

Hanna Liss (ed.)

Philology and Aesthetics

Figurative Masorah
in Western European Manuscripts

In collaboration with Jonas Leipziger



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European Bible manuscripts and their Masorah traditions are still a neglected field of studies and have so far been almost completely disregarded within text-critical research. This volume collects research on the Western European Masorah and addresses the question of how Ashkenazic scholars integrated the Oriental Masoretic tradition into the Western European Rabbinic lore and law. The articles address philological and art-historical topics, and present new methodological tools from the field of digital humanities for the analysis of *masora figurata*. This volume is intended to initiate a new approach to Masorah research that will shed new light on the European history of the masoretic Bible and its interpretation.

The Editor

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Philology and Aesthetics

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Rashi in the Masorah: The Figurative Masorah in Ashkenazi Manuscripts as Parshanut

Abstract: This article deals with three different figurative Eliyya Masorah compositions of MSS Vatican ebr. 14 and Parma Cod. 3289, presents an annotated edition of the *masora figurata* images, and discusses the question of how the scribes (Eliyya ben Berekhya ha-Naqdan for ebr. 14) introduced Rabbinic exegetical commentaries as well as contemporary halakhic issues linked to the respective Parasha and iconographic agenda of the Masorah.

Keywords: figurative Masora, Masora, biblical illustration, Parshanut, Eliyya ha-Naqdan

Many Medieval Hebrew Bible manuscripts are decorated with micrography, a scribe's art form that outlines images in tiny script. The textual repository, which is used to furnish the micrography, was frequently taken from contemporary and adopted masoretic traditions (*masora figurata*). Early examples of micrographically shaped decoration are found in the few extant oriental Bible codices.¹ Those few micrographically decorated, illuminated, and gilded pages were usually placed at the end of the codex. From the thirteenth century onward, micrographic, figurative Masorah annotations became an integral part of the mise en page in Franco-German Ashkenazi manuscript culture. The most prominent micrographically decorated Bible manuscripts – the “Duke of Sussex German Pentateuch” (London, BL, Add. 15282), the “Vienna Pentateuch” (Vienna, ÖNB, Cod. hebr. 28), the “Yonah Pentateuch” (London, BL, Add. 21160), the Prophets and Hagiographs codex BL Or. 2091, and the two Erfurt Bibles

1 Cf. the sixteen illuminated “Carpet Pages,” fol. 473v–479r and 488v–490r, of the “Leningrad Codex.”

“Erfurt 1” (Berlin, SBB, Or. Fol. 1210, 1211) and “Erfurt 2” (SBB, Or. Fol. 1212), to mention only a few – show an elaborate program of extensively decorated *masora figurata*, which depicts not only the full catalogue of gothic iconography of drolleries, chimeras, griffons and dragons, but also motifs of medieval literary conception that emphasized major aspects of Amour Courtois (nobility, chivalry, hunting, falconry).

The *masora magna* of Ashkenazi Bible codices has become – beyond its original role as marginal corrective supplement to the Hebrew Bible text – an augmented and complex visualization of text-image relationships between the narratives of the biblical *Obertext* and the topics of contemporary exegesis. Since the figurative micrography was of uncertain and alternating character, location and length within a codex, it is unsurprising that we find, beyond the ordinary *masora magna* annotations, also passages of external masoretic list compilations like *Okhla we-Okhla*, which were usually not necessarily part of the ordinary masoretic corpus in a Bible codex, but were instead used as an esoteric text repository of expert knowledge – not only to fill the figurative micrography with more or less meaningful masoretic content, but to reintegrate the remotely preserved *Okhla*-list material, which was made use of as exegetical tool, into the Bible. Moreover, the esoteric knowledge of the Masorah and its micrographic visualization was often a hidden link to the contemporary Parshanut literature, like the prominent commentary of Rashi (R. Shlomo ben Isaac)² or the various medieval Midrash and Targum receptions.

Three examples will elucidate the various forms, functions, and intertextual patterns of thirteenth-century *masora figurata* samples, which functioned not only as figurative Masorah annotations, but as a carefully arranged visual reminder of the substantive and exegetical issues of the Hebrew *Obertext*. The first two examples of *masora figurata* are part of the elaborate program of micrographically drawn illustrations in MS Vat. ebr. 14, a liturgical Pentateuch with Targum, Haphtarot, and Job, written

2 Cf. the contemporary manuscript of the Rashi commentary Munich BSB Cod. hebr. 5,1–2 from Würzburg, 1233 (the first dated illuminated Hebrew manuscript in Europe).

and illustrated by Eliyya ben Berekhya ha-Naqdan in Rouen in 1239.³ Both examples will serve to illustrate the specific relationship between the Hebrew *Obertext*, the various *masora figurata* contents (here: *Okhla*-lists and Midrash), and the exegetical approach to the contemporary *Parshanut* literature of Rashi and his school. The third example, a *masora figurata* in MS Parma Cod. 3289, illustrates the ambivalent relation between the hidden agenda of the pictorial program of the *masora magna* and the predominant *Peshat* narrative as the prerequisite for a micrographically drawn Numeri map of the authoritative Rashi commentary.⁴

1 The Town Gate of Mishpatim (Exod 21) – An *Okhla we-Okhla* List Repository and Bookmark into Rashi's commentary (Vat. ebr. 14, fol. 85v)⁵

The lower margin of folio 85v of MS Vat. ebr. 14 offers a figurative *Masora*, which draws a medieval town gate with a romanic archway, stairs and balcony, as they are still to be found in European cities like Rouen, Troyes or Frankfurt/Main. The figurative *Masorah* is placed beneath the illuminated header of the weekly pericope *Parashat Ve'eleh ha-Mishpatim*, which introduces Chapter Exod 21 on folio 85v. Exod 21 is part of the so-called Covenant Code, the *Sefer ha-Berit* (cf. Exod 24:8 for the term: סֵפֶר הַבְּرִית), an extensive corpus of legal texts with a substantial portion of mitzvot, and hence a source of Jewish law (Exod 20:22–23:19). A major legal issue in Exod 21 is the rules surrounding Jewish slavery laws, and here especially the so-called affranchisement, the judicial act of a slaveowner freeing his slaves (manumission), an act which was carried out publicly, within the town gate, and in front of witnesses.

