ and עַל. Such lists are elaborated much further in the P, however.

32. See above, chapter 6, p. 112.

33. Some of which are no doubt artificial and don't cover the whole set of occurrences of the phenomena in question!

יִ-; §56 -י- × -י- ; §§23-26: issues concerning the vowels *pataḥ* or *qāmeṣ*; or the “full”, מלעיל³⁴) versus “reduced”, מלרע spellings, e.g. §33. See also §57.) or even approach the problematics of the Hebrew accentuation (see, for example, §22 where the combination of the vowel *qāmeṣ* with the accent *zaqēf* is listed, actually representing the cases of pausal forms occurring at the minor divisions of the text). This alone shows that the “correct spelling” and other orthographical criteria are (at least) not the only concern of these lists.

Let us now examine one example of the collative masora lists dealing with consonantal issues, more precisely a list that shows very similar *hapax legomena* differing only in a single consonant:

34. The meaning of these grammatical terms apparently differs from the later one which understands them as equivalents to the *ultima* vs. *paenultima* stress position.

| | with ר | with ד | |
|-------------|-------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| Ps 18:43 | אַרְיָקִים | אַדְקִים | 2 SAM 22:43 |
| Ps 87:1 | בְּהַרְרֵי־קִדְשׁ | בְּהַדְרֵי־קִדְשׁ | Ps 110:3 |
| DEUT 14:13 | וְהִרְאָה | וְנִאֲתַהֲדָאָה | LEV 11:14 |
| JER 17:3 | הַרְרֵי | הַדְרֵי | MICAH 2:9 |
| JOB 34:20 | וַיַּעֲבְרוּ | וַיַּעֲבְדוּ | JOB 36:11 |
| 1 CHR 1:7 | וְדֹדָנִים | וְרוֹדָנִים | GEN 10:4 |
| GEN 10:3 | וְרִיפַת | וְדִיפַת | 1 CHR 1:6 |
| 2 KGS 6:17 | וְרִאָה | וְיִדְאָה | JER 49:22 |
| ISA 1:2 | וְרוֹמְמָתִי | וְדוֹמְמָתִי | Ps 131:2 |
| Ps 32:8 | וְאוֹרְךָ | וְאוֹדְךָ | Ps 43:4 |
| JOB 19:17 | זָרָה | זָדָה | JER 50:29 |
| EZEK 47:5 | לֹא־יַעֲבֹר | לֹא־יַעֲבֹד | DEUT 21:4 |
| JOB 39:25 | יְרִיחַ | יְדִיחַ | ISA 4:4 |
| JER 30:19 | לֹא־יַצְעֲרוּ: | לֹא־יַצְעֲדוּ | JER 10:5 |
| HOS 7:14 | יִתְגַּוְּרוּ | יִתְגַּדְּדוּ: | JER 5:7 |
| Ps 58:10 | יִשְׁעֲרְנוּ | יִסְעֲדְנוּ | Ps 41:4 |
| JER 5:26 | יִשׁוּר | יִשׁוּד | Ps 91:6 |
| ZEPH 2:14 | יִשׁוּרֵר | יִשְׁדֵּד | HOS 10:2 |
| 1 KGS 18:31 | כְּמִסְפַּר | כְּמִסְפֵּד | ZECH 12:11 |
| ESTH 10:3 | לְרַב | לְדַב | DAN 7:5 |
| Ps 90:8 | לְמֵאוֹר | לְעַד־לְמֵאֹד | 2 CHR 16:14 |
| 1 SAM 23:8 | לְצוּר | לְצוּד | GEN 27:5 |
| ISA 8:20 | לְתוֹרָה | לְתוֹדָה | Ps 100:1 |
| Ps 84:11 | מְדוּר | מְדוּד | Ps 81:7 |
| PROV 25:28 | מְעַצֵּר | מְעַצֵּד | ISA 44:12 |
| EZEK 4:7 | מְצוּר | מְצוּד | PROV 12:12 |
| 1 SAM 2:24 | מְעַבְרִים | מְעַבְדִּים | EXOD 6:5 |
| LAM 5:10 | עוֹרְנוּ | עוֹדִינוּ | LAM 4:17 |
| NUM 8:16 | פְּטָרַת | פְּטָדַת־כּוֹשׁ | JOB 28:19 |
| PROV 4:15 | פְּרַעְהוּ | פְּדַעְהוּ | JOB 33:24 |
| DEUT 29:17 | פְּרָה | פְּוֹדָה | Ps 34:23 |
| GEN 35:11 | פְּרָה | פְּדָה | Ps 25:22 |
| GEN 47:27 | וַיִּפְרוּ | וַיִּפְדוּ | 1 SAM 14:45 |
| JOSH 19:35 | צָר | צִיד | LEV 17:37 |
| JUDG 7:22 | צָרְרָתָה | צָרְדָתָה | 2 CHR 4:17 |
| Ps 78:34 | וְשַׁחְרוּ־אֵל | וְשַׁחְדוּ | JOB 6:22 |
| PROV 4:12 | וְאִם־תִּרְוֹץ | תִּדּוּץ | JOB 41:14 |
| DEUT 20:19 | כִּי־תִצְוֹר | כִּי־תִקְרָה־תִּצְוֹד: | PROV 6:26 |

* The forms are quoted according to L (BHS).

Table 59: Okl §7 (Esteban): א ב מן חד וחד ד וחד ר ולית דכותהון : “An alphabetic list of hapax legomena (לית דכותהון) pairs — one [of them having] ד , the other [with] ר .”

If we look at this list closely, we can see that all of the pairs sound very similar, differing systematically only in the sound *r/d*. Actually, these words are vocalized in the masoretic tradition (according to the Leningrad codex) in exactly the same way, apart from three small differences in the whole list: a) 2 SAM 22:43 אֲדַקֵּם has in L *dageš* in the second syllable, but its counterpart, אֲדַקֵּם in Ps 18:43 has none; b) in DEUT 14:13 the *rēš* cannot be doubled due to the definite article (doubling is possible with *dālet* in LEV 11:14) and thus the preceding *pataḥ* changes into *qāmeš*. Note, that this sound shift represents one of the very basic rules of the masoretic Hebrew; c) in ISA 44:12 *ḥātef pataḥ* occurs in מְעַצֵּד as compared to מְעַצֵּר in PROV 25:28 which only has *šwa*. All these minor variants can easily be explained basically in one of the following ways: either the tradition underlying this masoretic composition differed³⁵⁾ from the one attested by the Leningrad codex or this small difference was perceived to be so negligible that the two forms were still considered to be identical. For comparison, there are six cases where the consonantal text (according to L) differs in spelling from the pair in this list.

On the other hand we can see some forms whose vocalization is rather specific, for example some pausal forms (וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ , וַיִּתְגַּדְּרוּ , וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ and their respective counterparts), which can be only explained if we assume that the list is based on the oral tradition. If the list was based on the consonants, why would the form וַיִּרְאֶה in 2 KGS 6:17 be chosen for the consonants וִירָאָה and not וַיִּרְאֶה (GEN 38:15), וַיִּרְאֶה (1 SAM 17:42; 2 KGS 5:21; EZEK 18:14,28) or וַיִּרְאֶה (EZEK 1:18)? Besides, this is a list of *hapax legomena* which only make sense if fully vocalized forms are considered and not the consonantal shape: in many cases the consonantal form actually occurs much more often in the Hebrew bible than the form as pronounced.

Moreover, in our list there are two pairs which share the same consonants: פרה/³⁶⁾ פדה, but their vocalization differs entirely, but there is no confusion between the two pairs. A similar phenomenon occurs in §13 where two pairs (לְמַרְאֵה , ISA 11:3; EZEK 23:16 and לְמַרְאֵה , GEN 2:9; JOSH 22:10) differ only in the vowels *šērē/segōl*. This would make no sense if the lists were based solely on the consonants.

35. If this was true for the issue of the definite article in DEUT 14:13 it would mean that at the time of the composition of this masoretic list the *rēš* could have been doubled; for more discussion about the doubling of *rēš* see e.g. Morag 1958.

36. פוּדָה , Ps 34:23, is written *plaene* in the L and P, but not in H. Its counterpart, פָּרָה DEUT 29:17 is spelled *defective* in all the sources, anyway.

We can thus see that even lists which deal with issues concerning consonants³⁷⁾ are actually based on the oral tradition and don't make much sense outside of this context.

6.2.2 The Interchange of *sīn* and *sāmek*

The oral character of the collative masora lists in 'Oklā we-'Oklā can further be shown in a number of phenomena. The first of them is the “interchange” of the letters *sāmek* and *sīn*. Among the 'Oklāh we-'Oklāh lists we find some cases in which the words of certain word pairs differ (if we consider their spelling as occurring in the masoretic text, e.g. as found in the BHS) in the letters ס/ש :

| Okl list | left column | | right column | |
|-------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|---------|
| §6 ³⁸⁾ | Ps 42:5 | בִּסְדָּ | שָׁד | Hos 2:8 |
| §7 ³⁹⁾ | Ps 58:10 | יִשְׁעֵרְנוּ | יִסְעֵרְנוּ | Ps 41:4 |

* The forms are quoted according to L (BHS).

Table 60: Examples of *sīn/sāmech* interchange in the 'Oklā we-'Oklā lists.

It is clear that the masoretes considered these forms to be identical (apart from the systematic differences which the lists were compiled for). It therefore stands to reason that the basis for these notes was not a written Hebrew text, but a memorized oral tradition in which both *sāmek* and *sīn*⁴⁰⁾ sounded the same. This assumption can be supported by the fact that we also find cases of an interchange of ס for ש among the סימנים, i.e. in the short clusters of Biblical quotation used to locate the exact place of the word in question in the Biblical text (see e.g. Okl §24, מסתכל הוית in DAN 7:8 where L has משתכל הוית).

37. Note, that the consonants are inevitably part of the oral shape of a Hebrew text—unlike the vowels in the written Hebrew text!

38. List of pairs of *hapax legomena*, one starting with -ב, one without.

39. Lists of pairs of *hapax legomena* differing in the letters ר × ד.

40. But see Steiner 1994, who supposes that the ס/ש distinction in the masoretic text represent just a sort of *qerē/ketiv* phenomenon.

This becomes even more obvious if we consider the list §53 which records words differing in the letters *sāmek/šīn* (חד מן כ זוגין חד סמך וחד שין). Out of 19 (sic!)⁴¹ cases, 7 words in the “*sāmek* column” have a word spelled with ש and only the remaining 12 have ס.

We can also find a couple of places in alphabetically sorted list where a word with *šīn* stands in the position appropriate for the letter *sāmek*, for example: Okl §1: שְׁרִיז , שְׁמָחוּ , §4: שְׁלֵמָה ; § 14: שׁוּם , שְׁמַח , שְׁנִיר ; §16: שֵׁה . This also happens with alphabetic lists with only one entry for each letter (i.e. regular *acrostics*), e.g.: Okl §33 וְשָׂר (1 CHR 27:34), §35 שְׁפָתָם (GEN 11:7) or §43 שִׁימָה (DEUT 31:19). It is thus obvious that these words were not apparently misplaced (e.g. by mistake during the later transmission of the lists), but belong to the original shape of the list. This means that the lists must already have been compiled on the basis of the oral tradition and not written text.

6.2.3 The *qerē/ketiv*.

Another indication of the oral character of *’Okla we-’Okla* (or in turn of the *qerē/ketiv* phenomenon, see chapter 4.1, p. 31) is that in a number of cases the version on which this masoretic work is based, agrees with the biblical *qerē*. On the other hand, I couldn't find a single place where it corresponded to the *ketiv*⁴²:

41. So the ms. H.

42. I have not analyzed the entire work, though.

| OkI list | OkI counterexamples (=MT) | | OkI=MT/ <i>qerē</i> | | MT/ <i>ketiv</i> |
|--------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|------------|------------------|
| §7 ⁴³⁾ | LAM 5:10 | עֹרְנוּ | עוֹדִינוּ | LAM 4:17 | עוֹדִינָה |
| §11 ⁴⁴⁾ | EZEK 38:9 | כְּשֹׂאָה | כְּשׂוֹאָה | PROV 1:27 | כְּשֹׂאוֹה |
| §15 ⁴⁵⁾ | NAHUM 1:3; Ps 145:8 | וּגְדָל (<i>bis</i>) | גְּדָל | PROV 19:19 | גֵּרֶל |
| §20 ⁴⁶⁾ | — | — | בְּאִמְרָם | ESTH 3:4 | בְּאִמְרָם |

* The forms are quoted according to L (BHS).

Table 61: Examples of *’OkIā we-’OkIā* lists reflecting the masoretic *qerē*.

From these examples it becomes clear that not just the manuscripts known to us, i.e. the final stage of this masoretic collection, but already the original lists must have been based on the same text as shown in the biblical *qerē*. Otherwise the internal criteria for the inclusion of these cases in these lists wouldn't have been fulfilled: e.g. if in LAM 4:17 *עוֹדִינָה* was read, it cannot have been listed as a counterpart of *עֹרְנוּ*, which should differ only in the letters *ד × ר*. Similarly, if *בְּאִמְרָם* was found in ESTH 3:4 it would hardly be cited as an example of a word beginning with *כא-*.

6.2.4 Further Observations

Yet another indication of the oral character of the Biblical text underlying the *’OkIā we-’OkIā* can be found in the list §34, counting *hapax legomena* ending in *-i*. However out of 33 such words, three are spelled with *ה-* in the masoretic text (*לְחָה* in DEUT 34:7, *בְּנָה* in 1 KGS 8:13 and *אָלָה* in HOS 4:2) and one even with *א-* (*לְרָא* in 1 SAM 18:29).

There are some other interesting features which can be observed in the *’OkI we-’OkIā* list, some of which can also be found in other masoretic material, i.e. primarily in the *masora parva* and *masora magna*. For example, there are a couple of lists which do not only consider the exact form, but more so special or rare meanings of a specific word: see §57 or §60⁴⁷⁾. This makes much

43. Lists of pairs of *hapax legomena* differing in the letters *ד × ר*.

44. List of pairs, accented “מלרע” versus “מלעיל”.

45. List of triplets, occurring twice with *-ו* and once without.

46. List of *hapax legomena* starting with *כא-*.

47. See also Yeivin 1980, §122, p. 72

more sense if we assume that these notes emerged through oral studies of the biblical text (which tended to integrate a basic memorizing by heart with more exegetical study) rather than from scribal activity alone.

Moreover, some of the lists (§§57-58, §§61-62) are based on the occurrence of certain forms in specific biblical books (most notably the Psalms) or in the three parts of the Hebrew canon (תורה, כתובים, נביאים). A similar phenomenon is prevalent also in the Mp, Mm of the Tiberian codices⁴⁸, as well as in the Babylonian masora⁴⁹. The question is: in which context would masoretic notes, restricted to only a single book or to a group of books, make sense, and under which circumstances could they have emerged. In my opinion, this could be explained if we assume that the Hebrew Bible had not been memorized as a whole by all of its tradents, but that a certain person specialized in learning only a particular book or series of books by heart. This specialist was then not only able to recite “his” book, but also to locate a specific word by heart. The masoretic lists may have emerged from a discussion of such experts, in a process that today would be rather called a “game”⁵⁰ than “research” or “study”. Even though at the moment this is obviously only my theory and guess, and more examples need to be found to prove or disprove it, I believe that this could be a plausible explanation for Masora lists like Okl §58, for example:

This list presents an acrostic of three words for each letter of the alphabet, each being a *hapax legomenon* occurring in one of the three main parts of the Jewish Bible: one in תורה, one in נביאים and one in כתובים. Now, these triplets of words all start with the same letter of the Hebrew alphabet, are all different words, but bear certain resemblance among themselves:

48. Yeivin 1980, §116, p. 68.

49. Ofer 2001, p. 39-40.

50. See also I. Heinemann's concept of “creative philology” which he finds typical for the rabbinical exegesis, Heinemann 1952.

| letter | תורה | | נביאים | | כתובים | |
|--------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| ג | גָּרֵשׁ | LEV 2:14 | גִּדְעֵם | JUDG 20:45 | גָּאָה | PROV 8:13 |
| ד | דָּכוּ | NUM 11:8 | דָּעְכוּ | ISA 43:17 | דָּעְכוּ | PS 118:12 |
| ו | וְאִבְרָכֶם | GEN 48:9 | וְאֵהָב | MAL 1:2 | וְאֵהָבֶם | PS 119:167 |
| ט | טָבְעוּ | EXOD 15:4 | טוֹבֶם | MICAH 7:4 | טוֹבֶם | JOB 21:16 |
| ח | חִבֵּר | EXOD 36:10 | חִקְמָה | ZECH 9:2 | חִבְרִים | JOB 40:30 |
| מ | מִקְדָּשִׁי | LEV 21:23 | מִתְקִי | JUDG 9:11 | מִתְקוֹ לֹא | JOB 21:33 |
| פ | פָּקֵד | EXOD 38:21 | פָּקְדָתִי | ISA 38:10 | פְּתַחֹת | PS 55:22 |
| ש | שְׁתִּי | EXOD 10:1 | שְׁבוֹת | HAB 1:11 | שְׁבִית | PS 85:2 |

Table 62: *Some examples from Okl §58* (אָב מִן גַּג וּכְל חַד וְחַד לִית דְּכוּתְהוֹן חַד בְּאוּרִיתָא וְחַד בְּנִבְיָאִי וְחַד בְּכַתְיבִי—“An alphabetic list of triplets of hapax legomena, one in the Torah, one in the Prophets and one in the Writings”).

As we can see, there are cases where all three forms sound almost identical (*dālet*, *tēt*), in other cases only two of the tree forms are that similar (*wāw*, *het*, *mēm*, *pē* or *šin*) and in some of the cases all the *hapax legomena* are quite different (*gimmel*). It seems that these forms were chosen more on the basis of on a “free association” than on a more accurate method. It gives the impression that the Masoretes were playing some sort of a word game⁵¹, rather than it being the result of “scientific” work. Even though there may be other explanations⁵², I believe that this example makes my above aforementioned theory plausible to some degree.

To sum up, we have seen that the *'Oklā we-'Oklā* collection of masoretic lists was based primarily on the oral shape of the text of Hebrew Bible. Also the character of the collection itself clearly shows that it uses a number of mnemonic devices, a sign that it was intended to be

51. It reminds me of one such game, widespread in the Eastern Europe, in which people have to name quickly a word which begins with the last letter of previously mentioned word (in the Czech Republic called “word-football”).

52. For example, it can be argued that this particular masoretic list is rather late and that it processes already known masoretic material (i.e. a list of *hapax legomena*). Even so, it remains plausible that the present list is a result of some collective *language game* and there is no reason to assume that the earlier masoretic material emerged in a fundamentally different way.

memorized rather than written down⁵³). It should be noted, though, that a number of lists (which, actually, are grouped into a distinct block of lists in the second part of the collection, see above) deals with the shape of the consonantal text as well. Even these lists, however, use the same mnemonic devices as the former collative lists, such as alphabetically sorted lists or word-pairs.

6.3 Further Evidence

6.3.1 Did St. Jerome Know “The Masora”?

The Church Father Jerome writes in his commentary on Genesis, the *Questiones Hebraicae in Genesim*, commenting on אַחִי in GEN 41:2 the following:

Et ecce de fluvio ascendebant septem boves, speciosae ad videndum, electae carnibus, et pascebantur in achi. Bis in Genesi scriptum est ACHI (αχα [sic!]), et neque Graecus sermo est, nec Latinus. Sed et Hebraeus ipse corruptus est: dicitur enim in AHU (אחֹו), hoc est, in palude.

And behold, from the river came seven cows, very vivid and of the best body and grazed in Achi: Twice in Genesis it is written ACHI and it is neither a Greek nor a Latin word. And even [if one reads it as] Hebrew, it is corrupted: [In Hebrew] it is namely read “in AHU” (אחֹו), i.e. in a marsh.

Figure 43: Jerome's comment on GEN 41:2 (PL 23 / 997).

From this comment we can see that, besides the linguistic and the text-critical notes on the verse in question, Jerome also uses an argumentation well-known to us from the masora: he counts how many times a particular form occurs in a specific book (without using this information, however, in the further discourse). And indeed, there exists a masoretic note אָ , “twice”, which in the Leningrad codex is not, however, attached to GEN 41:2 but to the second occurrence of this form in GEN 41:18. This in itself isn't a big surprise, since the attachment of a masoretic note to a particular word is secondary and often varies between different codices. Also, in the Babylonian tradition the Masora was mostly not written in the margin of Biblical text, but as separate collection of notes after the Biblical text, at the end of the codex⁵⁴). It is, therefore, plausible to assume

53. Similar observations can be made throughout the masoretic literature, for example the masoretic “grammar” of Aharon ben Asher, *Diqduqē ha-Ṭe'amim* was rhymed.

54. See Ofer 2001, p. 26.

that a masoretic “note”, stating that אָחַז appears twice (in Genesis), existed in some oral form (independent of its actual “attachment” to a particular place in the Bible) before being written down by the “masorettes” (i.e. actually by the נִקְדָּוִים, “punctuators”).

