On Some Variants in Ashkenazic Biblical Manuscripts from the 12th and 13th Centuries

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Cover image: Detail from a bilingual Latin-Punic inscription at the theatre at Lepcis Magna, IRT 321 (accessed from https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Inscription_Theatre_Leptis_Magna_Libya.JPG). Leaf of a Syriac prayer book with Western vocalisation signs (source: Wikimedia Commons). Leaf of an Abbasid-era Qurʾān (vv. 64.11–12) with red, yellow, and green vocalisation dots (source: Wikimedia Commons). Genizah fragment of the Hebrew Bible (Gen. 11–12, Cambridge University Library T-S A1.56; courtesy of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library). Genizah fragment of a Karaite transcription of the Hebrew Bible in Arabic script (Num. 14.22–24, 40–42, Cambridge University Library T-S Ar. 52.242; courtesy of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library). Greek transcription of the Hebrew for Ps. 22.2a in Matt. 27.46 as found in Codex Bezae (fol. 99v; courtesy of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library).

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ON SOME VARIANTS IN ASHKENAZIC BIBLICAL MANUSCRIPTS FROM THE TWELFTH AND THIRTEENTH CENTURIES

Élodie Attia[*]

À Philippe Cassuto, trop tôt disparu.

1.0. Comparative Study between Oriental, Sephardic and Ashkenazic Manuscripts

In 1977, Frederico Pérez Castro published a detailed article entitled "Códices bíblicos hebreos. Evaluación comparativa de varios manuscritos toledanos, askenazíes y orientales," which focused on variants in medieval biblical manuscripts. The article aimed to "determine in a systematic way the quality of Sephardic manuscripts produced in the scriptoria of Toledo" (Pérez Castro 1977,

[*] Aix Marseille Univ, CNRS, TDMAM, Aix-en-Provence, France. This article was produced within the framework of the ANR Project *Manuscripta Bibliae Hebraicae* (N° ANR-16-ACHN-0008-01) at Aix-Marseille University, CNRS, TDMAM, Aix-en-Provence, France. I wish to thank my colleagues for the discussions around these results at the Vocalisation Workshop at the University of Cambridge (held in May 2017) and also at the Research Seminar on Semitic Linguistics held at the IREMAM, Aix-Marseille University (MMSH, October 2017).

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107). It sought to determine how close the late medieval Sephardic tradition was to the so-called 'Ben Asher tradition' or 'Tiberian Masoretic tradition'.[1]

Pérez Castro's study compared Sephardic manuscripts with early Tiberian manuscripts following the Ben Asher tradition and Ashkenazic manuscripts in order to identify differences between them. For that purpose, seven manuscripts were collated. First of all, a group of oriental Ben Asher (standard Tiberian Masoretic tradition) manuscripts, including:

a) the Leningrad Codex (MS St. Petersburg, National Library of Russia, I Firkovitch Evr. I B 19a, henceforth L) as the central comparative source,[2] dated 1008/1009, the most complete early Masoretic manuscript of the Hebrew Bible;[3]

b) the manuscript London, British Library, Or. 4445 (henceforth O), a Pentateuch the dating of which is still debated—the script has been attributed to ninth–tenth-century Persia;[4] some scholars agree with C. D. Ginsburg that the consonantal text could predate the tenth century, while its Masorah could have been made at the time of Aharon ben

[1] See Dotan (1977); Golinets (2012, 589); Khan (2013).

[2] On the manuscript, see Beit-Arié, Sirat, and Glatzer (1997, 114–31). Some editions, such as the Hebrew University Bible Project, take the Aleppo Codex as referent for the Standard Tiberian tradition. On the HUBP see Segal (2013) and on editions of the Hebrew Bible, see Lange and Tov (2016, 113, n. 4).

[3] Beit-Arié, Sirat and Glatzer (1997, i).

[4] Dotan (1993).