3 Cf. Attia, Élodie: *The Masorah of Elijah ha-Naqdan. An Edition of Ashkenazic Micrographical Notes*. (Materiale Textkulturen 11). De Gruyter: Berlin/Boston 2015 (open access: <https://t1p.de/1u9j>; accessed July 2020).

4 Cf. Petzold, Kay Joe: "Die Kanaan-Karten des R. Salomo Ben Isaak (Raschi) – Bedeutung und Gebrauch mittelalterlicher hebräischer Karten-Diagramme." *Das Mittelalter* 22(2), 2017, pp. 332–350.

5 The first two chapters were presented as a paper (*Masorah figurata as Visualised Parshanut*) in the Masoretic Studies section at the SBL Annual Meeting 2018.



Fig. 1: Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, ebr. 14, fol. 85v

The motif of the town gate as figurative Masorah works, on the surface, as a visual link to the main topics of the folio's content: the manumission laws of Exod 21. The Masorah of the town gate comprises half of the *masora magna* corpus and consists of three distinguishable masoretic annotations and one additional feature, marking the “figure” as a town gate with an archway and two doorposts.

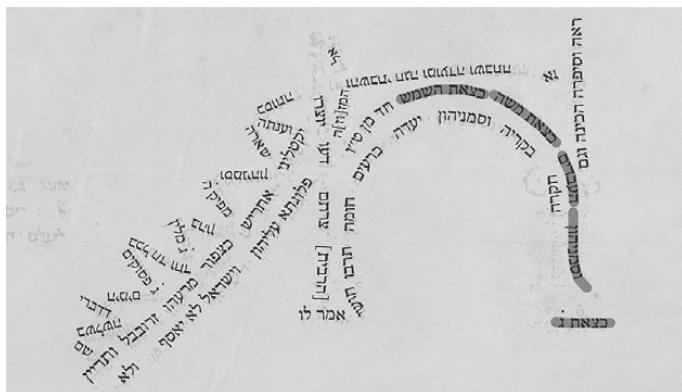


Fig. 2: The right doorpost: *masora parva* to the lemma תְּאַזֵּב. © BIMA: Biblical Masora Database

The first masoretic note within the figurative Masorah forms the base of the right doorpost. It consists of an exemplification of the *masora parva* note attached to the lemma **כִּצְאת** (which is an infinitive construct of the form: **יַצֵּא** + the particle prep. **כִּי**) “going out as” in Exod 21:7, and reads: **כִּצְאת הַשְׁמָשׁ** “the form appears three times, and their references are: Exod 21:7, Exod 33:8, and Judg 5:31.” This *masora magna* note supposedly exemplifies the purely statistical information found in the *masora parva* note **ג' בְּק'** “three times in the scriptures” in the margin and aligns perfectly with the normalized standard Masorah of L in BHS, whose *masora magna* note for the lemma **כִּצְאת** in Judg 5:31 contains the same information, though with different *simanim*: **כִּצְאת ג' וּסְמִינָן יְמִכָּר.** “the form appears three times, and their references are: Exod 21:7, Exod 33:8, and Judg 5:31.”

But what is the reason for the placement within the base of the right doorpost of the city gate? It might be found in the juridical and halakhic relevance of this phrase, since the regulations for Hebrew slaves, which are to be freed after seven years, do not apply to underage Hebrew maidservants. The corpus of regulations for slaves, which is the narrative of לְזַבֵּת “releasing,” is carefully separated in the Hebrew text by a

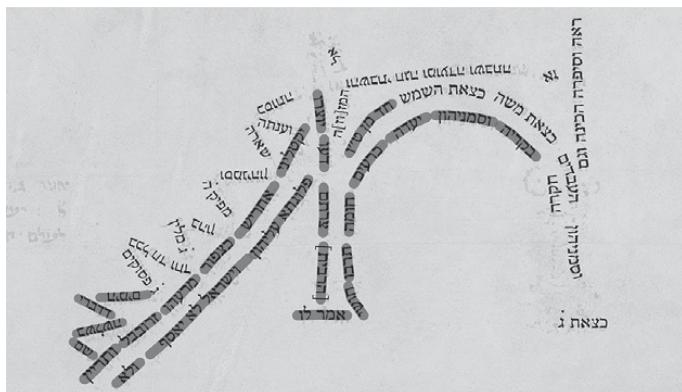


Fig. 3: The archway, the left doorpost, the ramp and parts of the stairs: *Okhla*-list of *Ketiv/Oere* variants. © BIMA: Biblical Masora Database

minor break paragraph (**סתומה**) from the fairly different regulations for underaged maidservants, which state unambiguously: **לא תצא עצת העבדים** “[do] not let her go free like the slaves.” The Masorah regarding the form and appearance of the lemma **עצת** in verse Exod 21:7 is singled out and used as a visual “linchpin” for the contemporary Parshanut literature of the Midrash and the Targums, since the juridical and halakhic implications of the verse Exod 21:7 are far more complex (i.e. regarding the status of **בצורה**, which applies to maidservants only until the initial signs of puberty appear) than the rather simple regulations of the Hebrew slavery laws. A comprehensive reading of those texts was not intended for a certain target audience without the Rashi commentary. The careful placement of the masoretic note on the lemma **עצת** was more than arbitrarily chosen textual material to fill the base of the right doorpost, but rather an instructive hint about the special and complex halakhic regulations for juvenile maidservants.