Interestingly, the word אָחַז (but without the preposition -אֶל) is also found once in JOB 8:11. The note in L (as opposed to what Jerome says!) seems therefore not to be completely clear: either it refers to the whole word together with the preposition -אֶל or the exact meaning of this note being restricted to the Book of Genesis was lost⁵⁵⁾

Obviously, I'm not claiming that some masoretic collections already existed in the 4th century and that Jerome was quoting from them. We should, however, ask how precisely Jerome obtained the information that this particular word occurs twice in Genesis, and why he quotes this at all. We should note that the way the texts were composed in antiquity, even the “scientific” ones (I'm referring to Jerome's use of textual criticism and linguistics) was quite different from today. There were certainly no written concordances (the first such books appear only around the time of the emergence of first printed biblical editions!) where an exegete would first look for the occurrences of a particular word as part of his usual exegetical procedure. It seems rather that the books were composed orally with no (or minimum) written notes and dictated directly to the scribe. Anyway, it is hard to believe that Jerome had searched through the entire book of Genesis only to make such a note about this particular word occurring twice in this book. It seems more likely that he had either received this information from his Jewish teacher as an already formulated exegetic comment or, alternatively, that he himself knew the Bible by heart (in Greek) and was making such a comment on the basis of his own excellent knowledge of the text. If the first explanation is correct, it would mean that at the time of Jerome the practice of “counting the words” already existed which seems to be the basis for the later masoretic work. If this is true, however, we can see that there are no indications that this “counting” was connected with a distinct institution or circle (“the Masorettes”) other than the regular study of the Hebrew Bible. If, on the other hand, the second possibility is correct, it would mean that counting examples of word's occurrences based on one's ability to learn the text by heart and “search” through it

55. Actually, we see quite often variations between the notes of various masoretic codices that show how a particular note was misunderstood or doesn't match the fact. Sometimes we see a “reinterpretation” of such notes to match the biblical text e.g. by adding some additional restrictions.

by the means of associative thinking, was not unknown in antiquity. More research should be done to find and analyse similar examples from the Rabbinic literature, the Church Fathers (and specifically their biblical commentaries) and ancient literature in general, before we can draw specific conclusions about this Jerome's comment.

In any case, I propose to locate the original *Sitz im Leben* of masoretic notes in the milieu of the “study” of biblical texts (which encompasses both its memorizing and the exegetical discussion around it) by oral means. Both of the explanations of Jerome's comment proposed above fit well into this image of an oral study of the Scriptures.

6.3.2 Targumic Masora

As mentioned before⁵⁶, there is another specific group of masoretic notes, namely those that accompany the manuscripts of the Targum Onkelos, i.e. the so-called targumic Masora⁵⁷. It is assumed that the very existence of the targumic Masora indicates that, similarly to the *masora* of the Hebrew bible, the targumic one was also meant to protect the exact shape of the text of Targum, and to avoid transmission errors and other textual changes, such as hyper-corrections⁵⁸. I would rather suggest that the targumic Masora has its roots in the oral study (and memorizing) of the Targum, in the same way I'm proposing for the Hebrew masoretic notes. The Targum is said to be classified as an example of the “Oral Torah”⁵⁹ by some rabbinic texts and is forbidden to be written down by them⁶⁰. This would strongly indicate that it has also been transmitted orally, at least as its primary method of transmission. Therefore, if the phenomenon of masoretic notes is found in manuscripts containing both the Hebrew Bible and the Targum, it would be another indication for the assumption that the Hebrew Bible itself was also studied and memorized orally. Note also that no masoretic notes were found in the oldest manuscripts of the Mishna or other rabbinic texts, even though they represented a text authoritative to similar degree as the Hebrew

56. See chapter 4.1.4.1, p. 53.

57. A collation of extant targumic Masora notes has been published by Michael L. Klein, see Klein 2000.

58. See e.g. Klein 2000, p. 1-2.

59. See also chapter 2.2, p. 6.

60. See chapter 2.4, p. 17.

Bible itself or its *targūm*. This fact can be explained by assuming that the Hebrew Bible and its Targum were studied and memorized “side-by-side”⁶¹.

There are also other indications of the oral character of the targumic masora. Some notes, for example, explicitly refer to the vocalized form of the Targum, as opposed to its written form alone:

| | |
|---|---|
| Where [the Hebrew texts has] אָמַר (“say!”), it is translated אִימַר , [with] <i>rafē</i> , where [the Hebrew reads] שֶׁה (“the sheep”), it is translated אִימַר [with] <i>dageš</i> . | היכא דאיכא אמור מתרג אימר רפי, היכא דאיכא שה מתרג אימר דגש |
|---|---|

Figure 44: Targumic masora note to GEN 3:1.

Even though this note, in its present form, is not completely clear and it should rather read אִימַר⁶² (for *impt* אִמַר) and אִימַר⁶³ (for “sheep”), it seems clear that originally it was trying to differentiate two Aramaic forms which, while written the same, sounded slightly different. In terms of (the unvocalized) written text of the *targūm* this note would make no sense at all.

Additionally, the fact that the targumic Masora is found in several distinct forms (marginal masora, independent collections sorted in the order of the Pentateuch, thematic lists)⁶⁴, similar to the Masoretic notes attached to the Hebrew Bible, shows that initially these notes were also most probably transmitted orally.

Klein also discusses Masoretic notes mentioning words which are read “in public” (i.e. liturgically) in some special way, or are not read at all⁶⁵, such as a note on EXOD 17:11:

| | |
|--|--|
| וגבר עמלק מתגברין is translated, [but] מתברין is translated in public | וגבר עמלק מתגברין תר מתברין מתרג בציבורא |
|--|--|

Figure 45: Targumic masora note on EXOD 17:11.

61. See also further chapter 5.4, p. 73.

62. See \mathfrak{F}^0 to EXOD 8:12.

63. See \mathfrak{F}^0 to GEN 30:32.

64. Klein 2000, p. 196.

65. Klein 2000, p. 5-6.

According to Klein⁶⁶, “the masoretes clearly differentiate between the literal Aramaic version that was written and studied, which they call תרגום, in contrast with that which may be recited in public מיתרגם בציבורא.” However, in my opinion, there is no indication that by the תרגום a written text is meant; it may rather point to the memorized and orally studied *targūm*.

6.4 Conclusion and Interpretation

As we have seen the Masoretic notes show a strong affinity to the oral study of the Biblical text. Therefore, I would like to propose a thesis that the phenomenon of such notes originates in a completely oral context and probably started as a sort of “word game” of more or less professional memorizers of the Hebrew Bible. Clearly, if a text is written down it can be stored and “forgotten”. However, a memorized text, which lasts only as long as it is repeated, provokes certain kinds of activity connected to the text. The targumic and midrashic traditions can be seen as one sort of such activity which strives to make sense of the memorized text. But it is also well imaginable that another sort of activity existed (originally spontaneous and only later more institutionalized) which treated the memorized text on a more basic level of actual words and forms. It seems, therefore, that the reason for the very existence of the “Masoretic notes” was the natural feature of the human brain to spontaneously make connections between similar or repetitive parts of the memorized text. If we use the terminology of David Carr⁶⁷, a memorization presented “shaping of the mind” of those who learnt the text by heart, and it is only natural then for the text to be reformulated or commented in various ways.

Excursus: The Language of Masoretic Notes

It also seems that the language of the Masoretic notes, which is Aramaic, strongly indicates that the Masora in its wording predates Islamic times and was, therefore, composed at a time when literacy was still rare. It thus stands to reason that the masoretic material emerged by oral means and was based on the oral version of the Biblical text. Masoretic notes composed in Judeo-Arabic

66. Ibid.

67. Carr 2005, p. 4ff.

are very rare, apart from the *Kitāb al-ḥilāf* of Mišael ben ‘Uzzi‘el⁶⁸ which already appear to represent a later rework of older traditions⁶⁹, only very notes are known to be formulated in Arabic. See e.g. the following targumic Masora note⁷⁰:

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| For verses that are not translated in public [but for which] <there is> a <i>targūm</i> ... | ... לפסוקי דלא מתרג ביבור פי תרג |
|--|----------------------------------|

Figure 46: Targumic masora on EXOD 32:22.

As can be seen, this note is a mixture of an Aramaic (לפסוקי דלא מתרג ביבור) and an Arabic (פי תרג) part and, clearly, the Arabic part is an addition to the original note. This is, however, a very much an exceptional case and the vast majority of Masoretic notes (whether appended to the Hebrew Bible or the Targum) are in Aramaic.

At some point, as literacy became more common the originally orally transmitted “lists” containing “notes” concerning the oral shape of the Hebrew bible gradually became more concerned with the written text—as this became more accessible to the “professional readers” of the Bible. Clearly, the differences between the oral tradition and the written text (i.e. the *qerē/ketiv* variants), and peculiar spellings, were presumably what first caught the attention of the Masoretes. Actually, as certain *qerē/ketiv* are occasionally quoted in (the orally studied) Rabbinic literature, it seems evident that a certain contact between the orally transmitted biblical text and the written one must have existed, even at times when the text was primarily studied orally. As we have seen, the *qerē/ketiv* notes were the first to appear in the margins of the biblical manuscripts. This would mean that even if some such cases were doubtless already known in the talmudic times and some of them probably even earlier, the systematic study of such cases only seems to have begun when literacy became more widespread.

68. See Lipschütz 1964.

69. Note that this work is attributed to a specific author, a typical sign of a work which was composed by literary means (as opposed to oral ones).

70. Klein 2000, p. 5, 136.

The first of these rabbis, Rabbi Meir Abulafia explains why he decided to write his book, attempting to fix the authoritative text of the Jewish Bible with following words⁷³:

And if have come to rely on the corrected scrolls that we posses, even they contain many disagreements. And were it not for the *masorōt* that were made a fence around Torah a man would be unable to find his hands and feet because of disagreements. Even the *masorōt* were not spared the occurrence of disagreements, for disagreements are found in some places even among them, but not like the large number of disagreements among the scrolls. And if someone would intend to write a Torah scroll correctly, it would be imperfect regarding defective and plene spellings; and he would find himself groping like a blind man in the darkness of disagreements, and he would not successfully achieve his purpose to find what he seeks.

Figure 47: *Rabbi Meir Abulafia on the variants in the biblical text*

Moreover, the *Masora* was not always accepted among the mediaeval rabbinic circles as a proper way to correctly produce the biblical text. Some were rather claiming that the rabbinic rule to “follow the majority”⁷⁴ should be applied and accordingly that Torah scrolls should be consulted and not the Masoretic notes⁷⁵. The problem of the variants was actually only largely resolved by another paradigmatic change, namely the discovery of print. It was completely solved just recently with the introduction of computer technology, that is with yet another paradigm change.

73. The translation is taken from Levy 2001, p. 18.

74. Based on a midrashic, de-contextualized understanding of EXOD 23:3, אֲחֶרֶי רַבִּים לְהִטֹּת .

75. Levy 2001, p. 58-59.

Chapter 7

Rare Biblical Forms: An Analysis

In this chapter I'd like to analyse some rare Biblical Hebrew forms as found in the Masoretic text, primarily with regard to the question about the relationship of the consonantal form to its masoretic vocalization, or more precisely, to the oral tradition which is the basis for vocalization of the Masoretic codices. Specifically, I'd like to ask in the first place whether it is possible and plausible to assume that the vocalization may present a deliberate reinterpretation of the consonantal text or whether the existence of such a form is caused by other factors.

Further, based on the assumption that the consonants and the vocalization both go back to two traditions—the written biblical text copied by the scribe and the memorized oral version of the Hebrew Bible—we should ask what are other possible interactions between the two traditions (besides the oral version being a deliberate reinterpretation of the consonants) or whether the oral tradition possibly just differs from the written text.

The forms are rather randomly chosen and should be seen only as examples, however. It seems that they are pretty representative in the features they show. When looking for such forms, the main idea was that many of the “unusual” and “rare” Biblical Hebrew forms may be a result either of some kind of discrepancies between the written and oral component of the Masoretic text or may even be a result of some sort of “deliberate reinterpretation” of the consonantal text by the oral tradition. For example, A. Geiger¹) suggested a couple of such cases, he claimed, for example, that לְרִאוֹת אֶת־פְּנֵי יְהוָה in EXOD 34:24 was read *לְרִאוֹת originally and was changed (without the change of the consonants!) in order to avoid the theologically problematic idea of “seeing God”. Obviously, לְרִאוֹת doesn't present a regular form (that would be לְהִרְאוֹת). While we can be sceptical towards such a thesis, it shows that rare and irregular Hebrew forms pose good material for an analysis trying to answer the question about the relationship between the written text of the Hebrew Bible and its vocalization.

1. Geiger 1857, p. 337ff.

Methodologically, I follow to some degree the standard text-critical procedure, however, given that I have a different goal than a regular text-critical analysis (my intention is not primarily to find and decide what the original form was but to look for mechanisms and to describe the interaction between the written text and the oral tradition), I deviate in a couple of ways from the standard textual criticism. For example, I never apply the rules such as “*lectiō difficilior*” as there is no need to actually decide what the form in question was originally. Rather, I try to offer different possibilities of how the form in question may have emerged and discuss how this may have happened. If I am to decide about the particular possibility, of how some form developed, I’m relying solely on internal criteria.

Further, besides the ancient biblical versions²⁾ I’m striving to take the Jewish exegetical tradition into account where appropriate to demonstrate whether there is any evidence for a link between the peculiar masoretic form and the ancient Jewish exegesis. Similarly, I’m trying to use the ancient version in a more differentiated manner and ask whether they really represent a different *Vorlage* or if they alone are influenced by some exegetical considerations or other factors. For this reason I also include among the versions the Arabic translation of Rav Saadya Gaon³⁾ which was created in a time close to the masoretic period.

7.1 The Analysis

[אבה]

ISA 28:12

Ⓜ: וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ <אָבוּא>

Ancient Versions

Ⓞ: καὶ οὐκ ἠθέλησαν ἀκούειν || Ⓜ: וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ אֶל קוֹלֵנוּ || Ⓝ: וְלֹא אָבִו לְקַבְּלָא אֶל פִּינֵן || Ⓞ: وَا لَا <أَبُو>

-
2. Unfortunately, I had no access to the edition of the Samaritan oral tradition of the Hebrew Bible as published by Ze’ev Ben-Hayyim (Ben-Hayyim 1957-77).
 3. Unfortunately, only the edition of J. Derenbourg (Derenbourg 1979) was available to me and not the editions of Yosef Qafih, encompassing more material than the former one.

Even though the consonants אָבוֹא would at the first sight suggest a reading אָבוֹא (“I will come”) this doesn't really make any sense in the actual context: First, there isn't anyone in the nearest context speaking in the first person. Even if we understood this statement as being said by the prophet, the saying “I will not come to hear” wouldn't be consistent with the first part of this proclamation. As can be seen, even all the versions agree with the masoretic vocalization. It is therefore highly probable that the consonants here are a result of a scribal error or an unusual orthography and do not denote any meaning other than that of the masoretic vocalization itself. Nevertheless we may still qualify this case as a “latent *qerē*”⁴) as the consonants don't apparently match the vocalization. On the other hand, the problem lies solely with the consonants and doesn't pose any problem to the oral tradition as reflected by the masoretic vocalization.

[דָּהָ]

EZEK 33:30

Ⓜ: דָּהָ-תָּהָ <דָּהָ> דָּהָ

Ancient Versions

Ⓛ: × || Ⓞ: λαλοῦσιν <> ἄνθρωπος τῷ ἀδελφῷ αὐτοῦ || Ⓞ^{var}: <εἶς> σὺν ἐνὶ || Ⓢ: תָּהָ עַם <דָּהָ> וּמַלְאִי ||

Ⓢ: ܕܗܗ <ܕܗܗ> ܕܗܗ

Modern Scholars

BL: “Könnte Aramaismus sein, ist aber wahrsch. ein Schreibfehler” (§79b, 662)

The grammar of BL summarizes well the problem of the origin of this form: we cannot tell for sure how this unusual reading, דָּהָ, emerged. At the first sight it seems like an Aramaism. Other possibilities, like the one mentioned by BL, i.e. that our form resulted from a scribal error, are possible. More interesting is to ask about the roles of the oral tradition and the written biblical text. If this orthography is original we must assume that it was also read as *had* from the very moment it was first written down. Maybe this form was itself influenced by an oral tradition which preferred here the shorter Aramaic form (for metric or prosodic reasons perhaps?). It is

4. See below chapter 7.2.2, p. 198.

In these two verses the two forms וַיִּסְפֹּךְ and תִּסְפֹּךְ, which, at the first sight and outside their current context would seem to come from $\sqrt{\text{ספ}}$, *hif.* (“to continue”), are no doubt derivatives of the verb $\sqrt{\text{אספ}}$, “to gather”. They could be explained simply through an elision of *’alef* (i.e. of the glottal stop in pronunciation) of the פֿ”א verb. There doesn't seem to be any plausible interpretation if we consider them to be derived from $\sqrt{\text{ספ}}$. Also, a majority of the ancient versions read an equivalent to the $\sqrt{\text{אספ}}$ here. The only exception is the Targum which has a conflate reading having both the aramaic equivalents of $\sqrt{\text{אספ}}$ (כּוּשׁ) and $\sqrt{\text{ספ}}$ (the same consonants). This shows clearly that the Targum was a product of “learning” the text and not just a mere translation: we see the clearly meaningless variant to be integrated into the translation. Obviously, this seems to have happened in an oral context. From our example, however, it is unclear as to which textual tradition was the base of this variant: it may have been the written text (i.e. the study of the written text may have inspired the translation), but it may also have been based solely on the orally transmitted biblical text. The targumic variant which lacks the verb כּוּשׁ seems to be secondary.

Astonishing is the fact that here the vocalization matches the consonants. We would rather expect, considering how oral traditions actually work, that the vocalization would be harmonized with other forms of the verb $\sqrt{\text{אספ}}$, where the letter *’alef* is pronounced as a glottal stop (see e.g. וַיִּאָסֶפּוּ in GEN 29:22, וַיִּאָסְפוּ in JER 40:12 or וַיִּאָסֶפּוּ in the *nifal* stem in ISA 57:1). It seems more so that our forms are harmonized with the consonantal text. It is, however, possible that the opposite is true, namely that here the consonants preserved the “original” pronunciation where the elision of the glottal stop had already happened (see the variant of 11QPs^a above) and that in the other places the פֿ was preserved as an “orthographic spelling” in the consonantal text. If this is true then all of the forms of $\sqrt{\text{אספ}}$ which “preserve” the pronunciation of the glottal stop in a position where in the regular verbs a syllable would be closed by the first radical are themselves to be regarded as a result of harmonization of the oral tradition with the consonantal text. These forms would then have emerged through some sort of “guessing” and are to be considered late. It shows that there was a substantial contact between the oral tradition and the written text, in one way or another.

[אסר]

QOH 4:14

כִּי־מִבֵּית <הַסּוּרִים> יֵצֵא לְמַלְךְ כִּי גַם בְּמַלְכוּתוֹ נוֹלַד רֶשַׁע

Ancient Versions

Ⲯ: ὅτι ἐξ οἴκου <τῶν δεσμίων> ἐξελεύσεται τοῦ βασιλεῦσαι || Ⲙ: <اصت> يصح صا مملوًا و يصح صا مملوًا || Ⲛ: × || ⲛ: ארעא דכנענאי על אברהם ומלך על ארעא דכנענאי || Ⲟ: اصصصصص.

Ancient and Mediaeval Commentaries

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Ⲛ: רש"י</p> <p>כי מבית <הסורים> יצא למלך - ממקום הטנופת וסרחון כדמתרגמינן ויבאש וסרי:</p> | <p>כי מבית <הסורים> יצא למלך : from places of impurity and smell, like we have in Targum: "it was spoiled and smelled" and "it was spoiled and smelled"</p> |
|--|---|

Ad: 2 Chr 22:5: רד"ק

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>ויכו הרמים - חסר אל"ף כמו הארמים וכן מבית הסורים יצא</p> | <p>'alef is missing and it should read הארמים , similar to: כי־מִבֵּית <הַסּוּרִים> יֵצֵא.</p> |
|---|--|

Rabbinic Literature

Midraš Rabba:

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>It's Joseph who came out of the prison of Pharaoh. (GENR 89:3)</p> | <p>כי מבית הסורים יצא למלך, זה יוסף שיצא מבית האסורים של פרעה</p> |
|---|---|

Midraš Rabba:

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>it means: he shakes himself out⁹, like from within the thorns (סריאתה) (QOHR 4:1)</p> | <p>כי מבית הסורים יצא למלך דהוא מכשכש לבריאתה כמן ביני סריאתה</p> |
|---|---|

7. He probably refers to some *targūm* of ExOD 16:20.

8. Ad 2 CHR 22:5, see p. 150.

9. Maybe "from the evil inclination" is meant here?

Midraš Rabba:

טוב ילד מסכן : וחכם : when he
 saved through his wisdom the whole world
 from the famine, ומלך זקן וכסיל : it's Potifar.
 How many wonders did he see [done] by
 him and didn't pay heed to it, כי מבית הסורים
 יצא למלוך : from Pharaoh's fortress came out
 the king. (QOHR 4:1)

טוב ילד מסכן: זה יוסף, וחכם: שבחכמתו החיה
 כל העולם כולו ברעב, ממלך זקן וכסיל: זה פוטיפר
 כמה נסים ראה על ידו ולא נזהר, כי מבית הסורים יצא
 למלוך: מבית גירותו של פרעה יצא מלך

It this verse, the form *הַסּוּרִים* is exceptional and its naïve reading would be “the Syrians” (note, however, that the proper form denoting “the Syrians” would rather be *הַסּוּרִים*^{*}). Since the earliest times the word in question was understood as *הַאֲסוּרִים*, “the prisoners”, as is attested e.g. in the LXX or *ᜆ*. Such an understanding of this verse is also not unknown in the Jewish exegetical tradition, see e.g. Kimḥi's comment above. Even some of the *midrašim* (Genesis Rabba and Qohelet Rabba) understand it in this way, for example when they identify the “poor child” (see the previous verse, QOHR 4:13) which should, nevertheless, become a king with Joseph, who, according to the Biblical narrative, was also imprisoned. Targum Onkelos (“Because from a family of devotees of errors came Abraham and reigned over the Canaanites”), on the other hand, has clearly “the Syrians” in mind which are identified with the Arameans of the Abraham story (see GEN 26:5). There exist, however, other Jewish exegetical traditions explaining the word “etymologically”, based on similar Aramaic lexemes—*סריל*, “to smell” or *סריאתא/סירתא*, “thorn”.

Even though we can quite plausibly assume that the original Hebrew text *intended* here to mean “the house of prisoners”, it is hard to decide what was really the original form. It seems questionable, whether in the original version an elision of the glottal stop had already occurred: the vast majority of Hebrew nouns starting with an *'alef* don't lose this letter after a definite article. See also, for example, the ancient Phoenician language where an elision of an *'alef* is a common feature but not after the definite article¹⁰. The elision of the letter *א* may, therefore, be more likely a result of a scribal error. Given the fact that one of the forms in question is a proper noun designating nation, it is even possible that already the scribe of the consonantal text

10. See Harris 1936, p. 30; 96.

(be it the original or some later one) aimed at creating an ambivalent version which could be understood in both ways by leaving out the *'alef*.¹¹⁾

For our analysis it is more important that the vocalization is in accordance with the consonants. Therefore, if the consonantal text presents a sort of reinterpretation or hidden message, then the masoretic tradition follows closely the written text. Note that the exegetical tradition still knows about the (assumed) original meaning of the word but plays with the other possible interpretations. In any way, the vocalization doesn't seem to reinterpret the consonants, but it reflects more the original reading *hā'āsūrīm* which was, apparently, only later assimilated to match the consonantal form (*hā'āsūrīm* > *hāsūrīm*).

[אָרם]

2 CHR 22:5

וַיִּלְדוּ אֶת־יְהוֹרָם בֶּן־אֲחָאָב מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמַלְחָמָה עַל־חֲזָאֵל מֶלֶךְ־אָרָם בְּרֵמֹזוֹת גְּלָעָד וַיִּכּוּ <הַרְמִים> אֶת־יְהוֹרָם

Ancient Versions

Ⲙ: × || Ⲯ: <οἱ τοξόται> || Ⲛ: וקטלו <ארמאי> ית יורם || Ⲟ: <و;هضلا> ح;س;ن. || ⲟ: *vulneraveruntque* <Syri> *Ioram*

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| <p>like the הרמים : ויכו הרמים the <i>'alef</i> is missing, as in: (2 SAM 19:14), and sometimes the <i>'alef</i> is added, like: לְאִיתָן הָאֲזָרְחִי (Ps 89:1) for הזרחי and the <i>'ālef</i> in אַחֲוֹתַי בְּאֲזִינְיָכֶם (JOB 13:17).</p> | <p>דְּשׁ"י ויכו הרמים: כמו הארמים הרבה מקומות חסר אל"ף כגון לעמשא תומר ופעמים האל"ף נוספת בתיבה כגון איתן האזרחי כמו הזרחי ואל"ף של ואחותי באזניכם</p> |
|--|--|

11. See also below p. 150 (הרמים).

fication which hinting at a particular “hidden” interpretation; see also a similar place above¹⁶. However, even if this be true, it is not a reinterpretation that would happen on the level of the oral tradition, at least not the masoretic one. Rather, if this really isn't just a boring example of a scribal error, it can be explained basically in one of two ways: a) as an independent intervention of the scribe intended to hide some “secret message” into the written text itself; b) as a result of the influence of some exegetical traditions that knew about the ambiguities of the consonantal shape of the text. The former would be a fairly typical action for a literate culture (note that writing allows for easier meta-textual activity), while the latter would present a word pun more typical for the oral context. The current vocalization, on the other hand, doesn't carry any reinterpretation of the consonants, but rather the *pešaṭ* of the text.

As we can see, the vocalization of our form apparently fits the consonants. On the other hand, if we compare הַרְמִים with the parallel אֲרָמִים in 2 Kgs 8:28 we can see that both forms are very much alike, differing only in the missing א vocalized in the parallel passage with *hātef pataḥ*. It stands thus to reason that some sort of assimilation of the oral tradition into the consonantal text is a plausible explanation for the form in question¹⁷, otherwise we would have here a *qerē/ketiv* variant. It seems that the vocalization of הַרְמִים with *qāmeṣ* in the first syllable corresponds unambiguously to the definite article and the particular form with the *dageš* in א doesn't indicate that the vocalization would be trying somehow to salvage a reinterpretation possibly hidden in the consonantal text.

[אִשָּׁה]

EZEK 23:44

אֶל-אֶהְלֶה וְאֶל-אֶהְלִיבָה <אִשָּׁה> הַזֵּמָה אֵ:

16. See הַסְוֵרִים , p. 148.

17. The possibility that it were the masorettes, viz. the *naqdanīm*, who didn't consider the *hātef* so significant as to be written down (in form of a *qerē* variant), doesn't seem very convincing to me, even if it cannot be ruled out either. On the other hand, I found among the *qerē/ketiv* variants of the Leingrad codex none where an *'alef* missing in the consonantal text retained this consonant in the vocalization of the *qerē*.

similarly exceptional *plural* form אִשִּׁים (Ps 141:4; PROV 8:4; ISA 53:3) may possibly be explained in the same way¹⁸).

More interesting are, on the other hand, the translations of the LXX and the Targum Onkelos. None of them can be seen as direct translation of the hebrew consonants אִשָּׁה. The Greek ποιῆσαι, however, most probably corresponds to the Hebrew אִשָּׁה (*inf. cs. ʿāsōt*) and the Aramaic דְּעִצְתָּהּוֹן is a rendering of the Hebrew אִשָּׁה (*ʿāsōt*)¹⁹. Note, however, that some of the targumic manuscripts do read a singular here (דְּעִצְתָּהּוֹן, being different only in the short *a* from the plural).

It could be suggested that these translations are based on some oral version of the Hebrew text (perhaps ʾiššōt), where the differences between the sounds *ś* and *š* (in the LXX version) or *š* and *ṣ* (in Targum) as well as *ʿ* and *ʾ* (both in the LXX and Targum) are ignored²⁰. Also, the duplication of *š* and the initial vowel are disregarded.

This can be explained in one of two ways: a) these sounds were not distinguished in the translator's pronunciation of Hebrew and the form was erroneously identified with another one. This may be the case especially if the original form was a rare one within the biblical corpus, b) the translator was well aware of the difference between these sounds, but chose to translate this word freely, based only on a free, midrashic association of the two forms. Either way, the fact is that both of the ancient translations misunderstand/reinterpret the text in a different way but based on the same, or very similar pronunciation of the Hebrew *Vorlage*.

We can conclude that it doesn't seem plausible that the form אִשָּׁה presents a masoretic reinterpretation of the consonantal text. It originates rather from an older (oral) tradition which was known to the translators of the LXX and the Targum Onkelos. This was either misunderstood by the translators of these ancient versions (due to the fact that this translation was done orally and in the dialect of the translator certain consonants were indistinguishable) or was provocative

18. Though they could be explained as dialectal form, similar to forms found in Phoenician and Punic (see KBL, Art. אִשָּׁה ; Harris 1936, p. 79).

19. With the addition of a possessive suffix *3rd m. pl.*, which may be considered as targumic extension.

20. A similar phenomenon can be found, for example, in Theodotion translation of GEN 2:23 which plays upon the confusion of the forms אִשָּׁה and אִשָּׁה ; Jerome's (*Questiones Hebraicae on Genesim on GEN 2:23*) transcribes both as forms as “*issa*” into Latin. The second column of the Hexapla has *ἔσσα*.

enough to create different midrashic explanations which entered the ancient version. Either of these two possibilities would speak strongly for an oral setting of the translational process.

[אתה]

JER 3:22

הַנְּנִי <אַתָּנוּ> לָךְ כִּי אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ 𐤀

Masoretic Comments

Mp^l: ×

Ancient Versions

Ⓞ: ἰδοὺ <δοῦλοι ἡμεῖς ἐσόμεθα> σοι || Ⓢ: <س> , وحو || Ⓣ: הא <בכל עידן אתון אמרין תבנא> לפלהנך || Ⓥ: ecce nos <venimus> ad te tu enim es Dominus Deus noster

Modern Scholars

BL: “Nach Verbis א”ל, aber ohne das orthogr. א ” (§59g, p. 442)

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| | | |
|---|------|---|
| | דד"ק | |
| <p>אתנו is pronounced with <i>qāmeṣ</i> like the א”ל verbs, but belongs to the ל”ה verbs; [its meaning is like]: “he came (ואתא) from Ribebboth-kodesh” (DEUT 33:2)</p> | | <p>אתנו: נקרא בקמץ כבעלי האלף והוא מבעלי הה”א מן ואתא מרבבות קדש:</p> |

As both the mediaeval Jewish commentators as well as modern scholars note (see above), the form אַתָּנוּ is peculiar in that its vocalization agrees with the א”ל verbs but there is no *’alef* written in place of its third radical. If we observe the form more closely, however, we’ll see that it doesn’t resemble the form of the ל”ה verbs either: א”ל would presuppose אַתָּאנוּ , *’ātānū*, while ל”ה would read אַתִּינוּ , *’ātīnū*. We see, therefore, that this form only shows a peculiar orthography (if not a scribal error) in its written form. The vocalization would then present the more original form. However, a small problem still remains: most of the occurrences of the verb אַתָּה in the BH are clearly ל”ה forms: for example, *imperfect* forms without an ending having the characteristic *segōl*

in the final syllable (תִּאָתְהָ , יִאָתְהָ) or forms with consonantal *yōd* in place of the third radical (יִאָתְיוּ , וַיִּאָתְיוּ). The only instance of a form of this root written (and vocalized) as א"ל is אַתְּ in DEUT 33:21 which in itself is problematic²¹). It is thus quite possible that even the original version of our form agreed initially with the א"ל verbs (i.e. sounded *'ātīnū*) but was later assimilated to the written text.

A question remains as to whether the reading of the consonants אַתְּנוּ as a verbal form of $\sqrt{\text{אתה}}$ presents the original meaning, or if it is a result of some reinterpretation or exegesis. As we can see, neither LXX nor S use an equivalent of the verb “to come” in their translation, nor anything that could be understood as an interpretation thereof. It seems that these versions are based on another reading of the same consonants, namely as אַתְּנוּ , “us”. הִנְנוּ אַתְּנוּ לְךָ would hence be understood as “behold, (it is) us to You”, i.e. in the sense “behold, we belong to You”, which corresponds to the meaning of the Syriac version. The LXX (lit. “servants we will become Yours”) can be seen as further elaboration of this idea. The Targum, on the other hand, even if it also contains haggadic expansions, is essentially based on the same understanding as represented by the MT: תִּבְנֶנָּה , “we returned” would then go back to the hebrew אַתְּנוּ .

It is hard to decide what the original reading was: understanding אַתְּנוּ as a *nota accusatīvī* would be possible, but such a usage is rather rare in Biblical Hebrew²²). The possibility that the masoretic reading changed from *ōtānū* > *ātānū* (*āṭānū*, more precisely) is therefore not completely convincing but neither can it be ruled out. If this was the case, we can assume that such a shift didn't present a conscious reinterpretation but may possibly have happened due to the similarity in the pronunciation of the vowels *hōlem* and *qāmeṣ*.

We can conclude that the masoretic reading either represents the original meaning of the verb $\sqrt{\text{אתה}}$, “to come”, in which case it was most likely slightly assimilated to the match the consonantal text (i.e. reading the form as א"ל and not א"ה verb), or it shifted from *ōtānū* (אֶתְנוּ , “us”) into the verbal form *āṭānū*, אַתְּנוּ , by a simple vowel shift $\bar{o} > \bar{a}$. In the latter case this would

21. It has been suggested that ... אַתְּנוּ | סָפְנוּ ... was originally וַיִּתְאַסְפוּ , see KBL and BHQ.

22. MurJ, for example, (§ 125j) shows only a few cases where the accusative particle אַתְּ can mark the subject (e.g. JUDG 20:44; EZEK 17:21; see especially EZEK 35:10: אֶתְשֵׁנִי הַגּוֹיִם וְאֶת־שְׂתֵי הָאֲרָצוֹת לִי תִהְיֶינָה) or can function as a pronoun (HAG 2:5; EZEK 43:7).

seem to have happened without any interaction with the written text by just oral means, and without any *a priori* exegetical or ideological reasons.

[בוא]

GEN 33:11

קח־נָא אֶת־בְּרַכְתִּי אֲשֶׁר <הִבָּאת> לְךָ

Ancient Versions

Ⲙ: × || Ⲅ: λαβὲ τὰς εὐλογίας μου, ἃς <ἤνεγκά> σοι || Ⲅ^{var}: <ενηνοχα>/<ενινοχα> || Ⲅ^{var}: <ενενοχας> ||

Ⲅ: קָבִיל כְּעֹן יְת תִּקְרֹבְתִי <דְּאִיתִיאַתְּ> || Ⲅ: אֶת בְּרַכְתִּי אֲשֶׁר <הִבָּאתִי> לְךָ || Ⲅ: וְאֶקְבַּל בְּרַכְתִּי אֱלֹהִי <גִבַּתְּ> לְךָ ... || Ⲅ: וְאֶקְבַּל בְּרַכְתִּי אֱלֹהִי <גִבַּתְּ> לְךָ ... || Ⲅ:

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|--|--|--|
| | רש"י: | |
| you didn't strive for it, but I tried hard to reach [you], until [the bless- ing] came upon you. | רש"י: אשר הבאת לך - לא טרחת בה, ואני יגעתי להגיעה עד שבאה לידך | |

The masoretic form הִבָּאת (“she/it was brought”) has a rare ending ת- for 3. f. sg. This is one of fourteen²³⁾ such *pf* forms in the BH. Moreover, out of sixteen *pf*. 3. f. sg. forms in the *hofal* stem only one form has such an ending (הִגַּלְתָּ appearing twice in JER 13:19). All the common *pf*. 3. f. sg. forms do end, on the other hand, with ה- .

The LXX²⁴⁾, Ⲙ and Ⲅ(ⲗⲗⲗ) is to be read as ‘*aytī*, 1. c. sg. ‘*af*) all present an active variant that corresponds to the Hebrew הִבָּאתִי, “I brought”. A single LXX ms. has *ενενοχας*²⁵⁾, “you brought”. Even though Saadya's arabic translation is not vocalized, גִּבַּת should most probably be read as an active form: جَبْتُ, “I brought”, or جَبْتَ, “you brought”. The passive *causative* form (which then

23. See also EXOD 5:16; LEV 25:21; 26:34; DEUT 31:29; 32:36; ISA 7:14, JER 13:19 (bis), JER 44:23; EZEK 24:12; 46:17; 118:23; 1 CHR 14:2.

24. The variants *ενηνοχα/ενινοχα* (*pf*. instead of *aor.*), found in some manuscripts are not relevant to our discussion.

25. Ms. 127 in the Göttingen Edition of the LXX (see Pešitta Leiden). This variant is considered an error by the editors but see below.

could only be 3. f. sg.) would more likely be spelled גִּיבַת (גִּיבִּיט) or (even better) אֲגִיבַת (אֲגִיבִּיט)²⁶, in the VI. stem.

Targum Onkelos, on the other hand, has an *'ittafal* form, denoting the passive variant which then corresponds to the masoretic reading.

One possible way of explaining the masoretic (and targumic) reading is to consider it to be a conscious and euphemistic change of the text, perhaps aimed at avoiding the idea that a man (Jacob) could be the source of a benediction and not solely God. Similar euphemisms are common in the targumic tradition. If, however, we consider the original version to be 1. sg. (as LXX, אג and א attest), the consonantal text would presumably be הַבֵּאתִי , i.e. ending with תי-²⁷). If we considered our masoretic form to be the result of a reinterpretation for ideological reasons, it wouldn't suffice to change the vocalization, but the consonants would also have to be changed (הַבֵּאתִי > הַבֵּאת) accordingly. Note, however, that this new consonantal form can still be vocalized as the 1. sg. Had this form been meant to be reinterpreted unambiguously as a passive *causative* it would have been written *plaene* (הוֹבֵאת) and the ending would have been changed into ה- (i.e. הוֹבֵאה).

Therefore, if this form indeed presents some sort of reinterpretation, the consonants should be regarded as a “mixed form” which would allow for both readings. In such a case we can perhaps consider certain interplay between the written Biblical text and the corresponding oral tradition, which possibly led to such *forma mixta*.

A much simpler solution is to consider the consonantal form to be a result of a scribal error caused by a simple omission of the letter *yod*.

In any case, it seems that the Jewish tradition (i.e. the rabbinic and later ones) did not fluctuate between the two above mentioned meanings (“I brought” vs “it was brought”) but between two possible interpretations of the consonants הַבֵּאת themselves: “you brought” (הַבֵּאתָ , this would be the obvious reading for those consonants if we disregard the context) and “it was brought” (i.e. the masoretic form). See, for example, the following *midrash*:

26. Blau attests a passive form וַיִּבֵּא in the IV. stem only, see Blau 2006, p. 106.

27. As the Samaritan version does.

קח נא את ברכתי אשר הובאת לך - he (Jacob) said to him, how much have I toiled away until it (the blessing²⁸) came into my hand but you - by itself it comes to you, as it is not written²⁹ אשר הבאתה, “which you brought”, but אשר הובאת, “that was brought to you”: by itself it came to your hand.

קח נא את ברכתי אשר הובאת לך, אמר לו כמה יגיעה יגעתי עד שתבא לידי אבל אתה מאליה היא באה אצלך, אשר הבאתה אין כתיב כאן אלא אשר הובאת מאליה באה לידך

Figure 48: *GENR 78,12 commenting on GEN 33:11.*

It seems that an exegetic note about two possible readings of הַבֵּאת was incorporated in the midrashic discourse here, proving that the question of how to read (and interpret) the form containing the consonants הַבֵּאת was discussed in the Jewish tradition. Rashi's commentary seems to refer to the same idea. Even Saadya's translation fits possibly into the picture, if we understand his reading as 2. sg. *m.*, “you brought” and not 1. sg. If this interpretation is correct, Saadya must have used here the written text as a basis for his translation (with its simplest possible interpretation) and not the oral tradition, and such a reading wouldn't really fit into the context. On the other hand, we cannot exclude the possibility that Saadya intended 1. sg. which presents the same variant as LXX, ⚡ and ⚡ attest.

To sum up, the most straightforward explanation for our form is that it is a result of a scribal error that was consequently reinterpreted by the oral tradition to fit into the context (it wouldn't make much sense if Jacob said to his brother that he, i.e. Esau, brought his “blessing”). The other possibility, namely that the consonantal form הַבֵּאת already bears a reinterpretation of the presumably original הַבֵּאתִי, seems less probable, but is also not completely to be ruled out. In the above-mentioned *midrash* we see a great sensitivity to the role of the blessing in the story.

NUM 14:11

וְהִבֵּאתִי < אֲתֶם וַיִּדְעוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ >

28. Note the ambivalent usage of this word here, which may simply stand for a “gift”, but on another level it points directly to the main theme of Jacob's story.

29. Sic!

2 KGS 9:2

וְהִקְמַתוּ מִתּוֹךְ אֶחָיו <וְהִבְיֵאתָ> אֹתוֹ חֶדֶר בְּחֶדֶר אֱלֹהִים

2 KGS 19:25

וַיִּצְרְתִּיהָ עֲתָה <הִבְיֵאתִיהָ> אֱלֹהִים

ISA 43:23

לֹא-<הִבְיֵאתָ> לִי שָׁה

SONG 3:4

עַד-<שָׁהִבְיֵאתִיו> אֶל-בֵּית אִמִּי וְאֶל-חֶדֶר הַזֹּרְתִי אֱלֹהִים

Modern Scholars

BL: “Alles späte Pleneschreibung.” (§59p, p. 445)

The above listed forms do not pose any problem for the translation or exegesis (all of them are clearly a *hif* of $\sqrt{\text{בוא}}$). Their spelling is, however, atypical. All of them bear two *mātrēs lectiōnis* which is highly exceptional³⁰. In וְהִבְיֵאתִי , e.g., both *yod* and *'alef* stand as a vowel-letter for the šērē . This could possibly be explained by assuming that the letter *'alef* occurs here due to an “etymological spelling”, extended by an additional vowel-letter *yod*, which stands here for the vowel šērē to point out its reading more specifically.

A better explanation, in my opinion, can be found if we take these forms as being a mix of two slightly different forms, one preserved in the consonantal text and the other in the oral tradition and, consequently, through the masoretic vocalization. The consonants would, then, represent the variant with the linking vowel \bar{o} : הִבְיֵאתִי standing for הִבְיֵאתִי , הִבְיֵאתָ for הִבְיֵאתָ , הִבְיֵאתִיהָ for הִבְיֵאתִיהָ , and הִבְיֵאתִיו for הִבְיֵאתִיו . This hypothesis could be supported by the fact that such an occurrence of two *matres lectionis*, being very rare in BH (apart from the case where the vowel-letter *yod* occurs as part of the *hif'il* stem), appears here in very similar forms of the same root: all of them *pf. hif'il* of the verb $\sqrt{\text{בוא}}$. This root, belonging to the ע"ו group of irregular verbs, allows for such a variant with a linking vowel to appear. Moreover, linking vowels occur frequently in

30. If we do not count regular forms, such as הִבְיֵא , where the *yod* vowel-letter is to be explained as a part of the *hif'il* stem having an *'alef* due to a “etymological” orthography.

forms with suffixes³¹, which two of the above mentioned forms do have. If this explanation is correct, these forms should be considered as an example of a “latent *qerē*”³²).