The second masoretic note within the figurative Masorah comprises the archway, the left doorpost, the ramp, and parts of the stairs of the city gate. This masoretic list is a textual witness of the well-known *Okhla*-list of *Ketiv/Qere* variants of written נֶל, which is to be read as נִל. This masoretic list is witnessed in many manuscripts and in both *Okhla we-Okhla*

recensions: It is list § 88 in the Halle *Okhla* manuscript UB Yb 4°10,⁶ and list § 105 in the Paris *Okhla* manuscript BnF, hébr. 148.⁷ The list on folio 85r is named **חד מין טיז בקירה** “list of 15 cases” and is almost identical to the *Okhla*-lists of the Halle and Paris *Okhla* recension (cf. Halle § 88: **חד מין טיז לא דכתא א' יקרין ו'**). But the *Okhla*-list on folio 85r lists fifteen cases of *Ketiv/Qere* and adds two uncertain cases (ולריין פלוגתא עליהון), for a grand total of 17 cases. The list here on folio 85r is in situ and refers to the biblical phrase **אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ (אֲשֶׁר־לָא) יִזְנַה**: “he who has designated her for himself” in Exod 21:8. Again, the Masorah has singled out a verse which connects to the juridical implications of the first note, and refers (with respect to the exegetic implications of the *Ketiv/Qere* reading of the phrase **אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ (אֲשֶׁר־לָא) יִזְנַה**) directly to the Rashi commentary.

A short analysis of the main manuscripts shows that this list functioned as a major repository for the exegetical cases of crucial *Ketiv/Qere*. This list is to be found in the *masora magna* of almost all major Hebrew Bible codices (Leningrad; Sassoon 507; Bm Or. 4445; Vat. ebr. 448; Madrid 1, Erfurt 3) and is a core constituent of the Tiberian and Ashkenazi masoretic traditions. Nevertheless, these lists are not identical with respect to their names, citations of simanim, order, or scope, and offer a wide range of variant readings. This list appears three times in the Leningrad Codex alone, the reference text of the critical editions of the Masoretic text (BHS, BHQ, BHL),⁸ making it a great witness to the various possible appearances of the same *Okhla*-list within one Hebrew Bible codex. It is to be found in L in the Masorah at 2 Sam 16:18 as *masora magna* list **לוֹ יֵזַח כְּתָה לֹא וּקְרָב** “seventeen cases of *Ketiv* **לוֹ** and *Qere* **לוֹ**,” at Prov 26:2 as *masora magna* note **וְהַזְמָנָה כְּתָה לֹא וּקְרָב לוֹ וּסִימָן** “fifteen cases of *Ketiv* **לוֹ** and *Qere* **לוֹ**,” and at Ezra 4:2 as the *masora magna* note **וְהַזְמָנָה כְּתָה לֹא וּקְרָב לוֹ וּסִימָן** “fifteen cases of *Ketiv* **לוֹ** and *Qere* **לוֹ**”

6 Cf. Díaz Esteban, Fernando: *Sefer ‘Oklah Wě-’Oklah. Collection de listas de palabras destinadas a conservar la integridad del texto hebreo de la Biblia entre los Judíos de la edad media*. CSIC: Madrid 1975.

7 Cf. Frensdorff, Salomon: *Das Buch Ochlalh W’ochlah (Massora)*. Hahn’sche Hofbuchhandlung: Hannover 1864.

8 Cf. BHS. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (eds. Karl Elliger/Wilhelm Rudolph). Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft: Stuttgart 1967/77; BHQ. *Biblia Hebraica Quinta* (ed. Adrian Schenker). Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft: Stuttgart 2004–; BHL. *Biblia Hebraica Leningradensis* (ed. Aron Dotan). Hendrickson: Peabody, MA 2001.

(note the different writings of “fifteen”: חֲמֵצִים instead of חֲמַצִּים, as in *Okhla Halle*). While the two lists of Prov 26:2 and Ezra 4:2 count 15+2 cases and separate the two uncertain cases with the note: בְּ פָלוֹג, which is the short form of the masoretic phrase וְתַרְיִין פָּלוֹגָתָא עַלְיהָן “and twice different opinions” (which is the case in almost all witnessed lists of this type), the list in 2 Sam 16:18 includes the two uncertain cases of Isa 49:5 and 1 Chr 11:20 without including בְּ פָלוֹג as a qualifier and counts seventeen cases. These variant options for counting, citing, and naming lists within the Masorah of the same manuscript prove that different scribes had different sources for the list material at hand. But the different features of these three different lists in L are not easily accessible in BHS, because its “normalized” Masorah, which was edited by G. Weil,⁹ does not refer to the *Okhla*-lists consistently and diplomatically. Weil, in giving his *masora magna*, follows the list of 2 Sam 16:18 and, instead of offering three lists, provides only one, idiosyncratic ally joined version¹⁰ which intentionally changes the *Ketiv* cases into the supposed *Qere* readings, including the numbering and the exact wording of the *simanim*, but neglects the interesting case of the masoretic separator note בְּ פָלוֹג for the two lists of Prov 26:2 and Ezra 4:2. The list in Vat. 14 is therefore a valuable textual witness for a widely used *Okhla*-list type of *Ketiv/Qere* cases within the context of Western European Ashkenazi manuscript culture.