This can be further supported by the fact that in JER 25:13 we find similar a case which was considered by the masoretes as a *qerē/ketiv* variant (Kt=והביאתי, Qr=והבאתי). Note, however, that here the letters *’alef* and *yōd* are swapped and may thus be the result of a scribal error.

1 SAM 25:8

וימָצְאוּ הַנְּעָרִים חֵן בְּעֵינֵיךָ כִּי־עַל־יּוֹם טוֹב <בָּנוּ>

Ancient Versions

Ⓜ: ὅτι ἐφ’ ἡμέραν ἀγαθὴν <ἤκομεν> || Ⓢ: ארִי עַל יוֹם טֹב <אֲתִינָא> || Ⓝ: ארִי עַל יוֹם טֹב <אֲתִינָא> || Ⓦ: ארִי עַל יוֹם טֹב <אֲתִינָא>

ⓑ: *in die enim bona <venimus>* || Ⓡ: ×

Ancient and Mediaeval Commentaries

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>An <i>’alēf</i> is missing in the writing but is present in the pronunciation.</p> | <p>דד"ק</p> <p>חסר אל"ף מהמכתב ונשארה במבטא</p> |
|---|---|

In this verse, we find the form בָּנוּ (which would normally, outside of the context, mean “in us”) apparently in the sense of בָּאנוּ (“came we”). There seems to be no obvious interpretation of this verse, not even haggadic one, where the former spelling would make sense. Moreover, all the versions agree with the later variant, i.e. the verbal form of בוא, “to come”. Therefore, what we have to do with here is a most probably a scribal error or at least an unusual orthography. We can also understand this form as a *latent qerē*, where the written form, *ketiv* doesn't correspond to the meaning implied by the oral tradition, but is not marked by the Masora. Note, on the other hand, that the oral tradition would allow for both spelling variants, as they are homophonic and thus indistinguishable in pronunciation (see also Qimḥi's comment above). In other words, if we consider this form to be an error, this error is a scribal one and doesn't apply to the oral tradition in any way.

31. MurJ, §80r, p. 221.

32. See chapter 7.2.2, p. 198.

1 SAM 25:34

וְתָבֵאתִי לְקִרְאָתִי כִּי אֶסְנֹתָר לְנָבֶל עַד־אֹר הַבֶּקֶר מִשְׁתֵּין בְּקִיר

Kt: ותבאתי || Qr: ותבאת

Ancient Versions

Ⓜ: εἰ μὴ ἔσπευσας καὶ <παρεγένου> εἰς ἀπάντησίν μοι || Ⓢ: אֲדִי אֵל לֹא אֶשְׁחַלֵּם <אֶשְׁחַלֵּם לֹא אֶשְׁחַלֵּם> || Ⓣ: אֲדִי אֵל לֹא אֶשְׁחַלֵּם <אֶשְׁחַלֵּם לֹא אֶשְׁחַלֵּם> || Ⓛ: אֲדִי אֵל לֹא אֶשְׁחַלֵּם <אֶשְׁחַלֵּם לֹא אֶשְׁחַלֵּם> || Ⓜ^{ar}: אֲדִי אֵל לֹא אֶשְׁחַלֵּם <אֶשְׁחַלֵּם לֹא אֶשְׁחַלֵּם> || Ⓛ: X

Ancient and Mediaeval Commentaries

דד"ק

. ותבאתי —so it's written and it is read ותבאתי .
And in the written form there are two feminine morphemes—[that of] the past [tense] and [that of] the future [tense], since the future forms is תבא and the past one באת .
And the multiplication in this word teaches us about how quick it will come. And the *qerē* [consists] also of two morphemes.

ותבאתי: כן כתי' והקרי ותבאת ובמלה בכתוב שני
סימני נקבה עבר ועתיד כי לשון העתיד תבא ולשון עבר
באת והיה הכפל הזה במלה מורה על זריזות ביאתה וכן
בקרי משני הסימנים

Both the *qerē* ותבאת and the *ketiv* ותבאתי are unique in Biblical Hebrew. They seem to present a *mixed form* of the *perfect* and *imperfect* forms of the second person feminine, i.e. containing the *imperfect preformative* -ת and at the same time the *perfect affirmative* ת- (or תי-). Moreover, the *ketiv* תי- seems to represent an archaic (or dialectal) form of the morpheme which is usually read as ת- in masoretic Hebrew.

Let us here examine whether some sort of reinterpretation may have happened through the vocalization. From the context it is clear that the verb refers to Abigail (see v. 23) and there is no obvious way of understanding the form as anything else other than 2. *f.* sg.. This is further supported by the fact that all the ancient versions agree with this straightforward understanding of the verb in question. The ending תי- cannot therefore refer to the 1. sg., and the function

of *forma mixta* cannot be seen as a device to hide two possible interpretations of the form in question. Obviously, both the *praeformative* and *afformative* are in agreement here.

More interestingly, there are a number of *qerē/ketiv* cases which resemble our form, in that the *ketiv* has a more archaic form, i.e. it ends with י- whereas the *qerē* has the shorter form. This happens with stand-alone personal pronouns (Kt=אָתִי, Qr=אָת) ³³, with verbal *perfect* forms (e.g. JER 2:33 ³⁴: Kt=לְמַדְתִּי, Qr=לְמַדְתָּ) and even with the *participles* (e.g. JER 22:23 ³⁵: Kt=מְקַנְנֶתִי, Qr=מְקַנְנֶתִי). There seems to be only one other form in the *imperative* form (which in BH is derived from the *imperfect* and can thus shed light on the form in question): Kt=הִתְפַּלְשֵׁתִי, Qr=הִתְפַּלְשֵׁתִי (MICAH 1:10).

These forms most probably go back to the protosemitic feminine singular personal pronoun *ʾanti* ³⁶ upon which the finite verbal forms are presumably based. This could explain why we find *perfect* forms ending with תִּי- in the *ketiv* ³⁷. However, the picture becomes more complicated when regarding the *imperfect* forms and *participles*. It can be argued that even here the ending developed from the stand-alone pronoun (it is assumed that this is the source for the ending -ī in the regular Hebrew 2. f. sg. תִּקְטְלִי ³⁸), and we can thus sometimes find archaic forms which preserve the original ending.

We may, therefore, assume that the consonantal וְתַבְּאִתִּי is an archaism resembling the original personal pronoun *תִּי (or *ʾanti*). Another possibility is that this consonantal form is simply a result of some scribal error. In any case, the difference between the *ketiv* and *qerē* is consistent with other similar cases of verbal forms or personal pronouns of the 2. f. sg. This means that at least the orally transmitted *qerē* was, beyond any doubt, understood as second person feminine

33. JUDG 17:2; 1 KGS 14:2; 2 KGS 4:16; 2 KGS 4:23; 2 KGS 8:1; JER 4:30; EZEK 36:13.

34. See also JER 2:33; 3:4F; 4:19; 31:21; 46:11; 51:13; EZEK 16:13; 16:18,22,31,43,47,51; RUTH 3:3.

35. See also 2 KGS 4:23; JER 10:17; 22:23; EZEK 27:3; LAM 4:21, some of them are more unusual, however.

36. As in Arabic, Syriac (the orthographic form) and Ge'ēz. See e.g. GesK §32h, p. 104f. In Hebrew the letter *nūn* is assimilated into the following *tāv*.

37. See also JUDG 11:35; SONG 4:9; 1 SAM 25:33; JER 15:10 where such archaic forms may have been preserved in the vocalization when this feminine ending occurs before the pronominal suffix. Note, however, that the vowel *ī* in these forms may be interpreted as an auxiliary vowel as well.

38. See e.g. BL §40, p. 297; GesK §47c, p. 125.

and didn't pose any shift in the meaning. We can see this in Qimḥī's commentary (see above). His explanation for the “mixed form” is, however, a midrashic one.

1 KGS 21:29

יַעַן כִּי־נִכְנַע מִפְּנֵי לֹא־<אָבִי> הִרְעָה בְּיָמָיו בְּיָמֵי בְּנוֹ אָבִיא הִרְעָה עַל־בֵּיתוֹ

Masoretic Comments

MP: ק אביא

Ancient Versions

G: οὐκ <ἐπάξω> τῆν κακίαν ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτοῦ || E: ... || L: <אָבִי> || S: לא <אִתִּי> || T: ×
 B: non <inducam> malum || Q: ×
 var: <אִתִּי> || B: non <inducam> malum || Q: ×

Ancient and Mediaeval Commentaries

| | | |
|--|-----|--------------------------|
| | ד"ק | |
| The third radical 'alēf is missing in the writing. | | חסר אלף למ"ד הפעל מהמכתב |

Even though the consonants אבי alone would naturally be read as אָבִי (i.e. sg. cs. of אָב ; “the father of”) such an interpretation is not feasible in this context. We also found no haggadic interpretation that would play with this variant. In fact, all of the variants³⁹⁾ understand this form as אָבִיא , which fits perfectly into the context and is even repeated in the second part of the parallelism at the end of the same verse. This form is also marked by the *masora parva* of the codex L as a *qerē*. We can conclude that this peculiar spelling most probably represents a scribal error or an unusual orthography, and it doesn't seem possible that either the consonants or the vocalization present any kind of reinterpretation. Again, the written text is less reliable than the oral tradition here.

EZEK 40:3

<וַיְבִיא> אוֹתֵי שְׂמָה וְהִנֵּה־אִישׁ מֵרָאֵהוּ כְּמֵרָאֵה נְחֹשֶׁת

39. The minute variants in the vocalization of the Targum are not significant for our discussion.

Masoretic Comments

Mp: ל מל

Modern Scholars

BL: §59p, p. 444n.

The meaning of וַיָּבִיא doesn't present any difficulty, it clearly denotes "he led in" as the Hebrew *narr. hif.* suggests. The form itself, however, is non-standard. One would either expect the shorter and more common וַיָּבֵא (based on the *apocopate imperfect*) or the less usual and longer וַיָּבִיא. Our peculiar form could easily be explained, though, as a mixed form where the consonantal text presents one variant (i.e. the longer וַיָּבִיא) whereas the vocalization (based presumably on a separate oral tradition) has the shorter one (*way-yābē*). The *masora parva* of L notices מלא (= *plae*) here, which may be seen as a certain alternative to the *qerē* note, suggesting to the reader that the written text doesn't match exactly the way it is to be read⁴⁰.

[חממ]

ISA 47:14

אִין־גַּחְלִית <לְחָמִים> אֹר לְשֶׁבֶת נִגְדָּו: א

Ancient Versions

Ⓜ: (1QIsa^a) לחוממ || Ⓜ: (1QIsa^b) [... ת שב] אור לחמם אור לשב[ת] || Ⓢ: אפ לא חמ. <לחמם> || Ⓣ: אית להון שאר <ומשיזיב> אף לא אתר לאשתיובא ביה || Ⓠ: ὄτι ἔχεις ἄνθρακας <> πυρός, ἀθήσαι ἐπ αὐτούς

40. See also Ofer 2007, p. 68.

Ancient and Mediaeval Commentaries

| | | |
|---|------|---|
| | רש"י | |
| <p>אין גחלת לחמם : They will have no remnant like this straw that makes no embers when burned, so that one could warm himself up from its glow.</p> | | <p>אין גחלת לחמם: אין שארית להם כקש הזו שאין בדליקתו גחלים להתחמם לאורם</p> |

The form לְחֻמָּם would, if taken out of the present context be easy to analyse and understand: it would simply mean “their bread”. This meaning doesn't, however, fit at all into the context of our verse and, clearly, none of the ancient versions translate גַּחְלֵת לְחֻמָּם (rather nonsensically) as “their hot coal of bread”.

However, if only the consonants are regarded, a meaningful reading can be proposed: the word can either be vocalized as לְחֻמָּם (*pi.*) or לְחֻמָּם (*pol.*), both of which would mean “to heat”, “to warm up”. For the first possibility see JOB 39:14, תְּחַמֵּם ; the second one seems to be attested by 1QIsa^a (but not by 1QIsa^b, which seems to have the same consonants as the MT). The ancient Hebrew versions possibly oscillated between the two stems, and in one tradition it appeared as *pi'el*, in another as *polēl*. This doesn't, however, answer the question as to why the vocalization doesn't reflect any of them. Clearly, if one vocalized the text on the basis of the consonants only, it would seem most natural to choose one of the two mentioned forms. However, a form occurs vocalized in a completely different manner here which, moreover, cannot be simply explained as another form (i.e. in another Hebrew stem).

My proposal as to how this form can have developed, is to assume that another form existed in the oral tradition which was incompatible with the consonants לחמם . This seems plausible, as some major ancient versions translate this word in a completely different way (לְחֻמָּם) or leave it out completely (לְחֻמָּם). Evidently, this word was a source of confusion. If the oral form disagreed with the consonants and the oral tradition came into contact with the written text, the oral tradition may have been “corrected” in order fit the consonants. If, for example, we expected the oral tradition to read *lahom* (לְחֻמָּם), i.e. in the *qal* stem (meaning “to be hot”) which can alternatively be understood as a noun with a preposition (“for the heat”; “warmth”), then the form could have been assimilated into the consonants (*lahom* > *lahmom*) and consequently harmonized with the above-mentioned

לְחֶמֶם, “their bread” (appearing four times in the Bible: EZEK 4:13; 12:19; HOS 9:4; PROV 30:25), based on the similarity of the sounds *o* and *ā*. This shift can also be described as being just the result of “guessing” based on the consonants.

[דרש]

EZRA 10:16

וַיָּשְׁבוּ בַיּוֹם אֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ הָעֵשִׂירִי <לְדַרְיוֹשׁ> הַדְּבָר׃

Ancient Versions

Ⲙ: × || Ⲯ: <εαζητθσαι> τὸ ῥῆμα || Ⲛ: <ܠܘܫܘܫܘܢܐ> || Ⲫ: ut <quaererent> rem

Modern Scholars

BL: Schreibfehler. [§50r, p. 357]

Modern scholars agree that the form לְדַרְיוֹשׁ (“to examine”, “to learn”) is a scribal error. It is hardly plausible that a quadriliteral verbal form (דריש, *daryos*) would develop from a regular one by inserting the letter *yōd* between the two last radicals⁴¹.

If we only look at the consonants, we can see that the word could also be read as לְדַרְיוֹשׁ* (“to [the king] Daryawesh”). The whole sentence would then be understood as: וַיָּשְׁבוּ - בַיּוֹם אֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ “And they sat.—On the first day of the tenth month [according to the King] Daryawesh [happened] this event.” We can also notice that the name דַּרְיוֹשׁ occurs no less than 10 times in the book of Esra. Besides that, it also appears a couple of times⁴² in other biblical books in a context of similar dating formulas. See e.g. HAG 1:15: בַּיּוֹם עָשָׂרִים וָאַרְבָּעָה לַחֹדֶשׁ בְּשָׁשִׁי “On the 24th of this month; of the sixth (month) in the second year of the king Daryawesh”.

In the present verse, however, a year is missing, which doesn't make much sense if we consider that ancient dates were counted according years (and not months) of a king's reign. It is therefore highly probable that the original text did not intend to have the king's name in this

41. 'Quadriliteral' Hebrew forms/roots can emerge from genuine Hebrew roots either by reduplication of one or two of its radicals, or by adding certain prefixes, like -ש or -ת.

42. HAG 1:1; 1:15; 2:10; ZECH 1:1,7; 7:1; DAN 9:1; 11:1.

verse. Such a reading may therefore either be the result of a misunderstanding (maybe in accordance with other places which sound similar) or presents perhaps a conscious (midrashic) reinterpretation done by a copyist of the text.

Much more interesting is the vocalization of the word in question. It is clearly based on the assumed original (and “correct”) reading לְדָרוּשׁ, but is more or less⁴³ adapted to a quadriliteral scheme. This shows that it is quite improbable that the Masoretes worked as grammarians (as is sometimes assumed among the scholars) who would invent the vocalization themselves. In such a case we would have expected them to vocalize this word as לְדָרְיוּשׁ or to correct the form and read לְדָרוּשׁ (by the means of a *qerē*, for example). I would rather suggest that our vocalization emerged by oral means when someone acquainted with knowledge of the oral tradition tried to read the consonantal text, and having differences he “guessed” and “corrected” his spelling according to the written text.

It is questionable as to whether this could have been carried out by the Masoretes themselves. If the oral tradition of the biblical text differed from the written text at the time of the Masoretes, we would rather expect them to vocalize the consonants with the vowels passed on by the oral tradition and to note the corresponding consonants as a *qerē* in the *marginal masora*. As this did not happen we can assume that this change took place before the time of the Masoretes.

If this thesis is correct, it would imply that the written and oral traditions of the Hebrew Bible were not disconnected but rather that they influenced each other. Note also that the book of Esra is not among the biblical texts traditionally read as part of the synagogal liturgy. This shows that it was most probably studied and passed on orally but that there were situations where the oral tradition came into contact with the written text of the Hebrew Bible and could have been “corrected” accordingly.

[היה]

QOH 11:3

וְאִם-יִפּוֹל עֵץ בְּדָרוּם וְאִם בְּצַפּוֹן מְקוֹם שִׁיפּוֹל הָעֵץ שֵׁם <יְהוּא>:

43. Quadriliteral verbs in the Tiberian Hebrew are vocalized similarly to the Hebrew *pi'el* stem, i.e. with *a* in the initial closed syllable. The form in question is only different in the vowel *o* in the second syllable, which is apparently induced by the letter *ו* of the consonantal text.

Ancient Versions

Ⓞ: τόπω, οὗ πεσεῖται τὸ ξύλον, ἐκεῖ <ἔσται> || Ⓢ: <|soo> اصح وبعده ل; || Ⓚ: × || Ⓣ: אתר דאיתגזר
למתקיימא ההוא עיטא תמן משתלחא <למהוי>

Modern Scholars

BL: “in הוא , ‘er’ zu ändern.” (§57t”, p. 423)

BHS: pc Mss הוא , sic l vel יהוא

The last word in this verse presents a very peculiar form. If we take it to be an *imperfect* of the verb $\sqrt{\text{היה}}$, we would expect such a form to be either יהיה or יהי. It could be suggested that we are dealing here either with an Aramaism or an Aramaic orthography applied to the Biblical Hebrew text. We must, however, reject such a suggestion, as there is no form יהי* or any similar in the BH (i.e. one that would sound $y^{\text{h}}\bar{u}$) which would fit the masoretic form. It seems improbable that the middle consonant of the Hebrew $\sqrt{\text{היה}}$ could ever develop into the sound \bar{u} ⁴⁴.

Even though the ל"י and ל"א groups of irregular verbs are basically interchangeable in Aramaic⁴⁵ and we find thus some forms of the root $\sqrt{\text{הוי}}$ written ending with *alēf*, there is no form in Aramaic that would correspond to the MT either. In most Aramaic dialects the letter *waw* of the root either remains consonantal, followed by the vowel \bar{e} (written in several different ways: see e.g. BA לְהוּא⁴⁶), Ancient Aramaic *yhw*⁴⁷, Syriac ܠܘܐ⁴⁸), mishnaic יהווי⁴⁹), the forms יהוא , להוא , להוי found in the texts from the Judean desert⁵⁰); Jewish-Palestinian יהווי and even יהבי⁵¹) and Jewish-Babylonian ליהוי , ניהוי or יהוי⁵²) or it elides completely, leaving only the vowel \bar{e} (e.g.

44. Our form in its context clearly is in *singular* (as הַעֵץ stands in sg.). We can, therefore, rule out the possibility that the reason for the vowel \bar{u} laid in the *plural* ending ו-.

45. See e.g. Degen 1969, p. 54 (§144) with regard to the BA.

46. For example DAN 2:20,28,29.

47. See Degen 1969, p. 76, who quotes the Sefire inscription (Sf. II A 4). According to Degen, -h stands as a vowel-letter for - \bar{e} .

48. See Smith 1903. Compare also Sokoloff 2009.

49. mGIt 9:3, see DJA (p.43).

50. See DJA (p. 43).

51. DJPA (p. 160) quotes *Targum Neofiti* (NUM 29:8; GEN 9:11). The later form (written with ב rather than ו) proves that the *waw* was pronounced as a consonant.

52. DJBA (p. 370).

Targum Onkelos 'תהי' 53); יהי and להי from Judean desert⁵⁴ and Jewish-Babylonian יהא , יהי and נהי respectively). We have no indication of forms ending with *ū*, nor would such forms make any sense.

A completely different solution would be to consider יהוא to be a corrupted form of the copula הוא (see e.g. above BL and BHS). Such a reading doesn't essentially change the meaning of this verse — at least as long as we stick to the basic meaning of the text in its primary context. It is therefore hard to decide which variant the Septuagint and the Peshitta present, even if it seems at first sight that their use of a verbal form would more likely correspond to the Hebrew *imperfect* than to a nominal clause with copula. It cannot therefore be easily decided what the original form was. The Targum doesn't help us much either because its version depends heavily on a particular haggadic interpretation of the whole verse.

If we consider the consonants and vocalization of our form one by one, however, we find, that the consonants יהוא could be understood as one of the orthographic variants of the full Aramaic *imperfect* form *yehwē*⁵⁵) There are several scenarios as to how this consonantal form could have emerged: If we consider יהוא to be the original form, then יהוא poses a scribal error (e.g. הוא could have been mistaken by an Aramaic-speaking scribe for a verbal form and “corrected” accordingly). יהוא may also have represented the original form. An even more complicated development is imaginable: let's consider, for example, that the original form may have been a BH *imperfect* יהיה , that was misspelled as יהוה , which in turn could have been understood as the Aramaic *imperfect* form and hence corrected into יהוא , in order not to be mistaken for the *Tetragram*.

If we look at the vocalisation, on the other hand, it seems that it is based on the copula הוא , *hū*, adapted to fit the consonants יהוא . This may have happened through a process of “guessing”⁵⁶) so that the letter *yōd*, which wasn't contained in the oral form, was vocalized randomly with *šwa*. Another possibility is to view the vocalization of the letter *yōd* as going back to the Aramaic form יהא . If this is correct it would be an example of a *forma mixta* where two distinct forms are mixed into one. It seems that in our case, such a “forma mixta” didn't emerge from exegetical,

53. GEN 4:12, see Dalman 1894, p. 294.

54. See DJA (p. 43).

55. Such a form is found among the texts from Naḥal Ḥever (Ḥev 43:7, see also DJA, p. 43).

56. See below p. 199.

ideological or haggadic considerations but simply by “guessing” the “correct form” in a situation where the written text and the oral tradition disagreed. In other words, the mixed form developed accidentally and by oral means.

To sum up, it is quite clear that if the masoretic form goes back to הוא⁵⁷, there must have been some contact between the written text, and the oral tradition and the oral tradition was “corrected” according to the written text.

[חתת]

JER 49:37

וְהַחֲתִיתִי <אֶת־עֵילָם לְפָנַי אִיבִיהֶם׃

Ancient and Mediaeval Commentaries

רד"ק

It appears as a regular verb and there is a *dagesh* in the last letter *tāv* for a missing third radical *tāv*. The root is חתת and its meaning “to break” (שבר).

והחתתי - בא על דרך השלם ודגש תי"ו האחרונה לחסרון תי"ו למ"ד הפעל שרשו חתת ענין שבר

Modern Scholars

BL: “Eine Neubildung nach dem Starken Verb, wobei merkwürdigerweise das *a* des Präfixes erhalten blieb”. (§58p', p. 437)

The form וְהַחֲתִיתִי doesn't pose any difficulty in understanding or interpretation, but the form itself is unusual. We would expect it to be וְהַחֲתִי (with an assumed assimilation of the last radical *n* into the affirmative וְהַחֲתִי : וְהַחֲתִי* > וְהַחֲתִי*). There is another form possible, however: the irregular verbs ע"ע (as well as ע"ו) tend to have an auxiliary vowel before the ending, e.g. הַסְבּוֹתִי (EZEK 7:22) or הַקְמַתִי (GEN 6:18, etc.). It would thus be possible to read the consonants here in such a way: וְהַחֲתִיתִי. See ISA 9:3 where such a form of the root חתת actually occurs: הַחֲתִיתִי.

We can therefore surmise that the masoretic reading emerged from the attempt to “correct” the

57. It would be much easier to vocalize יהוא as the Aramaic *imperfect yehwē* if one was “guessing” the vocalization without any previous knowledge of the text.

oral tradition (which presumably had the shorter form *hēḥattī*, *הַחַתִּי) according to the consonants הַחַתִּי. This may have happened by simply vocalizing the form according to the regular verbs (see also Qimḥī and BL above):

| form | syllabic structure | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|-------------|-----------|
| presumed oral form* | <i>hē-</i> | <i>ḥat-</i> | <i>tī</i> |
| masoretic form | <i>haḥ-</i> | <i>tat-</i> | <i>tī</i> |
| regular verbs | <i>hiq-</i> | <i>ṭal-</i> | <i>tī</i> |

Table 63: Comparison of the presumed oral form with the actual masoretic הַחַתִּי.

It stands to reason that the masoretic form הַחַתִּי can best be explained as a result of such a re-vocalization which was not based on any of the two ordinary forms (*וְהַחַתִּי, *וְהַחַתִּי) but emerged through some sort of “guessing” on the basis of the consonantal form.

[יבש]

NAHUM 1:4

גוֹעַר בַּיָּם <וַיִּבְשֶׂהוּ> מִיָּם

Ancient Versions

Ⲯ: <καὶ ξηραίνων αὐτὴν> || Ⲅ: <סחב סחב> || 𐤀: <ומיבש ליה>

Modern Scholars

BL: “Orthogr. Vereinfachung für *וַיִּבְשֶׂהוּ”. (§55c', p. 382)

The meaning of וַיִּבְשֶׂהוּ is obvious: “and he dries it (the sea) up” from the $\sqrt{\text{בש}}$. This fits perfectly into the context and even the different versions all agree. The form itself shows an interesting *sindhi* orthography: the two *yōd* letters are written as just one (see BL above). What is more intriguing is the vocalization which corresponds to this orthography. This can be explained either through contact between the oral tradition and the written text where the former was adapted to fit the latter. But the opposite way is also possible: it can be suggested that the form *way(y)-yabšēhu* was effectively pronounced as if the two *yōds* were assimilated into one sound (with gemination).

This could perhaps have been the reason for the *sindhi* orthography. In any way, it doesn't seem feasible that this form (neither the consonants nor the vowels) could be considered as a result of a conscious reinterpretation.

[ידה]

LAM 3:53

צָמְתוּ בַּבּוֹר חַיֵּי <וַיִּדּוּ> אֲבָנֵי בִי

Ancient Versions

Ⲭ: καὶ <ἐπέθηκαν> λίθον ἐπ' ἐμοί || Ⲅ: <مهمه> ص طا قلا || Ⲇ: <ורגמו> אבנא בי

Modern Scholars

BL: “Wahrscheinlich mit Brockelmann als haplologische Silbenellipsen zu erklären”. (§24n, p. 220.)

If we regard the consonants וידו alone, it would seem that they should be read as וַיִּדּוּ*, “and his hand”. Such a reading is, however, not feasible in the actual context: a suffix י- stands clearly in the singular, but the text speaks about the enemies, in the plural (v. 52). Even the first half of the verse, with which the second one builds a parallelism, has a verbal form in the plural. Even if we understood God to be the subject (i.e. translating בי אבן וידו as “and his hand *was like a stone to me*”), it wouldn't really fit the picture of God who looks down from the Heaven (v. 50) and hears the laments of Israel (v. 56).

It is thus unlikely that the vocalization presents a reinterpretation of some kind here. The masoretic reading corresponds to the ancient versions. It seems, therefore, that the unusual form (the expected *narrative* form of the ידה√ would be וַיִּדּוּ*) is a result of a *sindhi* orthography or pronunciation (see above ישב√, NAHUM 1:4⁵⁸).

[ידע]

EXOD 2:4

58. Above, p. 172.

וַתִּתְצַב אַחֲתָיו מִרְחֹק <לְדַעָה> מֵה־יַעֲשֶׂה לּוֹ

Ancient Versions

Ⲯ: καὶ κατεσκόπευεν ἡ ἀδελφὴ αὐτοῦ μακρόθεν <μαθεῖν>, τί τὸ ἀποβησόμενον αὐτῷ || Ⲛ: <לְמִידָעָה> מֵאֵה || יתעבִיד ליה || יי: <לדעה> || יי^{2vars}: <לדעת>

Modern Scholars

BL: “ < di‘atu, einem in Arab. bei dieser Verbklasse gewöhnlichen Inf.-Typus (sonst יַעֲשֶׂה).” (§55c', p. 382.)

לְדַעָה is an unusual form of an *inf. q.* ידע. While the possibility that this presents a dialectal/alternative form of such an *infinitive* cannot be ruled out, it seems that this form more likely developed from a scribal error in the consonantal text (לדעה > לדעת). Interestingly, the vocalization follows this modified form and vocalizes it as the noun דַּעָה, “knowledge”, differing substantially from the form of the infinitive (יַעֲשֶׂה). The most plausible explanation is that this is the result of some kind of “guessing”, where the new form is not based on the former oral shape combined with some element of the consonants but is completely replaced by another form—the noun יַעֲשֶׂה.

[ימן]

ISA 30:21

וְהָהָרְדָּד לְכוּ בּוֹ כִּי <תִאֲמִינוּ> וְכִי תִשְׁמְאוּ אֵילוֹ

Ancient Versions

Ⲛ: (1QIsa^a) תיאמינו || Ⲯ: πορευθῶμεν ἐν αὐτῇ εἴτε <δεξιὰ> εἴτε ἀριστερά || Ⲙ: <لصاح> || Ⲛ: <لصاح> || Ⲛ: <לִימְנָה> הַלְסִמְלָא || Ⲛ: <לִימְנָה> הָדָא אֹרְחָא דְתַקְנָא הַלִּיכוּ בָּהּ לֹא תִסְטֹן מְנִיָּה <לִימְנָה> הַלְסִמְלָא || Ⲛ: <ימנה> או יסרה

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| | | |
|--|--------------------------------|---|
| <p>תאמינו [reads] as if it would be מימינו , [but is written with] an <i>ālef</i> instead of <i>yōd</i>.</p> | <p>ק"ד</p> <p>⋮</p> <p>ב"א</p> | <p>תאמינו, כמו כי מימינו האל"ף תמורת היו"ד האל"ף תחת יו"ד</p> |
| <p>The <i>'ālef</i> [stands] for <i>yōd</i>.</p> | | |

The form תאמינו, if read outside its context, would normally be understood as a verbal form of אמן in the *hif.* stem, i.e. “you will believe”. However, in the scope of the present verse it clearly represents a verb derived from the noun ימן, “right”, as we can see from its counterpart תשמאלו, rendering the last part of the verse as “whether you go right or whether you go left.” Such an understanding is evident from the translation of the ancient versions as well. The variant we find in the Qumrān (1QIsa^a: תיאמינו) apparently has this straightforward interpretation in mind, as it has the consonant *yōd* as its first radical. Note that the letter *'ālef* stands presumably as a *mātres lectionis* for the vowel *a*, but we cannot completely rule out the possibility that this represents a spelling chosen to allow for both readings⁵⁹.

Unfortunately we don't find many Jewish interpretations which would play with the similarity with the verb אמן. To my knowledge, the only one of the classical Jewish commentators who understood the form in question in this way was Rabbi Yoseph Kaspi, who was predated by David ben Qimḥi by some hundred years. He wrote:

| | | |
|---|----------|---|
| <p>I do never accept that some letter be interchanged for another one but I stick to the [very] meaning [of the letters]. Thus [we should understand our verse as]: “so that they [should] believe in the word of the prophet”.</p> | <p>⋮</p> | <p>תאמינו: אין אני מודה לעולם בתמורת אות בואת, אבל מחויב שיהיה כמשמעו, כלומר שיאמינו בדבר הנביא</p> |
|---|----------|---|

Figure 49: The interpretation of rabbi Yoseph Kaspi to Isa 30:21.

59. If we, however, consider the character of the not very precise orthography of 1QIsa^a this would seem rather unlikely.

As we can see, rabbi Kaspi disagrees with his predecessor in that he rejects their thesis that here the letter *'alef* stands for the *yōd*. It stands, therefore, to reason that his interpretation stems solely from his own exegetical principals and cannot be taken as a proof for the earlier existence of this interpretation. But it does, at least, show that such an interpretation was not out of the scope of Jewish interpreters.

The vocalization of our form is, on the other hand, remarkable. The form is vocalized exactly the same as we would expect from the root $\sqrt{\text{אמנ}}$. If this form was understood by the tradition as being derived from the word יָמִין we would expect it to reflect this root (having *yōd* as its first radical) and thus to differ from the consonantal text written with the letter *'alēf* (by the means of a *qerē/ketīv* variant). Note that only a few forms of this root behave clearly as פ"ו verbs: אִמְנָה (GEN 13:9), לְהִמִּין (2 SAM 14:19), הִימִנִי (EZEK 21:21) but also מִימִינִים (1 CHR 12:2). It stands to reason therefore, that the oral tradition must have had contact with the written biblical text at some point and was influenced by its orthography.

[יצב]

EXOD 2:4

וַיִּתְחַצְּבֵם <וְתִתְחַצְּבֵם> אֶחָתָם מִרְחֹק לְדַעַתָּהּ מִהֲיִעָשֶׂה לָּוּ׃

Ancient Versions

|| <ווקפת> אכתה מן בעיד || א: <مصعب> ساعه صخ ; ساعه || ט: X || ז: <וּתְחַצְּבֵם> אחתו מרחק ||

|| ז: <ואתעתדת> אחתיה מרחיק || ט: και <κατεσκόπευεν> ἡ ἀδελφή αὐτοῦ μακρόθεν

Ancient and Mediaeval Commentaries

:ראב"ע

ותתצב : [it is] a strange word because the *silent šwa* disappeared between the two *tavs* as a result of the [disappearance of] *yod*. Rabbi Moshe Ha-Cohen said: a *tav* [similar to the infinitive forms of] לרדת and לשבת was added because the first radical (= *yod*) had disappeared. And the same is true concerning לדעת as it starts with a *laryngal*, but here, the *tav* was changed into *he* (resulting into לדעה), similarly to: אֲשֶׁר תִּנְהַ הוֹדֵךְ (Ps 8:2).

ותתצב, מלה זרה כי שמו⁶⁰ נח נעלם בין שתי התו"ן תחת היו"ד, אמר ר' משה הכהן כי תי"ו לרדת ולגשת נוסף בעבור חסרון הפ"א מן פעל וככה לדעת כי בעבור אות הגרון נפתח, ועתה החליפו התי"ו לה"א במלה לדעה, כמו אשר תנה הודך:

Modern Scholars

BL: Schreibfehler für *ותתיצב* (§52t, p. 368)

ותתצב cannot be interpreted as any regular grammatical form. Neither is there any obvious explanation for the consonants ותתצב, other than the simple meaning of “to stand”. In such a way the verse is understood by the *Peshittā* and Saadya Gaōn. The readings of the Targum Onkelos (עטר, *itpa*, “to be ready”) and the Septuagint (κατασκοπεύω, “to spy out”, “view closely”) should be taken for an amplification or further interpretation of the basic meaning of the hebrew יצב√. It is unlikely that the vocalization would here represent a reinterpretation of the consonantal text. If we consider the reading of the samaritan Pentateuch, it is very plausible to assume—as Bauer-Leander did—that the consonants ותתצב are a simple scribal error resulting from the *yod* being left out (out of ותתיצב). More interesting, however, is the question as to how the vocalization emerged. We can see that our reading (*tētaṣṣav*) sounds similar to the expected regular form (*tityaṣṣav*), where the only difference (apart from the missing *yod*) is the first syllable now being open and length-

60. =שוא?

Masoretic Comments

Mp: מַּיִשׁ , “three cases where one would think יִשׁ is correct (*sevīrīn*) but מַּיִשׁ is to be read.”

In 2 SAM 14:19 and MICAH 6:10 the masoretic form מַּיִשׁ occurs twice. Additionally, there is a similar form, מַּיִשׁ (written *plāenē*), found in PROV 18:24. The traditional reading considers these forms to be equivalent to the particle יִשׁ, “there exists”. As we can see, this presents the traditional Jewish understanding (see the Targum and Rashi) in all three cases. In 2 SAM 14:19 even Saadya appears to understand the form in the same way (this is evident from the fact that he translates both, the form in question and the parallel יִשׁ later in the verse using a comparison כִּמְ... וְכִמְ... , “as [is]... so [is]...”). This is also the interpretation that best fits the context. Also, the ancient versions mostly understand the form in a similar way⁶³, but with two exceptions. In MICAH 6:10 the Septuagint, Peshitta and Vulgate read מַּיִשׁ, “the fire” instead. This reading doesn't fit well into the context and can only be understood as a most “naïve” reading of the Hebrew consonants מַּיִשׁ. This reading is most probably the result of what James Barr calls “guessing”. Similarly, the Vulgate has *vir* for מַּיִשׁ in PROV 18:24 which is in terms of the context inferior to the interpretation preserved in the Jewish tradition and is apparently once more an example of such a “guessing”.

The question remains, however, as to how the form יִשׁ (whether spelled מַּיִשׁ or מַּיִשׁ) can be explained. Rashi is right (see above) when he points to the fact, that *yi-* at the beginning of a word may be interchanged with *ī-*. But in our case the מַּיִשׁ also differs from the regular יִשׁ in the vowel quality: *hīreq* as opposed to *šērē*. Why, if the regular form sounds *yēš*, are we reading יִשׁ here? Even if we assumed that *yēš* was pronounced *yīš* originally⁶⁴, how is it possible that יִשׁ didn't later change into *ēš* to match the shift *yīš* > *yēš*? It seems that the most probable answer is that the pronunciation was still influenced to some degree by the consonantal text which helped to retain the original vocalization of this word.

[ישב]

GEN 47:11

63. In the non-Semitic languages, naturally, יִשׁ is rendered using the verb “to be”.

64. See aramaic מַּיִשׁ or מַּיִשׁ. Also, according to KBL, Hieronymus transcribed יִשׁ as *is*.

Ⲙ: <וִישַׁב> יוֹסֵף אֶת־אָבִיו וְאֶת־אָחִיו וַיִּתֵּן לָהֶם ...

Ancient Versions

Ⲫ: <ואותיב> יוסף ית אבוהי וית אחוהי

Modern Scholars

BL: Wahrsch. Punktationsfehler (sonst וִישַׁב, וִישַׁב). (§55c', p. 384)

The meaning of the form וִישַׁב is obvious and doesn't present any difficulties. The form itself, however, is unusual in that it contains the *ṣērē* vowel in the second syllable and not *segōl* as we otherwise find in the regular cases:

| verse | text |
|-------------|---|
| 2 KGS 17:6 | <וִישַׁב> אַתֶּם בַּחֲלָח וּבַחֲבוּר נִהַר גּוֹזֵן וְעָרִי מְדִי: |
| 2 KGS 17:24 | <וִישַׁב> בְּעָרֵי שְׁמֹרֹן תַּחַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל |
| Ps 107:36 | <וִישַׁב> שָׁם רַעֲבִים |
| 2 CHR 8:2 | <וִישַׁב> שָׁם אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: |

Table 65: The usual וִישַׁב forms.

It is, moreover, unlikely that וִישַׁב is a scribal error of the punctuator (as Bauer-Leander suggest), since the form not only differs from its regular counterparts in the vocalization but also in the accents. Whereas normally it would be stressed on the *paenultima*, here we find a form with the stress on the last syllable. Such a form reminds us of the *pausa* phenomenon. From a syntactic point of view it would, however, be impossible here for וִישַׁב ever to behave like such a pausal form, as it cannot be separated from both the subject (יוֹסֵף) and the object (... אֶת־אָבִיו). Besides, there seems to be no masoretic manuscripts would attest *segōl* in this verse. Given these facts we can thus most probably rule out the possibility that this vocalization resulted from a scribal error.

The form in question can, however, possibly be explained from another point of view, namely if we consider it as the result of an assimilation to the following proper name יוֹסֵף which sounds very similar to our form (both forms differ, apart from the above mentioned *ṣērē* × *segōl* vowels and the stress position, only in the sibilants *ś* × *š*, and labials *v* × *f*). It therefore stands to reason

that the present form has been adjusted to sound even more like the other one in order to ease the pronunciation (and recitation) of this part of the verse.

Another explanation can be found if we look at the Aramaic form of the Targum Onkelos, which also has *segōl* in the second syllable. It can thus be argued that the vocalization of the masoretic text may have been assimilated to the targumic form. This would have been made possible if we consider that both traditions were memorized and studied orally by the same ancient Jewish scholars. The first proposed solution, i.e. the assimilation of *יִשְׁעַב* to *יִסְפָּב*, seems to be a more convincing explanation. In both cases, however, one has to presuppose an oral setting for such a change to have taken effect.

[ישע]

1 SAM 17:47

מִיִּלָּא בְּחַרְבַּ וּבַחֲנִית <יְהוֹשִׁיעַ> יְהוָה:

Ancient Versions

Ⲅ: ὅτι οὐκ ἐν ῥομφαίᾳ καὶ δόρατι <σώζει> κύριος || Ⲫ: *quia non in gladio nec in hasta <salvat> Dominus* || Ⲛ: אדִי לא בחַרְבָּא וּבַמִּזְרְנִיתָא <פְּרִיק> יי

Ps 116:6

שָׁמַר פְּתָאִים יְהוָה דְּלוֹתַי וְלִי <יְהוֹשִׁיעַ>

Ancient Versions

Ⲅ: φυλάσσω τὰ νήπια ὁ κύριος· ἐταπεινώθηγν, καὶ <ἔσωσέν> με || Ⲫ: *custodit parvulos Dominus adtenuatus sum et <liberavit> me* || Ⲫ^{var}: <salvavit> || Ⲫ^{bw}: <למפרוק> חמי ולי חמי || Ⲅ: *سَمِرَ لِحَمَلِي حَمَلًا*. || Ⲅ: *سَمِرَ لِحَمَلِي حَمَلًا* <سَمِرَ>

In these two verses an exceptional form of *ישע* occurs preserving in *impf.*, *hif.* the original morpheme *ה*. Even though the regular form (*יִשְׁעַב*) is otherwise common in the Hebrew Bible, there is no other obvious way to vocalize the consonants *יהושיע* meaningfully here. Also, all ancient version simplest understand *יְהוֹשִׁיעַ* in the way, as: “he will save”, or “he saves”. Even the mediaeval Jewish commentators (Rashi or Radak) pay no attention to this form at all. It seems

therefore improbable that it could even remotely present a case where the vowels reinterpret the consonants. It seems to be rather just a rare form, perhaps a poetic or archaizing one.