The third masoretic note within the figurative Masorah includes the upper part of the stairs and the balcony of the town gate. It consists of a rare masoretic annotation attached to the group of three lemmata in Exod 21:10: שָׂאָרָה כְּסֻוֹתָה עַזְבָּנָה “her food, her clothing, and her marital rights.” The masoretic note deals with the phenomenon of three verses which feature three consecutive lemmata written with Mappik in the *He-Suffix* and reads, in ebr. 14: ג' פְּסוּקִים בְּכָל חֶד וְחֶד ג' מְלִין בְּהָוּן מְפִיק ה' וְסִמְנִיהָן שָׁאָרָה כְּסֻוֹתָה וְעַזְבָּנָה. אֹז רָאָה וְסִיפְרָה הַכִּינָה וְגַם חֲקָרָה וְהַשְׁבָּתִי הַגָּה וְמוֹעָדָה וְשַׁבְּתָה. “three verses with three words each with Mappik in the He therein, and their references are: Exod 21:10, Hos 2:13, Job 28:27.” This masoretic note is not to be found in any

9 Cf. Weil, Gérard E.: *Masorah Gedolah: Iuxta Codicu, Leningradensem B 19a*. Pontificum Institutum Biblicum: Rome 1971.

10 Cf. Weil 1971, § 1795.

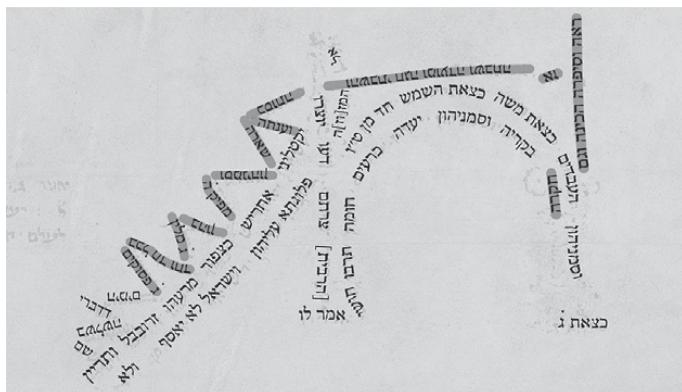


Fig. 4: Upper part of the stairs and the balcony: masoretic anocations to the lemmata, בְּשַׁתְּפָה קָסְוָתָה שָׁאָרָה. © BIMA: Biblical Masora Database

Oriental Hebrew Bible codex,¹¹ which only discuss the hapax readings of the lemmata, but miss the phenomenon of verses with “three words, consecutive, with Mappik-He therein.” Even the two recensions of the *Okhla we-Okhla* list compilations¹² overlook this phenomenon,¹³ although they include lists which specifically deal with Mappik-He issues. The few remaining witnesses of this rare masoretic annotation are Ashkenazi Bible codices like the so-called Regensburg Codex (MS Jerusalem IM 180_52),¹⁴ the “Yonah Pentateuch” (Pentateuch with Haphtarot, BL Add. 21160),¹⁵

11 Cf. MSS St. Petersburg Evr. I, B 19a; Aleppo Codex, Cairo Codex; BM Or. 4445.

12 *Okhla*-Paris, cf. Frensdorff 1864; *Okhla*-Halle, cf. Diaz-Esteban 1975; Ognibeni, Bruno: *La seconda parte del sefer 'oklah we 'oklah: Edizione del ms. Halle, Universitätsbibliothek Y v 4°, ff. 68–124*. Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas: Salamanca 1995.

13 Cf. the similar list of singular appearances of written *Mappik* in the *He-Suffix* in *Okhla*-Halle § 43.

14 Cf. Liss, Hanna: “Ein Pentateuch wie andere auch? Die Lese-Geheimnisse des Regensburger Pentateuch.” In: Focken, Friedrich-Emanuel/Ott, Michael R. (eds.): *Metatexte. Erzählungen von schrifttragenden Artefakten in der alttestamentlichen und mittelalterlichen Literatur*. (Materiale Textkulturen 15). De Gruyter: Berlin/Boston 2016, pp. 299–330.

15 Cf. Tahan, Ilana: *Hebrew Manuscripts: The Power of Script and Image*. British Library: London 2007.

or the “Duke of Sussex’s German Pentateuch” (Pentateuch with Haphtarot, BL Add. 15282),¹⁶ all of which are distinguished witnesses of the Franco-German Ashkenazi manuscript culture. All three codices witness this note in an almost identical way to MS Vat. ebr. 14. The *masora parva* notes of the “Yonah Pentateuch” and of the “Duke of Sussex’s German Pentateuch” are short but unequivocal: ג' פסוי דמי' מן ג', ג' פסוי כל מליהון מפקין respectively: “three verses each with three words with *Mappik* in the *He* therein,” while the “Regensburg Codex” includes, for the three lemmata in Exod 21:10, the more elaborate *masora parva* note: ג' מלין רצוף מפק' ה' ומש' אינ'י' ג' פסוי דמי' אית בהון “three similar verses, each with three words, consecutive, with *Mappik* *He* therein, realized throughout the scriptures.” All three notes refer to the same masoretic tradition as is witnessed in the figurative Masorah on folio 85v in Vat. ebr. 14.

But the “Regensburg Codex” alone preserves, in its *masora magna*, a unique variant of this masoretic note: ג' מלין רצוף מפק' ה' וכל: “three similar verses, each with three words, consecutive, with *Mappik* *He* therein, and each of them hapax,” thus joining the masoretic traditions of the three verses with three *Mappik* *He* lemmata to the hapax readings thereof. Additionally, the Masorah of the “Regensburg Codex” includes a different group of three lemmata with *Mappik* in *He* (Isa 5:14), and places the siman of Hos 2:13 into a masoretic appendix of the same note, denoting it as a similar group of four lemmata in one verse featuring *Mappik* in *He*: “�הן מן רצוף משושה חגה החדש ושבתה וחד מן ד' מלין רצוף משושה חגה החדש ושבתה” “and one (verse) with four words, consecutive, (with *Mappik* in the *He* therein) in Hos 2:13.”

The fact that this masoretic note is missing in all oriental manuscripts but was obviously part of the Franco-German Ashkenazi masoretic tradition, since it is consistently witnessed in many *masora magna* notes and especially owing to its artistic use as part of a figurative Masorah in MS Vat. ebr. 14, makes it a precious masoretic artifact. It tends to underline the already suggested possibility of a distinguished Franco-German Ashkenazi corpus of masoretic notes, one that not only supported local

16 Cf. Tahan 2007.

scribal conventions and reading traditions but guided the contemporary audiences of those codices to halakhic and midrashic issues.¹⁷ It is therefore unsurprising to find the three lemmata of the *masora magna* note regarding the group of three lemmata in Exod 21:10: הַנְּתָנָהּ וְעַלְמָהּ פֶּסְוָתָה אֲרָשָׁה in a different but prominent role in halakhic Midrashim like *Mekhilta on Exodus*, and in the Babylonian Talmud (*b. Keth* 47b) in an argument about pension-rights adjustments for Hebrew women who seek divorce: הַרְאָשָׁה “her sustenance” (referring to food); הַסְּפָכָה “her clothing” (literally her covering); and הַתְּמִינָה “her marital relations” (her physical intimacy). It should be considered that a certain corpus of masoretic notes, which appear in Franco-German Ashkenazi Bible manuscripts, belongs to a distinguished tradition which aimed to integrate the Masorah into the broader context and discourse of midrashic and halakhic interpretations according to contemporary and local Parshanut literature like the commentary of Rashi. It was Rashi who founded his lengthy comments on this verse on the base of the *Ketiv* reading אֲשֶׁר-לֹא יִעַשֶּׂה and elucidates the complex implications of the custom of נֵישָׂה (designation for marriage with underage maidservants) and any other forms of betrothal and their execution, since the marriage was not automatic, as the conditions show, but the lawful treatment of the maid servant was safeguarded (a way for poor Israelite families to provide a better life for a daughter).

There is one more hint for the Parshanut interpretation of Rashi within the figurative Masorah. In the upper part of the left doorpost, there is a hidden fourth *masora parva* note, which observes that the phrase אל-הַמְזֻוָּה in Exod 21:6 is unique in this configuration (אֶל-מְזֻוָּה). But the presumably redundant *siman* אל, without any masoretic content, functions here as an iconographic sign post. The המזווה within the figurative Masorah is not an additional masoretic note, but rather a Mezuza by itself, properly placed, as an iconographic item, at the door post. It reminds the

17 Cf. Liss, Hanna/Petzold, Kay Joe: “Die Erforschung der westeuropäischen Bibeltexttradition als Aufgabe der Jüdischen Studien.” In: Lehnardt, Andreas (ed.): *Judaistik im Wandel: Ein halbes Jahrhundert Forschung und Lehre über das Judentum in Deutschland*. De Gruyter: Berlin/Boston 2017, pp. 189–210.

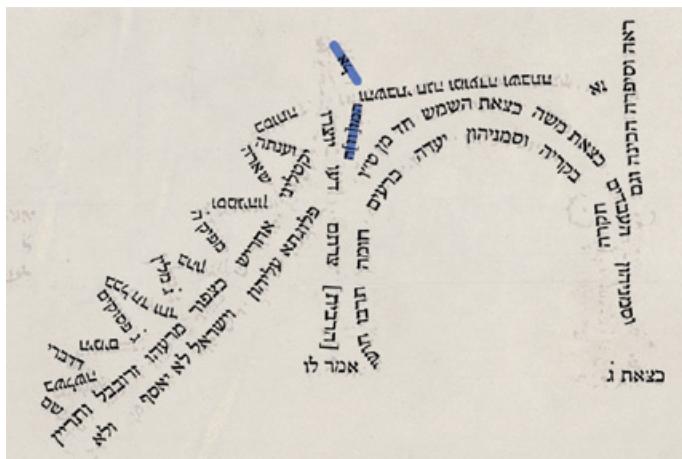


Fig. 5: Upper part of the left doorpost: האל המזווהה. © BIMA: Biblical Masora Database

contemporary reader to remember the related Rashi commentary of Exod 21:6, which deals extensively with the manumission laws and the special role of the human ear. Rashi comments:

Why were the door and the doorpost (Mezuza) singled out from all the fixtures in the house? Because the Holy One said: The door and the doorpost (Mezuza) were witnesses in Egypt when I passed over the lintel and the doorposts, and I said: 'For the children of Israel are slaves to Me; they are My slaves, but not slaves to other slaves. And this one who went and acquired for himself a master, (his ear) shall be bored before them' in public and at the doorpost.

And this is the place where the motif of the figurative Masorah and the iconographical item of the Mezuza attached to it come together. The *masora magna* shaped as a town gate works as a visual marker for the issue of the Hebrew slavery laws, and the Mezuza annotation within the *masora figurata* reminds the reader of the relating Rashi commentary. This complex pedagogic concept worked even for those contemporary readers who could not decipher the Masorah itself, but who knew the Rashi commentary by heart.

2 Rivka at the Well (Gen 24) – An *Okhla we-Okhla* List Repository, Midrash and bookmark into Rashi’s Commentary (Vat. ebr. 14, fol. 25r)

On folio 25r, the scribe of Vat. ebr. 14 offers a figurative Masorah which depicts a scene from the so-called Rivka at the well narrative of Gen 24. The text of the folio covers the verses Gen 24:30–43, which comprise the encounter of Eli’ezer with Laban and the “Rivka at the well” narrative as renarration in the version with Eli’ezer talking to Laban and Betuel. The figurative Masorah consists of two main elements: Rivka with a jar, and a shadoof well with pole and bucket.