[בל]

2 SAM 23:6

וּבְלִיעַל בְּקוֹץ מִנֶּדַד <בְּלָהֶם>

Ancient Versions

Ⲙ: ×

1 KGS 7:37

מוֹצֵק אֶחָד מִדָּה אַחַת קָצַב אֶחָד <לְכֹהֵנָה>:

Ancient Versions

Ⲙ: <לכלהנ]ה..> (4QKgs, frg. 5)

The forms בְּלָהֶם and לְכֹהֵנָה are unusual in that their suffices start with ה. The usual forms are בְּלָם for the *masculine* (occurs 118 times) and בְּלָנָה for the *feminine* (occurs in GEN 42:36 and PROV 31:29 at the very end of the verse, viz. in the pausal position). Furthermore, their vocalization is rather bizarre: if one vocalized בְּלָהֶם in the same way as forms like בְּלָמָם⁶⁵, the expected result would be *בְּלָהֶם. Similarly we would expect בְּלָהֶנָה to read *בְּלָהֶנָה or similar. Neither can these two forms be explained as pausal forms, since both occurrences of the regular בְּלָנָה are clearly already at the pausal position in the verse, and there are a couple of examples where בְּלָם should be *in pausa* as well (see EZEK 37:24 where it occurs with *atnāḥ* and GEN 11:6; 1 SAM 6:4; 1 SAM 22:11 with a minor disjunctive accent).

What then is the reason for such forms? If we just consider the consonants, we can assume that the form בְּלָהֶנָה may originally have represented two words (בְּלָ and הֶנָה). The same applies

65. This form occurs 18× in the Hebrew Bible and has no alternatives.

to כלהם⁶⁶. Their written appearance as one unit may, however, be quite old: see the instance of כלהנה written as one word in the *Qumrān* texts.

Whether or not these words were perceived as two units or as one, in any case the masoretic vocalization is puzzling. If, however, we compare these spellings to the regular forms we see that they are very similar. I'd suggest, therefore, interpreting these masoretic forms as the result of an adaptation of an oral form (which is identical to the regular ones⁶⁷) to the consonantal form, i.e. *kullānā* > *kullāhnā* and *kullām* > *kullāham*. We see that these forms only differ from the regular ones in the addition of *h/ha*, which corresponds to the differences in writing, i.e. the additional ה.

EZEK 36:5

לְכֹן כִּהְאָמַר אֲדַנִּי יְהוָה אִם־לֹא בָאֵשׁ קִנְאַתִּי דְבַרְתִּי עַל־שְׂאֲרֵי־הַגּוֹיִם וְעַל־אֲדוֹם <כְּלֹא> אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי
נִתְּנִי־אֶת־אֲרָצִי לָהֶם לְמִזְרָשָׁה בְּשִׂמְחַת כָּל־לֵבָב בְּשִׂאֵט נֶפֶשׁ לְמַעַן מִגְרָשָׁה לְבֹז

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רד"ק

<כלא> : an *'ālef* is written instead of *hē*, similarly to: וְהָיָה לְכֶם לְזֵרָא (NUM 11:20), קִרְאֵן לִי מְרָא (RUTH 1:20) and בֶּן יִתֵּן לִידִידוֹ שִׁנָּא (Ps 127:2).

ועל אדום <כלא>: אל"ף במקום ה"א כמו והיה לכם לזרא קראנה לי מרא כן יתן לידידו שינא

The masoretic form כְּלֹא evidently means “the whole of” (i.e. corresponding to one of כָּל, כְּלֵה* or perhaps even כְּלֵה*). Apparently, no lexeme derived from כלא seems to make any sense here. I agree, therefore with David Qimḥī that the form is just written with an unusual orthography. This would mean that the oral tradition is not affected by the problem of the orthography and only the consonants are problematic. There remains, however, a small problem with the vocalization: one

66. The question is what makes a “word” a single unit: The masoretic sign *maqṣēf* shows that the division into words and the notion of word boundaries was conceived differently in writing and in the oral performance of the biblical text.

67. I assume this according to the characteristics of an oral transmission of text which tends to harmonize parallel occurrences of the same word, at least in terms of non-significant variants.

would expect the oral form to be *kullāh*, i.e. with a “*mappiq* in the final *hē*”. There could be several possible ways to explain this: the final *h* may have just got dropped from the pronunciation, perhaps even being influenced by the written form כָּסֵא. It may, on the other hand, have developed from a masculine form כָּסֵה (assuming a vowel shift $\bar{o} > \bar{a}$).

[כָּסֵא]

1 KGS 10:19

יש מַעֲלוֹת <לְכֶסֶה> וְרֵאש־עֲגֹל <לְכֶסֶה> אֵי:

The word כָּסֵה, appearing twice in this verse has an unusual vocalization. The present vowels do fit the consonants כָּסֵא (“a throne”), while the consonants would rather match a word vocalized with הֶ- (i.e. a *feminine* noun) or הֶ- (typical for the הֶל־ roots). Actually, there exists a noun כָּסֵה, “(the day of) the full moon”⁶⁸. In the present verse, though, this meaning would make no sense. In 1 KGS 10 we are told about the palace and the throne of king Solomon. We can, therefore, again interpret this case as an example of a “latent *qerē*” where the consonants and vowels do not entirely match. We can also see that the reading tradition presents a more accurate version than the consonantal text. It is, however, unreasonable to suppose that the scribe did not understand the text or assumed a different meaning of these words. It's much more likely that our spelling represents rather an unusual orthography for כָּסֵא itself.

JOB 26:9

מֵאֲחִז פְּגִי- <כָּסֵה> פְּרִשׁוּ עָלָיו עֲנָנוּ אֵי:

Ancient Versions

Ⲯ: ὁ κρατῶν πρόσωπον <θρόνου>, || Ⲛ: <כורסיא> דמן || Ⲙ: <אלכרס׳׳> וגה || אלמאסך וגה

Ⲟ: <اصصا> ابي حاقف || Ⲟ: *qui tenet vultum <solii> sui*

Here again, we find the same unusual form as in the previous example, but the situation is far from being that straightforward. Even though the masoretic vocalization understands (as do the Septuagint, Vulgate and Saadya) this form as כָּסֵא, “throne”, it isn't completely clear how this fits

68. See Ps 81:4 and PROV 7:20 (the latter being spelled כָּסֵה, however).

into the context: This section of JOB 26 is a cosmological description used as an argument in Job's speech. It is thus quite probable that our word denotes some kind of natural phenomenon. The temple and God's throne, on the other hand, also have strong cosmological connotations in the Hebrew Bible (as well as in the Ancient Near East in general), and such a reading cannot therefore be ruled out either.

As we can see, there are alternative readings present in the Targum and in the Peshitta: The Peshitta reads ܠܟܫܘܢܐ (‘‘garment’’, ‘‘cloak’’) which shares the same semitic root ($\sqrt{\text{כסה}}$, ‘‘to cover’’) with the Hebrew consonantal text (and with the possible reading כָּסָה). The Syriac translation is, however, probably not directly connected to the meaning of כָּסָה (‘‘full moon’’) itself. It seems thus more likely that this translation is based on a *guessing* of the word's meaning, depending solely on the consonantal text. The targumic reading (‘‘he takes dark clouds from the throne’’) is even more complicated. It presents a *double reading* in that it combines both interpretations: כָּסָה (‘‘a throne’’, כּוֹרְסִיאַ) and a noun derived from $\sqrt{\text{כסה}}$ (which the Targum understands as a ‘‘dark cloud’’⁶⁹), אַמִּיתָא, presumably having in mind the image of a cloud covering the sky).

This shows that both interpretations were known to the Jewish exegetical tradition. Even more interesting is the fact that both the Targum and the Peshitta show renderings which presumably go back to the Hebrew $\sqrt{\text{כסה}}$ and agree with the consonants but differ in their exact meaning. Maybe we can assume that the underlying Hebrew noun was understood simply as ‘‘the covering’’ and was consequently further explicated by both translations. Whether this can be identified with כָּסָה, ‘‘full moon’’ is doubtful, see KBL who shows etymological parallels from other semitic languages being derivatives of $\sqrt{\text{כסא}}$ and not $\sqrt{\text{כסה}}$. In any case, these readings of the Peshitta and the Targum would fit into the broader context of that chapter, but would also fit the inner structure of JOB 26:9 where it stands in a parallelism to עָנְנֵי, similarly to מֵאֲחֻזַּי (i.e. $\sqrt{\text{אחז}}$ II according to KBL, ‘‘to grasp’’, not $\sqrt{\text{אחז}}$ I, ‘‘to grasp’’) being parallel to פָּרְשָׁיו.

Considering these facts we can assume that the original text had most probably a meaning derived from כָּסָה in mind (i.e. ‘‘a covering’’ in the sense of a ‘‘cloud’’ or similar). The masoretic vocalization would then represent a reinterpretation thereof, which would make the text more ‘‘theological’’ by referring to God's throne and not just to nature. Even though this reading was

69. See e.g. DJPA.

most probably considered by the time of the Masoretes to be the “*pešat*”, the “basic sense” (see Saadya's translation), and perhaps even earlier (see the Vulgate⁷⁰) it was no doubt perceived at some point as being one of two possible meanings (see Targum).

Also, the LXX's translation is notable here. If we assume that the original reading was actually based on כסה, “to cover”, we could regard the LXX's rendering to be a result of a “*guessing*” (in terms of James Barr). We can see that the translation is very verbatim; consider, for example, *πρόσωπον* used for פָּנָי. If the LXX did “guess” here, how could it represent a variant which we know was later the accepted (masoretic) reading? A possible solution would be that the process of “guessing” was not a result of a “quick translation” by the scribes, but, on the contrary, to see it in the terms of the oral culture: Such a reading could have emerged through oral study and discussion of an orally transmitted text. This hypothesis must, however, be left as an open question to be answered by the Septuagint scholars.

[כסה]

EXOD 15:5

תְּהַמַּת <יְכַסִּימוּ> יָרְדוּ בַמַּצּוֹלֹת כְּמוֹ-אֲבָן

Ancient Versions

Ⲙ: × || Ⲙ: <יכסמו> תהומת || Ⲙ^{vars}: <יכסימו> || Ⲙ^{var}: <יכסהמו> || Ⲙ: <כסה> ⲗⲟⲟⲥ || Ⲙ: πόντω <ἐκάλυψεν> αὐτούς || Ⲙ^O: עליהון <הפּוֹ> תהוּמֵא || Ⲙ^{PJ}: עליהון <כסון> תהומיֵא || Ⲙ: <גטתהם> || Ⲙ: *abyssi* <operuerunt> eos

יְכַסִּימוּ in our verse is an unusual form and deviates from the regular Hebrew forms of the ל"ה group. Clearly this form is vocalized as if it was a regular verb and not belonging to ל"ה. On the other hand, it can be suggested that the consonants יכסימו could simply be understood as *hif'il* of the root כסם (i.e. if vocalized יְכַסִּימוּ) and according the Arabic كَسَمَ interpreted as “to cut (through?)”, which would, interestingly, be quite possible in the context. However, it doesn't seem very probable that a simple consonantal form would be “emended” into a complicated one

70. Note, however, that the Vulgate may just follow the Septuagint.

through the vocalization. If a reinterpretation $\sqrt{\text{כסה}} > \sqrt{\text{כסם}}$ was really intended by the Masoretes, one should ask why a *qerē/ketīb* is not found here.

Also, if we consider the ancient versions, we can see that in most of them the equivalent to $\sqrt{\text{כסה}}$, “cover”, is found. Interestingly, only in some versions of the Samaritanus a variant (יכסימו) exists which corresponds to the “masoretic” consonantal text. However, another single Samaritan variant, יכסהמו, seems to indicate that יכסימו in the Jewish consonantal text and in Samaritan variants is rather to be interpreted as an unusual (orthographical) variant of the same root $\sqrt{\text{כסה}}$, having no consequences for the interpretation.

יכסימו can then possibly be understood as an anomalous orthography for $y^{\text{q}}\text{kassēmō}$ and in an analogous way that the singular orthography יכסהמו, mentioned above, can also be explained. Note also, that the same form, יכסמו, is found as a *qerē* in Ps 140:10. Evidently, the masoretic form יכסימו can be traced back to the plural form $y^{\text{q}}\text{kassūmū}$ (or $y^{\text{q}}\text{kassūmō}$), and it seems that this was “corrected” to match the consonants יכסימו, thus resembling a form of regular verbs (יִדְבְּרֵמוּ)⁷¹.

The only question left is whether the unusual consonantal יכסימו is the original form, or whether it reflects the presumed plural $y^{\text{q}}\text{kassūmō}$. Both possibilities seem plausible: the plural form of the reading tradition may be the result of a contextual harmonization according to the תְּהַמַּת, which is in the plural but may be (as in the presumed consonantal version) conceived as a *plurale tantum*. On the other hand, יכסמו may have been the original form, consequently corrupted due to scribal error: $\text{ו} > \text{י}$.

To sum up, it is unlikely that the masoretic form יכסימו would be the result of a reinterpretation of $\sqrt{\text{כסם}}$, *hif.* as would appear from the consonantal יכסימו (in Ps 140:10 the same form is found as *ketīb*). Rather it can be seen as an attempt at correcting the diverging oral tradition (in *plural*) according to the consonantal text (in *singular*), based on some sort of “guessing” by a reader who came into contact with the written Torah text.

[לאט]

71. Actually, the fact that this form is vocalized according to the regular verbs and not the לִה group goes well with the assumption that the masoretic form is a result of “guessing” the correct form induced by the disagreement of the consonantal text and the oral tradition.

[לוט]

JUDG 4:21

מ: <בִּלְאֵט> וַתָּבוֹא אֵלָיו

מ^{tr}: <בִּלְט>*Ancient Versions*

Ⲙ: × || Ⲭ^A: καὶ εἰσῆλθεν πρὸς αὐτὸν <ἡσυχῆ> || Ⲭ^B: <ἐν κρυφῆ> || Ⲛ: <ברו> וַעֲלָה לְוַתִּיה || Ⲛ: *et ingressa* <*abscondite*> *et* <*cum silentio*>

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רש"י
|
בלאט: ברו חרש

בלאט : [as the Aramaic] ברו , “silently”.

The form בִּלְאֵט is written with an unusual orthography. If this is to be understood in the sense of בִּלְט, “secretly” (derived from √לוט ; see 1 SAM 18:22; 24:4; RUTH 3:7), as the vocalization suggests, why is the consonantal text written *plae*? We can suspect this from of originally having borne another meaning. We can, for example, read the consonants בלאט as בִּלְאֵט, “slowly” (from אט combined with the prepositions ב and ל). The joining of the two preposition may sound unusual at first sight but it is by no means not impossible in Biblical Hebrew and we find a couple of places⁷² where אֵל functions as a fixed adverb. We can also see that one of the Septuagint versions has ἡσυχῆ, “still, quietly, gently” which would reflect this reading while another version follows the masoretic understanding. Interestingly, the Vulgate combines both in a *double reading*. It seems, however, that Hieronymus depended here solely on the Septuagint and not on the Hebrew text or on some Jewish exegetical tradition, as can be seen from the semantic shift בִּלְאֵט > ἡσυχῆ > *cum silentio* (i.e. “slowly” > “silently”).

Considering the two variants, we can state that both of them fit into the context well and make good sense: When Ya’el came “secretly” she must have been “slow” and “silent”. The Jewish tradition, however, apparently prefers the masoretic reading (see the Targum) and doesn't play

72. 2 SAM 18:5; ISA 8:6; JOB 15:11. See also אֵל in GEN 33:14.

with this ambiguity of this form in some sort of midrashic interpretation. Quite interesting is Rashi's commentary as he first quotes the targumic ברז , “secretly” which he then further explains as חרש , “silent(ly)”. He may have well been aware of some exegetical discussion based on the other reading of the consonants לאט , but we cannot be certain and he may just have tried to refine the targumic understanding.

It is thus not easy to tell which reading was the original. The consonants לאט may just present the usual spelling, the scribe used for this word⁷³. In such a case the masoretic reading tradition would correspond to the original meaning and we could classify our form as a *latent qerē*. If, however, the spelling לאט was originally understood as “slowly”, then we are witnessing here a (slight) change in the masoretic oral tradition *l^{at} > lāt* which could be seen as a simply elision of a vowel, maybe induced by the other לֹט forms. In this case, of course, we can interpret our form to be a “*latent qerē*”, too.

2 SAM 19:5

וְהַמְלִיךְ <לָאֵט> אֶת־פָּנָיו וַיִּזְעַק הַמְּלִיךְ קוֹל גְּדוֹל

Ancient Versions

Q: ×

Modern Scholars

BL: Für לֹט Die auch sonst mehrfach vorkommende Schreibung des Noml. und des Part. mit א (vgl. קום , רום , רוש , שוט) zeigt, daß die aus dem Ursem. ererbte Form des aktiven Partizips im Hebr. dialektisch vorhanden war, etwa *lā'ēt*, *rā'ēs*, und daß danach der Noml. gelegentlich umgebildet wurde: לָאֵט , וְרָאָמָה . (§56u", p. 403)

לאט seems like a regular verbal form, viz. a *perfect* of √לאט . This is the only occurrence of this verb (but see JUDG 4:21 above⁷⁴) derived from a regular verb with א as the middle radical. There exists, nevertheless, a similar verb of the לוט class of irregular verbs: לוט , and its meaning fits perfectly

73. But see 2 SAM 19:5, וְהַמְלִיךְ <לָאֵט> אֶת־פָּנָיו which could mean that the presumably original *ālef* as the second radical was preserved in some Biblical Hebrew dialects.

74. See p. 189.

into our context. Its *perfect* form differs, however, in both the consonants and the vocalization of the form in question. One possible explanation for this spelling is to assume that it presents a dialectal variant of the expected *טָלָה. As BL shows (see above), in order to explain such a shift we would, most probably, have to assume that this form developed from a *participle* (presumably going back to *lā'it* or a similar form, see e.g. Arabic participles of the *w/y* class.). But such a shift *pt.* > *pf.* doesn't change the meaning in a significant manner. It seems thus that in such a case we cannot speak really about a reinterpretation by the oral tradition.

Another possible way of interpreting this form is to see in the consonants לט only an orthographic variant of the presumed original *טָלָה (where the ל stands as a *māter lectiōis* for the long ā only). In such a case the vocalization must have been “corrected” at some point to match the consonants (see the similarity of the forms *lāt* and *lā'at*). If this is correct it would be yet another example of how the written biblical text and its orally transmitted counterparts did influence each other. This latter explanation seems more plausible.

[קרא]

1 SAM 28:15

וַאֲקִרְאָהּ <וַאֲקִרְאָהּ> לְךָ לְהוֹדוֹתַי מֵאָּתְּמָה אֲעֲשֶׂה

Ancient Versions

Ⲙ: × || Ⲯ: καὶ νῦν <κέκληγά> σε γνωρίσαι μοι τί ποιήσω || Ⲯ: <וקרית> לך להודעותי מא אעביד ||

Ⲯ: <וַאֲקִרְאָהּ> לְךָ לְהוֹדוֹתַי מֵאָּתְּמָה אֲעֲשֶׂה

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דד"ק

The addition of [*cohortative*] *he* is common, as in: אשמעה, אשמרה; but the third radical having *segol* is not common. Similar, however, happens in: ידשנה. (Ps 20:4)

<וַאֲקִרְאָהּ לך> - בה"א נוספת כמנהג כמו אשמעה
 אשמרה אבל להיות למ"ד הפעל בסגול אינו כמנהג ובא
 כמהו ידשנה סלה

In the sense of “I will be summoned to you” as in: *נְקָרָא נְקָרִיתִי בְּהַר הַגְּלִבְעָ* (2 SAM 1:6) and in: *נְקָרָא אִישׁ בְּלִיעֵל* (2 SAM 20:1). [The verse means:] “I needed to be called to you so that you make me known what shall I do”

דִּשׁׁי

<ואקראה לך>: לשון ואזעק אחריך כמו נקרא נקראתי בהר הגלבוע, וכמו ושם נקרא איש בליעל, הוצרכתי להיות נקרא אליך שתודיעני מה אעשה:

Modern Scholars

BL: Wahrsch. Vermischung der Lesarten *נְאָקְרָא* (so sonst immer) und *נְאָקְרָה* (ל״ו). (§54r, 376)

In this case, the consonantal text could suggest the reading of a *cohortative* **נְאָקְרָה*. This possibly corresponds to the Septuagint where *εὔν* lacks its usual Hebrew equivalent *עָתָה*. Since both *עָתָה* and a *cohortative* form do emphasize a particular clause in the text, it is quite plausible that the Greek translators included *εὔν* intentionally, in order to render the Hebrew *cohortative*. (See e.g. *εὔν* being a translation of *הִנֵּה* in NUM 20:16; 24:11; DEUT 22:17; 2 KGS 7:6 or of the *נָא*-particle in JUDG 16:28. We find, on the other hand, passages where *εὔν* has no corresponding equivalent in the Hebrew version). This verse does not appear in any of the biblical Qumrān fragments, it is thus difficult to decide which form is the original one.

The masoretic reading is rather unusual here. Bauer-Leander suggest interpreting it as a “mixed form” of *נְאָקְרָא* and *נְאָקְרָה*; both having the same meaning, being different only in that the former one is based on the (etymologically correct) root *קרא*, while the latter was adapted to the ל״ה group of irregular verbs⁷⁵). If this really is a *forma mixta*, its purpose was not to preserve two different meanings of the text, but rather two insignificant and almost identical variants of this particular form.

The masoretic form can, however, be explained as a result of discrepancies between the written biblical text and its oral counterpart. If we assume that the consonantal text originally had *ואקראה* (either being understood as a *cohortative* form as discussed above, or perhaps resulting from a scribal error), while the oral tradition read *wa-ʿeqrā* or *wa-ʿeqrē*, then it stands to reason that the oral form may have been changed into the present *wa-ʿeqrāʿē*, even though it isn't

75. The root *קרה* does exist (denoting “to happen”) but would make no sense in the present context.

7.2 Conclusion

7.2.1 A Reinterpretation through Vocalization?

As we can see, in the vast majority of the above analysed cases it doesn't seem plausible that the Masoretic vocalization resulted from any kind of reinterpretation of the consonantal text. Actually, we found only one case which may be interpreted in this way, כָּסָה in JOB 26:9 (above p. 185). The difference between the two forms is, however, very small, one of them having *segōl* where the other has *šērē*. Note, that these vowels may have even been homophonic in some dialects⁸³). Moreover, the LXX seems to reflect the same reading as the Masoretic text does and the *Targum* has a conflate reading of both variants. This shows that if a reinterpretation through a re-vocalization occurred in this case it must have been relatively old.