The shadoof, which was a widely used irrigation tool in medieval Europe, consists of an alphabetical list “of words which are written with Yod but to be read with Waw” (אלפָא בַּיתָּא כְּתָא כְּתָא בְּמֵצֶע תִּבוֹתָה וְקָרֵין וּוְסִימְנֵיהֶן), as it may also be found in the *Okhla*-list Halle § 71. The list on folio 25r lacks two *simanim*, since the folio is damaged at the bottom. The list is linked to the lemma וַיִּשְׁם לְפָנָיו וַיִּשְׁמַם “(The food) was set before him to eat” of Gen 24:33. The *masora parva* note: קָרֵין וְיִשְׁמַם requires a different reading than the supposed *Ketiv* version of the masoretic text. The *Okhla*-list preserves a certain number of those readings and requires their reception. Due to its brevity, the list in Vat. ebr. 14 is not identical to the recensions of *Okhla* Halle or Paris. It appears that the scribe copied an alphabetically sorted list and chose only one representative reference for each letter. Since the margin was cut off, the list cannot be completely reconstructed, and some *simanim* remain defective or missing, such as the *simanim* for the letters Het, Nun, Samekh, Pe and Tzade (Dalet and Tet do not occur in the *Okhla*-list Paris § 80, either). Again, the figurative Masorah of Vat. ebr. 14 functioned as a list repository for exegetically relevant *Okhla*-list material, which is witnessed here in an artistic form.

The second element of the Masorah is a figure, supposed to be Rivka because of the context of the narrative. The upper part of Rivka bears a note, which is a repetition (or better yet, an extended citation) of the second siman of a *Masorah parva* note in the lower left corner of the folio. This note, which is linked to the verse Gen 24:42, discusses the five defective appearances of the lemma אַבָּא in the Scripture (וְאַבָּא הָיָה) and lists

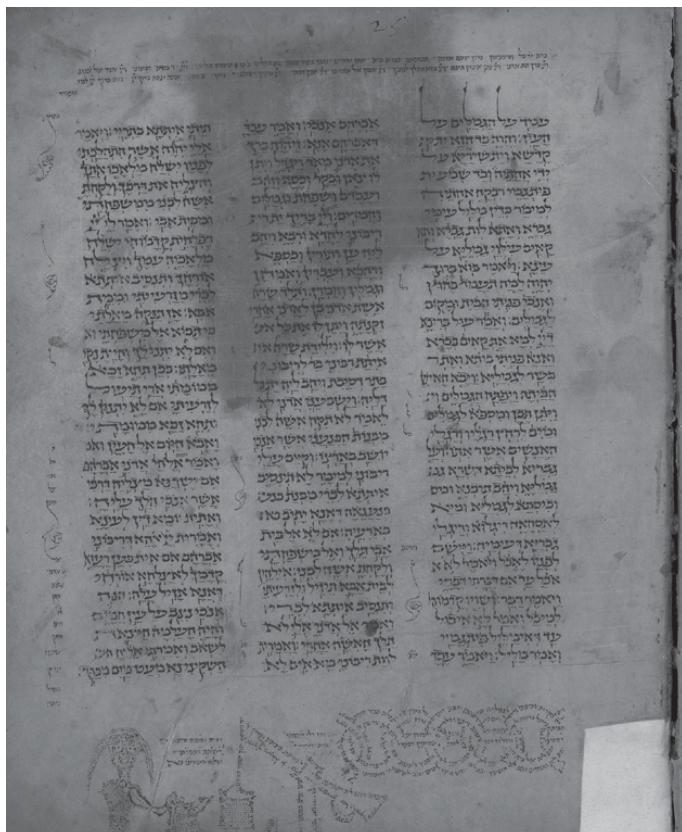


Fig. 6: Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, ebr. 14, fol. 25r

the five appearances of this phenomenon. The scribe makes intentional use of the second siman and places the phrase: **עד אשר אבא אל אדני שעירה** “(...) until I come to my lord in Seir” of Gen 33:14 in the left side of the figure of Rivka. This “para-masoretic” feature extends the interpretative horizon to include the time when Rivka has become the ancestress of Israel, and Jacob’s family has just obtained reconciliation with Esav on their way to the land of Seir. The phrase of Gen 33:14 on Rivka’s body is the visual marker leading into Rashi’s commentary. The text box beside Rivka, which is part of the figurative Masorah

זהה הנערה היצאת לשאוב ואמרתי א לליה השקיני א נא “Let the maid who comes out to draw water (...),” but intentionally changes the Hebrew form for maiden. While the Masoretic text ad locum reads **העלמה**, the text box reads **הנערה**. This intentional switch from **העלמה** to **הנערה** marks the starting point of Rashi’s discussion of Rivka’s virginity and his theory of the three-year-old Rivka at her wedding. Rashi comments on Gen 25:20, “And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rivka,” with a detailed calculation of the age of Rivka. But the prerequisite of Rashi’s calculation was the assumption that Abraham’s return from Moriah (Gen 22:20) and Sarah’s death in the very next verse (Gen 23:1) happened in the same year. That is exactly what the scribe and his contemporary audience knew from *Genesis Rabbah* (58:5). Sarah died in the very same year of the Aqedah, and Rivka was a child of three years at her wedding with Isaac. All this was brought to mind once again for the audience of MS Vat. ebr. 14 by the arrangement and shape of Rivka at the well in the figurative Masorah of MS Vat. ebr. 14. Yet again, a figurative Masorah functions as a repository for lengthy and remote *Okhla* lists, and as a bookmark for and visual reminder of the major perceptions of the Midrash and the exegetical interpretation according to Rashi’s commentary.

3 Rashi’s Numeri Map (Num 34): Masorah as Diagrammatical Citation of Rashi’s *Peshat*

The importance and impact of the Parshanut literature, and here especially of the Pentateuch commentary of Rashi, must not be underestimated. The Masorah of manuscript Cod. Parma 3289 (Catalogue de Rossi 265), an Ashkenazi liturgical Pentateuch with Targum and Megillot, offers a figurative micrography on folio 243r which is shaped in the well-known silhouette of the “Numeri maps” of the Rashi commentary, which depict a map of *Eretz Israel*. Those maps were illustrations of Rashi’s elucidations on the landmarks of the borders of *Eretz Israel*, which are described in Num 34, and within which a certain number of the 613 biblical *mitzvot* (מצוות), applying to cultic matters in *Eretz Israel*, were valid. These maps are witnessed in various artistic forms and drawings in many manuscripts

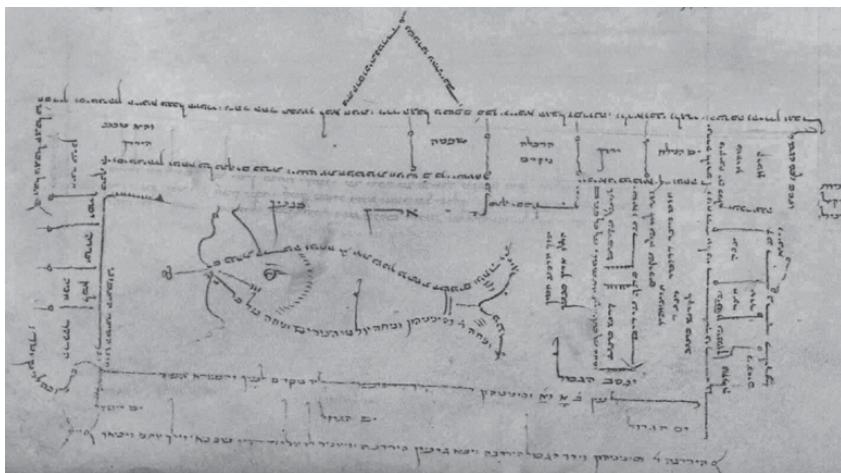


Fig. 7: Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, Cod. Parm. 3289, fol. 243r

of the Rashi commentary of the thirteenth century¹⁸ and appear in almost identical shape and with similar inventory.¹⁹ The figurative Masorah of folio 234r in Cod. Parma 3289 consists of both *masora magna* notes to the lemmata and מהה מגביל, על-כתח'ן, ליען, הירדנה, the in verse Num 34:11 and a topographical inventory of the Rashi maps. The Masorah is in situ, since the masoretic notes refer to lemmata which appear with *masora parva* notes on folio 243r. However, the figurative Masorah cites the silhouette and parts of the inventory of the well-known Rashi maps to place the *masora magna* notes along the silhouette of *Eretz Israel* (Canaan), which is attested in the map with the title: ארץ כנען. The various Rashi maps in the manuscripts are drawn as ancient maps of *Eretz Israel*, which are justified with an eastern direction. The rectangular shape of the northern border and the two long borders of East and West form an east-bound grid, which parallels the coastline of the Mediterranean in the bottom and to the Jordan valley in the top line.

18 Cf. MSS Munich, Cod. hebr. 5,1; Oxford, Bodl. Opp. 34; Leipzig, UB fol. 1; Weimar, Q 651/652; Paris, BnF hébr. 154.

19 Cf. Petzold 2017.

The first two instances of the figurative Masorah refer to the lemmata **לעין** and **לעין הירדן** in verses Num 34:11 and 12 and form, as a double line, the western border of the map, abutting the Mediterranean Sea (ימ הגדול). The *masora magna* for the lemma **לעין** in Num 34:11 notes the two different appearances of the lemma and says: **לעין ב א וסימניון הרבלה מקדם** “the form **לעין** twice, once with Qametz and once with Pataḥ, and their references are: Num 34:11 and Ezek 12:12.” This is almost consistent with the *Masorah magna* notes of other manuscripts, since the *masora magna* of L reads, **ad locum**, **ב חד** “the form **לעין** twice in two readings, once with Pataḥ and once with Qamatz, and their references are: Num 34:11 and Ezek 12:12.”²⁰ Both masoretic notes feature interesting mistakes made by the scribes. The *masora magna* of L reads, for the *siman* of Num 34, the phrase: **מקום לעין** instead of **לעין**; and the *masora magna* of Cod. Parma 3289 reads the phrase: **והנשיא אשר בתוכם לمعן אשר** as *siman* of Ezek 12:12, and, by including the phrase: **למען אשר**, offers an erroneous citation of: **לעין הוא** instead of: **לעין והוא** in the same verse. The last case is remarkable, since the standard Tiberian texts do indeed read, **ad locum**, **ב עשר**, but requires with the LXX reading ὅπως (and Syriaca) the reading **למען אשר**, which would coincide with the anticipated but erroneous reading **למען אשר** of the *Masorah* (because the verse Ezek 12:12 would then offer two forms of **למען** with Pataḥ). The *masora magna* for the lemma **הירדן** forms the outer western border and notes the four appearances of the lemma, saying: **הירדן ב סימניון ויורד הגבול הירדן. ויבא גדען הירדן. ויאמר לו אליו שב נא. וילך אתם ויבאו** “the form **הירדן** appears four times, and their references are: Num 34:12; Judg 8:4; 2 Kgs 2:6 and 6:4.”²¹

The third masoretic instance is more complex, since it forms parts of the northern border on the left side and major parts of the eastern border at the top of the map in two lines. This *masora magna* note of the phrase: **על-**
כתר- in Num 34:11 reads, as part of the northern border, **על כתר ה** “the combination **על** **כתר** appears five times,” and continues along the inner fence lines of the eastern border with the five (respectively, six) *simanim* for the form: **סימניון ומה על כתר ים כנרת. ויעש את המכונות חמש על-**
כתר-, reading: **על-****כתר-**