Overall, it seems that the present “vocalization” of the Masoretic text doesn't reflect any sort of intentional reinterpreting of the consonants in most cases⁸⁴). In the remaining, exceptional cases which can be suspected of having emerged through some sort of reinterpretation it seems that these weren't *a priori* a result of an intention to change the text but were rather induced in an *ad hoc* manner by some confusion or a difficulty in the text itself. Only in such a context we may consider some interpretative process of “guessing” the “correct” form. Such a guessing was, presumably, done primarily orally and it is not clear whether the written text was consulted as part of this process.

Moreover, unlike the vocalization, it was demonstrated by several scholars⁸⁵) that the division of the Biblical verse as reflected by the masoretic accents shows sometimes a particular interpretation which doesn't correspond to the most simple understanding of the text, i.e. we can say that the accents reinterpret the text of the Hebrew Bible. More specifically, it is the oral version which may sometimes be reinterpreted by the accentuation and sometimes even the accents go against the vocalization (see above chapter 5.7, p. 107). As I have suggested above, this “interpretive”

83. Note also, that in the Babylonian Hebrew dialect (i.e. as reflected by the Babylonian masoretic punctuation) there was even no distinctive *segōl* sound at all.

84. Stefan Schorch comes to a similar conclusion concerning the Samaritan reading tradition, see Schorch 2004, p. 247.

85. For example see Kogut 1996 or Cohen 1974.

character of the Hebrew accents (as opposed to the vocalization) can be best explained by the assumption that the accentuation actually served not only as a mnemonic device to ease the study of the Hebrew Bible by heart but was also used as a sort of “synchronization device” between the Masoretic text and its *targūm* (chapter 5.4, p. 73). If this is correct, it becomes obvious that the accentuation may sometimes be influenced by the masoretic *targūm* and thus reflect its interpretation while the vocalization changes occurred only as a result of some textual problem. Moreover, the very existence of a *targūm*, studied together with the orally transmitted Hebrew Bible explains why this oral tradition (and consequently the vocalization as found in the Masoretic codices) was almost not changed to fit some interpretation: there already was a parallel text intended to contain exactly such kinds of interpretative intervention into the text: the appropriate masoretic *targūm*.

Interestingly, we can actually find more cases in which rather the consonantal form can be suspected of being a reinterpretation of an older tradition (see הַסּוּרִים , p. 148 and הַרְמִים , p. 150). Although other explanations of these forms may also be suggested (e.g. a result of a scribal error), the fact that both examples can be interpreted as pointing to a name of an ethnic group, which was a popular method of exegetical actualisation in ancient Judaism, makes this explanation possible. A scribe should, then, be responsible for such an interpretive orthography.

7.2.2 A “Latent *Qerē*”.

We should, further, ask whether the “rare forms” can sometimes be explained by a sole difference between the written biblical text and the oral tradition, or some kind of an interaction between the two. The first possibility, in which the two traditions simply differ, indeed occurs in the above analysed cases. Such cases would usually be marked as a *qerē/ketīb* variant in the masoretic codices, sometimes, however, the difference was so small that the Masoretes didn't consider this to be a distinct variant. These include cases where a distinct *mātres lectiōnis* occurs in the written text from the one that fits the vocalization (see כָּסָה in JOB 26:9, above on p. 185 or רָעָה in GEN 46:34, p. 194)⁸⁶, cases where two *mātres lectiōnis* occur in the masoretic form when we can assume that

86. Note, however, that a similar case in 1 KGS 10:19 (p. 185) shows rather an unusual orthography in the written text than two “real” variants.

one of them was consonantal in the form intended by the written text (e.g. וְהִבִּיאֲתִי in NUM 14:11 and similar, see p. 160) or the written form may even have a superfluous *mātres lectiōnis* (וְאֵשׁ in ZECH 11:5, p. 193). I suggest to term such cases as a “latent” or “unmarked *qerē*”⁸⁷).

7.2.3 The Interplay between the Written Text and The Oral Tradition

In other cases, however, forms occur whose vocalization doesn't fit the consonants but wouldn't make sense on their own, either. In such a case the present vocalization can be explained basically in two ways: a) the vocalization is based on an older oral form which was only slightly changed to match the consonants. This can include cases where a consonant is missing in the written text (וְתַחֲצִב in EXOD 2:4, p. 177) or, on the other hand, has one more consonant when compared to the oral version (e.g. בְּלָהֶם in 2 SAM 23:6, p. 183 or לְדִרְיוֹשׁ in EZRA 10:16, p. 167)⁸⁸).

b) In other cases, however, the vocalization in question is completely replaced with another one (see לְהִקָּם in ISA 47:14, p. 165 or לְדַעָה in EXOD 2:4, p. 174). Interestingly, such a vocalized form is actually possible and grammatically correct⁸⁹), but doesn't fit in the context and may even have a completely different origin and meaning (as with לְהִקָּם, for example). Both cases can be well explained if we assume that they emerged through some sort of “guessing”, based on both the written text and the oral form (although the latter was not actually used in the second case, it is clear that the very reason for such a “re-vocalization” lies in the disagreement between the two traditions). If another form existed in the language (and the biblical corpus) for the same consonants this form was taken, even if it doesn't make sense in the place in question. In the other cases the vocalization was simply adapted to the consonants.

Actually, the term “guessing”, I'm referring to was first introduced by James Barr in connection with the translation techniques of the Septuagint. Barr assumes that there were two basic modes of how an ancient biblical translation may have been done with regard to the consonantal text and the oral tradition⁹⁰): either the translation was done on the basis of the oral tradition

87. M. Breuer calls it קרי מדומה, a “seeming/virtual *qerē*”, see also Ofer 2007, p. 275.

88. For an example of similar case where a consonant is interchanged with another one see Joosten 2010 (יִבְקַע־אִישׁ in EXOD 22:4).

89. But see the וְהִקָּתִי (JER 49:37, above p. 171) which apparently is the result of a re-vocalisation according to regular verbs.

90. See e.g. Barr 1967.

(Barr's "Method B") i.e. the translators knew the accepted pronunciation by heart and translated accordingly or the translation was based on the written text solely ("Method A"). In the latter case, Barr presumes that a process of "guessing" must be seen as part of the translational technique. Interestingly, however, we have shown that a comparable "guessing" occurred even in the case of the differences between the written and oral component of the Masoretic text. It, however, doesn't mean that the masoretic "vocalization" emerged by "guessing" as whole but this process of a search for a more suitable "vocalization" of the form in question happened only when the pronounced form was felt to be problematic. The thesis of J. Barr should thus be reexamined to show whether it really proves that the Septuagint was translated **only** from a written *Vorlage*, without any knowledge of traditional pronunciation.

In any case, the proposed explanation of some rare Biblical Hebrew forms which would see them as a result of an adaptation of the oral biblical version to its written counterpart, if it is correct, shows that contact between the two traditions must have existed and that the written text was seen as more authoritative than the oral tradition (at least with regard to these cases)⁹¹. Several possibilities can be suggested as to where to locate a *Sitz im Leben* of such contact between the written and oral Hebrew Bible: one can perhaps think about the synagogal liturgical reading of the Torah and *Haftarōt*. This cannot, however, explain forms occurring in passages not usually read as part of the Jewish services (see e.g. EZRA 10:16 above). We thus assume that either the scribe knew the Bible by heart and was consequently able to affect the further fate of the oral tradition if he found some problematic forms. Alternatively, it is possible that in some contexts the written biblical text was consulted as part of its oral study (presumably rather in some sort of rabbinic academies rather than in regular, smaller Jewish communities).

7.2.4 The *forma mixta*

Given these observations, we may also ask whether the phenomenon of "*forma mixta*"⁹², i.e. a form which seems to be conflated from two distinct grammatical forms, may not be explained also

91. Note, that we have a limited possibility to locate the opposite examples in which a written form would be changed to match the oral tradition, mainly because very few reliable sources for the biblical oral tradition exist. The only cases are those whose orthography deviates from the etymological spelling, e.g. וְהָיָה in 2 SAM 20:9.

92. See MurJ §16g, p. 73.

on the basis of the dual character of the Masoretic text, i.e. as mixed from the written text and the oral tradition. While such cases occasionally occur (and they are basically to be categorized as a “latent *qerē*”, as well), see e.g. וַיְבִיא in EZEK 40:3 (p. 165), not all the assumed cases of a *forma mixta* can be explained in this way. Sometimes, for example, a mixed form would happen on the level of the consonantal text alone (see e.g. וְאֶקְרָא⁹³ in 1 SAM 28:15, p. 192); in other cases only in vocalization (e.g. יְרֵדָה in Ps 7:6). It seems that forms being traditionally categorized as intentionally “mixed forms” should rather be analysed based on the internal criteria and by observing the possible role of the oral and written component of the masoretic form. Sometimes a form, traditionally assumed to be *forma mixta*, may be much better explained considering the interaction between the written text and the oral tradition, for example וַתִּהְלַךְ (EXOD 9:23) would be better interpreted as a form whose oral component emerged from the *hit. wa-tith^allak* adapted to the consonants וַתִּהְלַךְ (> *wa-tih^alak*).

7.2.5 Masoretic Hebrew as a Non-Vernacular Language

Some of the examples also show that the masoretic vocalization was influenced to some degree by its oral performance in a way atypical for forms in a vernacular language. Most notably, some forms may be assimilated to similarly sounding forms standing in the near context, see e.g. רָעָה in GEN 4:2 and Ps 80:2 (p. 196) or וַיִּשָּׁב in GEN 47:11 (p. 181).

93. Note, however, that the differences between those two forms are not significant for the interpretation.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

As I have proposed, the reason for the existence of the text of Hebrew Bible as two parallel traditions, i.e. the written text as copied by the scribes and the oral tradition as memorized by professional Bible “readers”, is to be sought within the socio-economic conditions concerning the ability to write texts in the Rabbinic era (most notably the costs connected with writing and, consequently, the literacy rate in the Jewish society). It seems that in this period the oral study of traditional texts (be it the Bible or rabbinic traditions) was a means how to target a broader public from all social strata. Access to written texts was in this time still restricted to a small literate elite¹⁾. The reason why in the rabbinic period the Torah and other biblical books were still copied is to be seen in their symbolic and artefactual character²⁾. Moreover, the written text seems to still be copied relatively faithfully and, as our analysis shows, there seems to be occasional contact between the oral and the written biblical text³⁾. Sometimes the oral tradition was apparently “corrected” according to the written version⁴⁾. On the other hand, both traditions still deviated from each other, as shown by the relatively large number of the *qerē/ketīb* variants⁵⁾. It seems, therefore, that contact between the two traditions was rather random and *ad hoc*, not systematic or in any way methodical. Interestingly, the adaptation of the oral tradition to the consonantal form happened through a process which can be described as “guessing”, similar to what J. Barr proposes with regard to the translational process of the Septuagint⁶⁾.

The situation in which the Hebrew Bible was transmitted dually as an oral and a written tradition, apparently changed only in a period when actual Hebrew manuscripts emerged that are

1. It seems that such an elite existed before 70 C.E., mainly in the priestly circles or closed communities like in Qumrān and indeed, evidence for a considerable literary activity from this time exists. This, however, doesn't necessarily mean that before 70 C.E. there was no institutionalized oral study of biblical or other texts.
2. See chapter 2.4.1, p. 20.
3. See chapter 7.2.3, p. 199.
4. Actually, there seem to be no indications as to when this contact between the two traditions happened and it cannot be ruled out that it has its root before the rabbinic era.
5. See chapter 4.1, p. 31.
6. See p. 199.

known to us today. Moreover, the time of the Masoretes coincides with an important paradigm change within the history of Jewish literature: a transition from a traditional literature (Mishna, Talmud, *midrašim*) towards individual works composed by authors known by their name and having a clear structure, not composed of older pieces of tradition. It seems, therefore, that both processes are a result of a more general shift from orality to literacy, at least among the Jewish intellectual elites. Apparently, this change happened relatively late among the Jews, compared, with, for example, the ancient Christianity or the Graeco-Roman world in general⁷. This seems to be an outcome of a strong anti-literary sentiment⁸ within Rabbinic Judaism which we assume to be the result of an effort not to restrict the Jewish spiritual elites to a small circle of wealthy individuals having access to the material resources needed to reach literacy⁹. This tendency to restrict literary activity only to scribes (whose role was to copy the biblical scrolls for their symbolic value) was formulated by the Rabbis as prohibitions and restrictions on the use of the written texts. These, in turn, were the reason why the oral activities remained the primary mean of Jewish intellectual activities long after literacy became more available to a broader circle of scholars. At the end, however, it seems that Jewish scholars became acquainted with scribal techniques in their everyday lives (probably under Islamic influence) and were losing their ability to learn and study the texts orally. This situation should be seen as *Sitz in Leben* of the emergence of the first masoretic codices.

This brings us to the second question, namely what the mutual relationship between the individual components and elements of the Masoretic text (as found in the masoretic codices) was. As we have shown¹⁰, the textual and meta-textual element of the Masoretic text can basically be divided into two groups: the first one containing, besides consonants, occasional other elements (such as the suspended letters, *puncta extraordinaria* and so forth), all having a scribal background. All of these were allowed to be written in the liturgical (Torah-)scrolls. The second group of textual elements, on the other hand, restricted to masoretic codices only, can, as I have shown, all

7. See chapter 2.1, p. 4.

8. See chapter 2.4, p. 17.

9. See chapter 2.4.1, p. 20.

10. See chapter 3, p. 23.

be traced back to oral study of the Hebrew Bible: the vocalization¹¹⁾ reflecting the actual pronunciation of the biblical text, which was not possible to be marked using consonantal signs only; the accentuation¹²⁾ representing primarily a mnemonic device and the masoretic notes¹³⁾ reflecting the oral shape of the biblical text as well. Actually, the last two elements provide us with a picture about the methods and techniques of oral transmission, study and even “translation” of biblical texts. The accents show how music was used to ease the memorization and collective repeating of the memorized biblical text¹⁴⁾. Moreover, as I have shown¹⁵⁾, the accents served most probably as an synchronization device between the original Hebrew text and its “*targūm*”, i.e. the word-for-word (or better: cluster-for-cluster¹⁶⁾) annotation of the biblical text, done mainly in another language (besides Aramaic *targumīm* we can most probably apply this to certain Greek versions and perhaps to the Peshitta as well). The masoretic notes, on the other hand, emerged presumably from some sort of a “word game” which started as entertainment or relaxation of the professional bible “readers” but seems to develop into a didactic technique used to teach the biblical text accurately and avoid deviating readings¹⁷⁾. Only when literacy became more widespread were the masoretic notes attempted to be used as a tool for the scribes to cope with the problem of textual variants between individual manuscripts. The logic of the masoretic notes was thus changed to fit the need of the scribal context (i.e. adding notes about *plēne/defectīve* spellings and reversing the logic of the *qerē/ketīb* variants¹⁸⁾).

Lastly, we tried to answer the question, to what degree the oral tradition as reflected by the (Tiberian) masoretic vocalization represents a reinterpretation of the consonants (or of an older tradition preserved by the consonants). As we have seen in both, the individual examples of

11. See chapter 4, p. 31.

12. See chapter 5, p. 62.

13. See chapter 6, p. 112.

14. See chapter 5.2, p. 64 and following sections.

15. See chapter 5.4, p. 73.

16. See p. 78.

17. Actually, I am reluctant to speak about techniques aimed at “fixing” the biblical text, as the diachronic aspect (i.e. the question about textual variants found in various manuscripts written at different places and times) doesn't seem to be as important as the synchronic and social aspect (i.e. the need to agree upon the same text when reciting it collectively).

18. See chapter 6.4, p. 139, chapter 4.1.1, p. 35 and chapter 4.1.3, p. 47.

rare grammatical forms¹⁹⁾ and in the *qerē/ketīb* variants²⁰⁾, cases of such reinterpretation are very rare. Moreover, many of them can be seen as a response to some textual problem and only very few examples are left which could possibly be attributed to a deliberate reinterpretation in the midrashic style. The masoretic accentuation, on the other hand, can indeed be shown to mirror in some cases a particular kind of midrashic/targumic interpretation²¹⁾ which occasionally even contradicts the sense as reflected by the masoretic vocalization²²⁾. As I have shown in this work, to a great degree the interpretive nature of the accents may be a result of the accents presumably serving as a synchronization device between the oral Hebrew biblical text and its *targūm*. As we have seen²³⁾, even if in most cases the prosodic structure of the Hebrew text determined the structure and content of the *targūm*, sometimes, however, the opposite was true and the accentuation was influenced by the *targūm*²⁴⁾—reflecting sometimes a particular interpretation.

8.1 Questions and Proposals for Further Research

Further, the present work opens several question for various fields of Hebrew Bible scholarship:

1. For **grammatical research of Tiberian Hebrew and textual criticism** we propose to consider analysing complicated, rare or grammatically unusual Tiberian Hebrew forms by regarding their two constituents—the written text and the oral tradition—separately and to consider the possible interaction(s) between the two traditions as I have shown above²⁵⁾ on a couple of examples. In my opinion the interplay between the oral tradition and the written text can plausibly explain some more peculiar Hebrew forms.

2. For **textual criticism**: I am suggesting²⁶⁾, given the findings we have shown concerning the role of orality and mechanisms of oral techniques for the emergence of the Masoretic text, to reconsider the possible use of the oral tradition in ancient Hebrew witnesses. In the first place

19. See chapter 7.2.1, p. 196.

20. See chapter 4.3, p. 56.

21. See e.g. Cohen 1974; Kogut 1996.

22. See chapter 5.7, p. 107.

23. See chapter 5.4, p. 73.

24. In a few exceptional cases even a targumic addition may have slipped into the Hebrew (oral) text, see chapter 4.3, p. 56.

25. See chapter 7, p. 143.

26. See p. 99.

we propose to take a new look at the “vulgar texts” of the Hebrew Bible from *Qumrān* and ask to what degree oral techniques played a role in the emergence of these texts. A further question would be whether these texts may have actually represented some kind of *targūm* or a similar para-text or paraphrase of the Hebrew Bible. Also, it may be suggested to reconsider the role of the oral tradition within the ancient biblical version in general, on a typology of individual text-critical phenomena.

3. For **textual criticism** and **masoretic studies**: I'm suggesting that the masoretic notes should not be taken as a primarily scribal device aimed at “fixing” the written text but rather as an oral technique used to teach and ease the memorizing of the oral version of the Hebrew Bible. This means that the masoretic notes, at least those that apparently show the primary, i.e. oral, stage²⁷⁾, should be used to reconstruct the oral shape of the biblical text and not the written one. Care should be given when analysing which masoretic note is still referring to the oral tradition and which has already (to some extent) the written text in mind.

4. For the **targumic studies**: we propose to see the Hebrew chant (i.e. the Hebrew accents) as a constituent element of the targumic translation and transmission and not as only a late feature of some targumic manuscripts. We, therefore, urge that further editions of the *targumīm* should include accent signs (edited critically) where these exist in the manuscripts. The same should be true also for the vocalization and the targumic Masora. Also, we have shown²⁸⁾ with high probability that there was a “*targūm*” to the Aramaic parts of the Hebrew Bible, which means that the phenomenon of a *targūm* should not be regarded primarily as a translation but rather a kind of annotation or explication.

5. For the **Septuagint studies**: we suggest the need to reconsider the role of orality in the process of translation and transmission of the ancient Greek version of the Bible as well. Further, as shown above (), it seems that the LXX share some important characteristics with the *targumīm*, mostly the “word-by-word” character of this translation which may suggest that also some of the Greek version may have emerged in the same way we are suggesting for the *targumīm*, i.e. as an annotation of the original Hebrew, both texts synchronized using some sort of chant. This

27. See chapter 6.4, p. 139.

28. See chapter 6.4, p. 139.

resembles closely what has been suggested by the proponents of an “interlinear paradigm” of Greek translations, albeit not on an oral basis. Obviously, more work should be done on examining the claims of James Barr who holds that the LXX must have emerged from the Hebrew consonantal text by some kind of “guessing”.

6. For **textual criticism** of the Hebrew Bible: Moreover, further ancient biblical versions should be examined to see whether they show the characteristics of orally translated or orally transmitted texts and the mutual relationship between the written and oral element should be studied accordingly. Further, a typology of “para-biblical” texts, emerged by distinct means and using various (presumably oral) techniques—such as the *targūm*, *midraš* or more free paraphrases—should be systematized to allow for a more exact description of individual para-biblical texts.

7. For the **Jewish studies**: We suggest that the reason for illiteracy and a strong sentiment against writing in the Judaism of the rabbinic era should be sought in the socio-economic conditions of writing in this period and in the possible impact of adopting either literacy or orality in establishing the intellectual elites.