20 Cf. Weil 1971, § 2815.

21 Cf. Weil 1971, § 1441.

בָּ בָו. ישאו. על כתף יסבלחו. ויביאני במבוא. ישאו על כתף עירם [על-כטף] are: Num 34:11; 1 Kgs 7:39 and twice therein; Isa 46:7; Ezek 46:19; Isa 30:6.”²² The scribe here erroneously introduced an additional sixth *siman* for the form *על-כטף* in Isa 46:7, which does not belong to this Masorah, and attached the correct *siman* for Isa 30:6 at the end, forming the inner fence line of the northern border. The outer, long fence line of the eastern border consists of the *masora magna* note referring to the lemma *הַגְּבֵלָה* in Num 34:11, which is written plene in L and in Cod. Parma 3289, but which is considered defective according to the Masorah (Mp-note reads, ad loc.: חֲלֹת חֲלֹת). The *masora magna* reads: *הַכָּל מֶגְבֵּל הַגְּבֵל שְׁחִסְרִין וּסִימְנִיהוּן*. היצא מגבל האמרי. מהר ההר תtau לא בא המת. וירד הגבל משפט בָּ בָו. ויצא הגבל זרונה. “ולראובני ולגדי. והעbara והירדן וגביל. בית הרם ובית נמרה. נשמדנו מהתיציב defective nine times, and their references are: Num 21:13; Num 34:8; Num 34:11 and twice therein; Deut 3:16 and 3:17; Josh 13:27; 2 Sam 21:5.” This long masoretic note is interesting, since it reads contra textum in most places and has only very few equivalent lists or annotation in other manuscripts so far. The normalized Masorah of BHS is not a strong witness for this tradition, since only the lemma in Num 21:13 has the Mp-note חֲלֹת (contra textum), and the *Obertext* of the Tiberian manuscripts reads most of the listed lemmata with plene writing. Only Ashkenazi manuscripts like Jerusalem IM 180_52 (“Regensburg Pentateuch”) or BM Add. 21160 (“Yonah Pentateuch”) witness a consistent defective writing of the listed lemmata and a persistent masoretic annotation for each of the lemmata with the Mp-note חֲלֹת, and secure this masoretic tradition for at least the European manuscript culture.

The fourth masoretic instance marks the more complex shape of the southern border, which is different from the rectangular scheme of the three other borders. The southern border of *Eretz Israel* was in many ways uncertain, since it meandered (ונסוב הגבוי). The topographical markers of Rashi’s inventory traced its main course by using biblical toponyms, and draw it ranging from the southern edge of the Dead Sea (מִצָּה יִם-הַמִּלְחָה), south of Kadesh Barne'a (חוֹצָאתְיו מִגְבֵּן לְקָדֵשׁ בְּרֵנָע), towards Atzman (מִקְדָּשׁ בְּרֵנָע עד עַצְמָוֹן), and south-bound to the Nile river (וּמְשֻׁם לְצַד הַדָּרוֹם וּבָא לוּ)

22 Cf. Weil 1971, § 1033.

(לנהל מצרים), which was erroneously identified by Rashi with the brook of Egypt.²³ The masoretic notes, which were used by the scribe to mark the two rectangular fence lines in contrast with the meandering topographical inventories, consist of three notes referring to lemmata in Num 34:8, 9, and 11. The inner line initially consists of the *masora magna* note צדקה ל of Num 34:8, which cites a toponym of the northern border and says “the form צדקה is unique.” This uniqueness of the lemma צדקה is doubtful and contradicts other texts like L, which in fact does witness, ad locum, the same *masora parva* note, but notes in Ezek 47:15 צדקה ב “the form צדקה twice.” This ambivalence of the masoretic annotation is yet another example of the contamination and mixed state of the Masorah in a certain period, when the Tiberian material of full Bible codices was mixed with Ashkenazi material from liturgical Pentateuch codices. Both notes are correct within their context: the *masora magna* note צדקה ל of Num 34:8 is correct for the Pentateuch with Megillot, and the *masora parva* note of Ezek 47:15 צדקה ב “the form twice,” which was amended into the normalized Masorah of L in BHS, is correct for a full Hebrew Bible. The second *masora magna* note for the inner line begins with the Masorah referring to the lemma ומחה in Num 34:11, which is continued completely within the “fish” in the middle of the map. The “fish” symbolizes Lake Galilee (ים כנרת), a toponym that is missing among Rashi’s inventory of the Eastern border here in that map. The Masorah in the “fish” reads ומחה ר סימניון ומחה אל מי המרים ומחה על כתף ים כנרת קדמה ומחה יי את שמו מתחת השמיים ומחה יי “the form appears four times, and their references are: Num 5:23, Num 34:11, Deut 29:19, and Isa 25:8.” The outer fence line of the southern border consists of the short *masora parva* note זפרנה לית “the form זפרנה is unique,” referring to Num 34:9.

4 Conclusion

The three figurative Masorot described above – (a) the Town Gate of Exod 21 in the lower margin of folio 85v, (b) the so-called Rivka at the well narrative of Gen 24 on folio 25r, both of MS Vat. ebr. 14, and (c) the “Canaan Map” of Rashi’s Numeri commentary on folio 243r of the MS

23 Cf. Petzold 2017.

Cod. Parma 3289 – offer a unique ensemble of different, yet similar figurative Masorot from the Ashkenazi manuscript culture of medieval Western Europe. The Masorot represent not only the Ashkenazi reading tradition (often contrasting with the Tiberian tradition), but make use of the *masora magna* to feature an additional exegetical aspect. The Town Gate of Exod 20 resembles, among other notes, an *Okhla*-list (*Okhla* Halle § 88) with important reading variants of the neglected *Ketiv/Qere* tradition of the Masoretic text. The “Rivka at the well” narrative of Gen 24 reminds the audience of the exegetical importance of the Midrash and of Rashi’s commentary by combining Masorah with contemporary Parshanut literature. The masoretic “*Eretz Israel* map” of Num 34 is not only an important iconographical and diagrammatical citation of the content and shape of well-known Rashi commentary within the *masora magna*, but a strong evidence of the contemporary reception of Rashi and the mixed use of figurative Masorah to implement Parshanut into the Masorah. All three examples deal with the important issue of contamination and stabilization of the masoretic tradition, show the diverse and complex developmental process of the appearance of Ashkenazi manuscript culture, and disprove the assumption of a unique and coherent Masorah within the various full Hebrew Bibles and liturgical Pentateuch codices.²⁴

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24 Cf. Petzold 2019.

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