Appendix A

Doubly Accentuated Words in the Aramaic Portions of the Hebrew Bible

| verse | doubly accentuated words (in context ¹⁾) | | |
|----------|--|---------------------|--|
| DAN 2:10 | לֹא־אִיתִי אֲנִשׁ | <וְאִמְרִין> | עֲנוּ כִשְׁדָאֵי קְדָם־מַלְכָא |
| DAN 2:11 | עִס־בְּשָׂרָא לֹא אִיתְזוּהִי: | <מְדַרְהוֹן> | לְהוֹ אֱלֹהִין דִּי |
| DAN 2:12 | לְכָל חִכְמֵי בְבַל: | <לְהוּבְדָה> | וְאִמַר |
| DAN 2:20 | דִּי חִכְמַתָּא וּגְבוּרְתָא דִּי לֹה־הִיא: | <וְעַד־עֲלֵמָא> | לְהוּא שְׁמָה דִּי־אֱלֹהָא מְבָרַךְ מוֹעֲלָמָא |
| DAN 2:40 | תְּהוּא תְּקִיפָה פְּפְרוּלָא | <רְבִיעֵאָה> | וּמְלָכוּ |
| DAN 2:41 | מְלָכוּ פְּלִיגָה תְּהוּה | <פְּרוּזְלָא> | וְדִי־חִזְיָתָה רְגֵלְיָא וְאַצְבָּעֵתָא מִנְהוֹן חֶסֶף דִּי־פָחַר וּמִנְהוֹן |
| DAN 2:44 | לְעָם אַחְרוֹן לֹא תִשְׁתַּבַּח | <וּמְלָכוּתָהּ> | מְלָכוּ דִּי לְעֵלְמִין לֹא תִתְחַבֵּל |
| DAN 2:46 | אִמַר לְנִסְכָּה לֹה: | <וּנְיָחֻחִין> | וּמִנְחָה |
| DAN 2:48 | עַל פְּלִמְדֵינַת בְּבַל | <וְהַשְׁלֵטָה> | וּמִתְנֵן רַבְרָבוּ שְׂגִיאוֹן יְהִב־לָהּ |
| DAN 3:2 | דְּתַבְרִיא תְּפִתִּיא וְכָל שְׁלֹטְנֵי מְדִינְתָא | <גְּדַבְרִיא> | וּגְבוּכְדִנְצָר מְלָכָא שְׁלַח לְמַכְנָשׁ לְאַחַשְׁדַּרפְּנֵיא סַגְיָא וּפְחוּתָא אֲדַרְגוּרִיא |
| DAN 3:3 | תְּפִתִּיא וְכָל שְׁלֹטְנֵי מְדִינְתָא | <דְּתַבְרִיא> | בְּאֲדִין מִתְכַנְשִׁין אַחַשְׁדַּרפְּנֵיא סַגְיָא וּפְחוּתָא אֲדַרְגוּרִיא גְּדַבְרִיא |
| DAN 3:5 | וְכָל זִנֵּי זְמָרָא | <סוּמְפִנְיָה> | בְּעַדְנָא דִּי־תִשְׁמַעוּן קָל קַרְנָא מְשֻׁרוּקִיתָא קַתְרוּס סַבְכָא פְּסַנְתְּרִין |
| DAN 3:7 | קַתְרוּס שְׁבַכָא פְּסַנְטְרִין וְכָל זִנֵּי זְמָרָא | <מְשֻׁרוּקִיתָא> | כְּדִי שְׁמַעוּן כְּל־עַמְמֵיא קָל קַרְנָא |
| DAN 3:9 | לְנְבוּכְדִנְצָר מְלָכָא | <וְאִמְרִין> | עֲנוּ |
| DAN 3:10 | וְכָל זִנֵּי זְמָרָא | <וּסְפִנְיָה> | כְּל־אֲנָשׁ דִּי־יִשְׁמַע קָל קַרְנָא מְשֻׁרוּקִיתָא קַתְרוּס שְׁבַכָא פְּסַנְתְּרִין |
| DAN 3:12 | עַלְדִּי מְלָכָא שְׁטַם | <לֹא־שְׁמוֹ> | גְּבַרִיא אֵלְדִּי |
| DAN 3:15 | וְכָל זִנֵּי זְמָרָא | <וּסוּמְפִנְיָה> | קָל קַרְנָא מְשֻׁרוּקִיתָא קַתְרוּס שְׁבַכָא פְּסַנְתְּרִין |
| DAN 3:19 | עַל דִּי חִזָּה לְמִזְיָה: | <חֲדַשְׁבַּעָה> | וְאִמַר לְמוֹזָא לְאַתּוּנָא |
| DAN 3:23 | שְׁדַרְדִּי מִישָׁד וְעַבְדִּי נִגּוּ | <תְּלַתְהוֹן> | וּגְבַרִיא אֵלְדִּי |
| DAN 4:4 | וּפְשָׂרָה לֹא־מְהוּדְעִין לִי: | <קַדְמֵיהוֹן> | וְחֵלְמָא אִמַר אָנָּה |
| DAN 4:9 | | <לְכַלְא־בְּהָ> | עַפְיָה שְׁפִיר וְאַנְבָּה שְׂגִיא וּמוּזוֹן |
| DAN 4:15 | וְאַנְתָּ כְּהֵל | <לְהוּדְעֵתְנִי> | כְּל־חִכְמֵי מְלָכוּתֵי לֹא־יִכְלִין פְּשָׂרָא |
| DAN 4:18 | | <לְכַלְא־בְּהָ> | וְעַפְיָה שְׁפִיר וְאַנְבָּה שְׂגִיא וּמוּזוֹן |
| DAN 5:6 | דָּא לְדָא נְקִשׁוּן: | <וְאַרְכַּבְתָּהּ> | וְקִטְרֵי חִרְצָה מִשְׁתְּרִין |
| DAN 5:7 | כִּשְׁדָאֵי וּגְוִרִיא | <לְאַשְׁפִּיא> | קָרָא מְלָכָא בְּחִיל לְהַעֲלָהּ |
| DAN 5:12 | דִּי־מְלָכָא שְׁס־שְׁמָה בְּלִטְשָׂאֲצָר | <בְּדַנְיָאֵל> | כְּל־קַבֵּל דִּי רִיחַ וְיִתִּירָה ... הַשְׁתַּבַּחַת בְּהָ |
| DAN 5:16 | אַרְגוּנָא תְּלַבֵּשׁ | <לְהוּדְעֵתְנִי> | הוּן תְּכִיל כְּתָבָא לְמַקְרָא וּפְשָׂרָה |
| DAN 5:17 | לְאַחְרוֹן הַב | <וּגְבוּבִיתָד> | וְאִמַר קְדָם מְלָכָא מִתְנַתֵּד לְדִי לְהוּן |
| DAN 5:19 | הוּן זִיעִין וְדַחֲלִין מוֹקְדָמוּהִי | <וְלִשְׁנֵיא> | כָּל עַמְמֵיא אִמְיָא |
| DAN 5:21 | וּמִטְל שְׁמֵיא גְשְׁמָה יִצְטַבַּע | <יִטְעִמוּנָה> | עֲשָׂבָא כְּחוּרִין |
| DAN 5:29 | דִּי־לְהוּא שְׁלִיט תְּלָתָא בְּמְלָכוּתָא: | <וְהַכְרוּו> | |
| DAN 5:30 | קִטְלִיל בְּלֹא־שְׂעָר מְלָכָא כִּשְׁדָאָה: | <בְּלִילִיא> | בְּהָ |
| DAN 6:6 | עֲלוּהִי בְּדַת אֱלֹהָה: | <הַשְׁכַּחְנָה> | לְהוֹן |
| DAN 6:17 | וּרְמֹו לְגַבָּא דִּי אַרְיוּתָא | <לְדַנְיָאֵל> | בְּאֲדִין מְלָכָא אִמַר וְהִיתִיו |
| DAN 6:20 | לְגַבָּא דִּי־אַרְיוּתָא אֲזֹל: | <וּבְהַתְּבַהֲלָהּ> | |

| verse | doubly accentuated words (in context) | | |
|----------|--|----------------------|---|
| DAN 6:21 | בְּקֵל עֲצִיב זַעֲק | <לְדִנְיָא־ל> | וּכְמִקְרָבָה לְגָבָא |
| DAN 6:24 | אָמַר לְהַנְסִיקָה מִן־גָּבָא | <וּלְדִנְיָא־ל> | בְּאֲדָנִין מִלְכָּא שְׂגִיָא טָאֵב עֲלוֹהִי |
| DAN 6:25 | בְּהוֹן אַרְיוֹתָא | <דִּי־שְׁלֹטוֹ> | וְלֹא־מִטּוֹ לְאַרְעֵית גָּבָא עַד |
| DAN 6:25 | וְכַל־גְּרַמְיָהוֹן הַדְּקוֹ: | <אַרְיוֹתָא> | עַד דִּי־שְׁלֹטוֹ בְּהוֹן |
| DAN 6:27 | מִן־קִדְּם אֱלֹהָה דִּי־דִנְיָאֵל | <וְדַחְלִין> | בְּכָל־שְׁלֹטוֹן מִלְכוּתֵי לְהוֹן זִיעִין |
| DAN 6:27 | וּמִלְכוּתָהּ דִּי־לֵא תַתְחַבֵּל | <לְעֵלְמִין> | דִּי־הוּא אֱלֹהָא חֵזִיא וְקִים |
| DAN 7:5 | אָכְלִי בְּשַׂר שְׂגִיָא: | <קוּמִי> | וְכֹן אָמְרִין לָהּ |
| DAN 7:6 | וְשְׁלֹטִין יְהִיב לָהּ: | <לַחֲיוֹתָא> | וְאַרְבַּעָה רֵאשִׁין |
| DAN 7:8 | אֲתַעֲקֶרָה מִן־קִדְּמָה | <קִדְּמִיתָא> | וּתְלַת מִן־קִרְנֵיָא |
| DAN 7:16 | וַיִּצִיבָא אֲבַעָא־מִנְהָ עַל־כַּל־דְּנָה | <מִן־קִמְאִמְיָא> | קִרְבַּת עַל־חַד |
| DAN 7:18 | וְעַד עֲלַם עֲלַמְיָא: | <עַד־עֲלַמְיָא> | וַיַּחֲסִיגוּן מִלְכוּתָא |
| DAN 7:19 | דִּי־הוֹת שְׁנֵיה מִן־פְּלִהִין | <רְבִיעֵיתָא> | אָדִין צִבִית לְצִבָּא עַל־חֵיוֹתָא |
| DAN 7:23 | מִלְכוֹ רְבִיעֵאָה תְּהוּא בְּאַרְעָא | <רְבִיעֵיתָא> | כֹּן אָמַר חֵיוֹתָא |
| DAN 7:27 | לָהּ יַפְלִחוּן וַיִּשְׁתַּמְעוּן: | <שְׁלֹטִיָּא> | וְכָל |
| ESR 4:14 | לְמַחְזָא | <אַרְיִד־לְנָא> | וְעֵרֹת מִלְכָּא לָא |
| ESR 4:14 | שְׁלַחְנָא וְהוֹדְעֵנָא לְמִלְכָּא: | <עַל־דְּנָה> | |
| ESR 4:15 | קִרְיָתָא דְּדִי חֲחַרְבַּת: | <עַל־דְּנָה> | |
| ESR 4:17 | דִּי יַתְבִּין בְּשַׁמְרִין | <בְּנִנְתָּהוֹן> | עַל־רְחוּם בְּעַל־טַעַם וְשִׁמְשֵׁי סַפְרָא וְשַׁאֲר |
| ESR 4:20 | וְשְׁלִיטִין בְּכָל עֵבֶר נְהָרָה | <עַל־יְרוּשָׁלַם> | וּמִלְכִין תְּקוּפִין הוּן |
| ESR 4:20 | בְּכָל עֵבֶר נְהָרָה | <וְשְׁלִיטִין> | |
| ESR 4:23 | וּבִטְלוּ הֵמוּ בְּאַדְרַע וְחֵיל: | <עַל־יְהוּדִיָּא> | אֲזָלוּ בְּבַהִילוֹ לִירוּשָׁלַם |
| ESR 5:1 | דִּי בִיהוּד וּבִירוּשָׁלַם | <עַל־יְהוּדִיָּא> | וְהַתְּנַבֵּי חֲגִי נְבִיָּא וְזִכְרֵיהָ בְּרַעֲדוּא נְבִיָּא |
| ESR 5:6 | אֲפִרְסִיָּא דִּי בַעֲבַר נְהָרָה | <וּכְנָנְוֹתָה> | תַּתְּנִין פַּתַח עֵבֶר־נְהָרָה וְשַׁתַּר בּוֹזְנִי |
| ESR 5:6 | דִּי בַעֲבַר נְהָרָה | <אֲפִרְסִיָּא> | וּכְנָנְוֹתָה |
| ESR 6:4 | | <וְנִפְקִיתָא> | |
| ESR 6:6 | מִן־בֵּית מִלְכָּא תְּהִיב: | <וּכְנָנְוֹתָהוֹן> | |
| ESR 6:18 | עַל־עֵבֶדְתָּ אֱלֹהָא דִּי בִירוּשָׁלַם | <בְּמַחְלָקְתָּהוֹן> | וְהַקִּימוּ כְּהֵנָּא בְּפִלְגָתָהוֹן וְלוּיָא |
| ESR 7:12 | מִלְכָּא מִלְכֵיָּא | <אַרְתַּחְשַׁטְתָּא> | |
| ESR 7:24 | תַּרְעִיָּא נְתִינִיָּא וּפְלַחֵי בֵּית אֱלֹהָא דְּנָה | <זְמַרְיָא> | וְלִכְּס מְהוּדְעִין דִּי כַל־כְּהֵנָּיָא וְלוּיָא |
| ESR 7:24 | וּפְלַחֵי בֵּית אֱלֹהָא דְּנָה | <נְתִינִיָּא> | כַּל־כְּהֵנָּיָא וְלוּיָא זְמַרְיָא תַּרְעִיָּא |
| ESR 7:24 | בֵּית אֱלֹהָא דְּנָה | <וּפְלַחֵי> | כַּל־כְּהֵנָּיָא וְלוּיָא זְמַרְיָא תַּרְעִיָּא נְתִינִיָּא |

1. The text is quoted according to the *qerē*.

Appendix B

The *masora parva* of JOSH 1

| verse | word(s) | masoretic notes |
|----------|--|---|
| JOSH 1:1 | וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי מוֹת | A L M1: ד |
| JOSH 1:1 | מֹשֶׁה עֶבֶד יְהוָה | A L: יד בסיפ M1: יד בספ |
| JOSH 1:1 | מִשְׁרַת מֹשֶׁה | A: ב מבחריו L M1: ב |
| JOSH 1:2 | מֹשֶׁה | A [L] [C]: ג רא פט M1: ג ראש פסו ג |
| JOSH 1:2 | וַעֲתָה קוּם | A: ג |
| JOSH 1:2 | עָבַר | M1: ו חס |
| JOSH 1:2 | אֶת־יְרֵדוֹן הַזֶּה | L: ו |
| JOSH 1:2 | וְכַל־הֶעָם | A L: ג וכל רא פסו דכו ב מ ג C: ג וכל רא פט דכ ב מ ג |
| JOSH 1:2 | אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי נֹתֵן | M1: ב |
| JOSH 1:2 | אָנֹכִי נֹתֵן לָהֶם לְבָנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל | A: ל |
| JOSH 1:3 | כָּל־מְקוֹם | L M1: ב A: ב אשר יהיה שם (=ISA 7:23) C: ב יהיה (=ISA 7:23) |
| JOSH 1:3 | תִּדְרֹךְ | A C: ה M1: ו חס |
| JOSH 1:3 | לְכֶם נִתְּנִיו | A L C: ל |
| JOSH 1:4 | מֵהַמִּדְבָּר | A L M1: ב C: שלח (=1 SAM 25:14) |
| JOSH 1:4 | וְהַלְבִּינּוּן | A L M1: ה |
| JOSH 1:4 | מֵהַמִּדְבָּר וְהַלְבִּינּוּן | A: ל (? , improbable, see below וְעַד־הַנְּהָר) |
| JOSH 1:4 | גְּבוּלְכֶם | L M1: ג A: ג חס וחד מל C: מל ל |
| JOSH 1:4 | וְעַד | M1: יד פסו ועד ועד |
| JOSH 1:4 | וְעַד־הַנְּהָר | C: ל A: ל (?) |
| JOSH 1:4 | הַחֲתִים | A: ה C: ? |
| JOSH 1:4 | וְעַד־הַיָּם | A L M1: ב C: ? |
| JOSH 1:5 | לֹא־יִתְיַצֵּב | C: ג |
| JOSH 1:5 | לֹא (1 st) | L: ז ראש פסוק בסיפ M1: ז ראש פסוק בספ |
| JOSH 1:5 | לֹא (2 nd) | M1: ו פסוק לא לא לא |
| JOSH 1:5 | אֲרַפֶּךָ | A L M1: ל |
| JOSH 1:6 | אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְאַבוֹתֶם לָתֵת לָהֶם | L: ב |
| JOSH 1:6 | נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְאַבוֹתֶם | A M1: ב |
| JOSH 1:7 | רַק חֹזֶק וְאַמֵּץ | A: ב לשלמה ? (=1 CHR 28:20) |
| JOSH 1:7 | חֹזֶק וְאַמֵּץ | M1: ב בענינ |
| JOSH 1:7 | וְאַמֵּץ | L: ב C: ב רק לשלמה (=JOSH 1:7; 1 CHR 28:20) |
| JOSH 1:7 | צִוָּךְ מֹשֶׁה עֶבְדִּי | L: ל |
| JOSH 1:7 | מִמֶּנּוּ | A: ו סברין L: ו סבר ממנה M1: ו סברין ממנה וקריין ממנו וסימנ כת (see Mm) |

Appendix B: The masora parva of Josh 1

| verse | word(s) | masoretic notes |
|-----------|---------------------------------|---|
| JOSH 1:8 | לֹא (1 st) | A: אַ ראַ פֿט בסיפּ (see above JOSH 1:5) |
| JOSH 1:8 | לֹא־יְמוּשׁ | L: אַ C: אַ מאַתךְ : אַ (=ISA 54:10) M1: אַ ראש פסוק אַ |
| JOSH 1:8 | יְמוּשׁ | M1: אַ |
| JOSH 1:8 | וְהִגִּיתָ | A L M1: אַ C: אַ חס |
| JOSH 1:8 | דְּרַכְךָ | A L M1: אַ חס C: אַ חס |
| JOSH 1:8 | וְאַזְ | A L C M1: אַ |
| JOSH 1:9 | אֶל־תַּעֲרֹץ | A L M1: אַ |
| JOSH 1:9 | בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר תֵּלֵךְ | A L: אַ |
| JOSH 1:9 | בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר | M1: אַ —incorrect (32×) |
| JOSH 1:10 | שֹׁטְרֵי | C: אַ ליש חס בר מן אַ M1: אַ |
| JOSH 1:11 | וְצִוּוּ | A L M1: אַ C: illegible |
| JOSH 1:11 | הַכִּינוּ | A: אַ |
| JOSH 1:11 | אֶת־הָעָם לֵאמֹר | L: אַ C: illegible |
| JOSH 1:11 | לְבוֹא לְרִשְׁתָּ | M1: אַ בספּ |
| JOSH 1:12 | וְלִרְאוּבֵנִי | A: אַ נתתי מן הגלעד L: אַ |
| JOSH 1:12 | וְלִרְאוּבֵנִי וְלִגְדֵי | C: אַ נתתי מן הגלעד M1: אַ אמר יהושע (=JOSH 1:12, sic!) |
| JOSH 1:13 | מֹשֶׁה עֶבֶד־יְהוָה | M1: אַ |
| JOSH 1:13 | מִנִּיחַ | A L C M1: אַ |
| JOSH 1:14 | נְשִׁיכֶם טַפְּכֶם וּמִקְנֵיכֶם | A: אַ |
| JOSH 1:14 | נְשִׁיכֶם טַפְּכֶם | L C: אַ |
| JOSH 1:14 | נְשִׁיכֶם | M1: אַ ראש פסוק |
| JOSH 1:14 | יָשְׁבוּ | A C M1: אַ |
| JOSH 1:14 | חֲמִשִּׁים | A M1: אַ חס C: אַ |
| JOSH 1:14 | גְּבוּרֵי הַחַיִּל | A: אַ M1: אַ |
| JOSH 1:14 | הַחַיִּל | L: אַ |
| JOSH 1:14 | וְעֹזְרֵתֶם | A: אַ |
| JOSH 1:15 | יְהוָה= | C: אַ |
| JOSH 1:15 | לָהֶם | C: אַ דמט |
| JOSH 1:15 | יְרֻשְׁתְּכֶם | A L: אַ |
| JOSH 1:15 | מֹשֶׁה עֶבֶד יְהוָה | L: אַ בסיפּ M1: אַ בפּט |
| JOSH 1:16 | צִוִּיתָנוּ | A L M1: אַ C: illegible |
| JOSH 1:16 | תְּשַׁלְּחֵנוּ | A L M1: אַ C: illegible |
| JOSH 1:18 | כָּל־אִישׁ | A: אַ ראש פסו בסיפּ L: אַ |
| JOSH 1:18 | יִמְרָה | A: אַ |
| JOSH 1:18 | וְלֹא־יִשְׁמַע | A C M1: אַ |
| JOSH 1:18 | תְּצַוֵּנוּ | A L: אַ |

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| 24 | ישעיהו | 97 | כֹּנֵת | 167-168 | לְדַרְיוֹשׁ |
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| 132 | לוֹחַ | 92 | מְדִינָתָא | 163 | מְקַנְנֵתִי |
| 166 | לוֹחֵם | 92 | מְדִינָתָא | 24 | מְרַשְׁעִים |
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| 81 | לוֹמִיכַל | 24 | מִיעַר | 60 | נְהַר |
| 46 | לוֹמִינָה | 165 | מִלָּא | 55 | נְגו |
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