Asher (who is mentioned as still living in some Masoretic annotations);

c) the Cairo Codex of the Prophets, dated to 894/895 (henceforth C).[5]

As far as the non-oriental manuscripts analysed are concerned, the Sephardic manuscripts included in the case study are:

d) the M1 Complutensian of Madrid, with the estimated date 1280, from the Toledo school,[6] the basis of the Complutensian Bible of 1520;[7]

e) the JTS 44a Hilleli Codex (a Spanish codex supposed to have been copied from a lost codex of the seventh century called Codex Hilleli), dated 1241.[8]

The Ashkenazic area is represented by:

f) MSS Paris, BnF, hébreu 1–3, dated 1289–end of the thirteenth century, Germano-Ashkenazic script;[9] and

g) G-I-1 from the Escorial, dated 1306, probably not copied in Chersin, according to Pérez Castro, but in Flavignac, which is geographically near the present day *lieu-dit* Les Cars, in

[5] Beit-Arié, Sirat, and Glatzer (1997, MS 1, 25–39).

[6] See Del Barco (2003, MS 1). Its origin from Castilla may be doubtful according to Javier del Barco (private correspondence, 15 January 2014).

[7] Fernández Tejero (1976).

[8] Ortega Monasterio and Fernández Tejero (2005).

[9] Del Barco (2011, 20–27).

Western France. This is corroborated by the Franco-Ashkenazic type of square script used by the scribe.[10]

Although the reasons for Pérez Castro's choice of Oriental and Sephardic manuscripts are clear (famous standard Tiberian codices or codices used for sixteenth-century editions), in the case of the Ashkenazic sources chosen there are regrettably no easy explanations: dating from the end of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth century, the two items were not the earliest, but may have simply been available for research as microfilms.

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[10] An alphabetical Masorah written in fols. 380v–387r gives the Colophon of the MS Escorial G-I-1 and mentions the name of place. The Sfardata Database (Description Key 0S014) mentions " פילאוינק היושבת במדינ<ת> קיארצין [Flavignac?]" Flavignac is indeed located near Limoges in Haute-Vienne (Aquitaine, France). In support of this interpretation, the parish of Flavignac includes a smaller *lieu-dit* called 'Les Cars' three km from the village of Flavignac. I personally read במדינת קיארצין as 'in Carsins' village' (i.e., the inhabitants of the place nowadays called 'Les Cars', a name in a plural form that justifies the plural in Hebrew). Javier del Barco, in his catalogue (Del Barco del Barco 2003, 140), suggests a reading which fails to persuade us (בילאוינק קיארצין). Pérez Castro (1975, 109) suggested "escrito en Pilawoinaq, de la provincia de Chersin," which would lead us to think of a Ukrainian region (Cherson) proposed by our colleague Viktor Golinets. But the French type of script visible from the samples available in Sfardata does not confirm Pérez Castro's hypothesis. A verification will be made and the result set up in an online description of this manuscripts on the MBH Project Database, see https://www.mbhproject.org/).

Pérez Castro's article gathered 826 lemmas by comparing ten verses from each biblical book in L with the other manuscripts. The results of this investigation showed, in the case of the Sephardic items, "a greater closeness to the Ben Asher tradition, [whilst] the Ashkenazic manuscripts *are far removed* ('se alejan muchissimo') from the Ben Asher model (here represented by L, O and C)" (Pérez Castro 1977, 160).

The conclusion of the article leads to the idea that Sephardic manuscripts are very close to the Ben Asher standard tradition, a point commonly shared nowadays, as it was already claimed in the thirteenth century by some Ashkenazic grammarians, such as Yequtiʾel ha-Naqdan in his *ʿEn ha-Qore*.[11] Although the method employed in the article (comparing variants) is beyond reproach, the question of the treatment of the Ashkenazic manuscripts must be reassessed by taking into account the following facts:

a) Tiberian codices already vary among themselves—the best example is that, according to Pérez Castro's data, the Cairo Codex of the Prophets itself varies to almost the same extent as G-I-1 (one of the two selected Ashkenazic manuscripts) when both sets are compared to L (Pérez Castro, 1977, 159).

b) The unexplained choice of Ashkenazic manuscripts implies (without explicitly saying so) that MSS Paris 1–3 reflect the

[11] See Yarkoni's (1965) PhD dissertation and Yarkoni (1993). I thank Samuel Blapp for having brought these references to my attention.

Palestino-Tiberian vocalization system or the so-called 'extended Tiberian' vocalization system.[12] This system, described by Dotan as a nonconventional Tiberian system, requires further study, as it seems to exist in many variations across Ashkenazic Bible manuscripts. MSS Paris 1–3 and G-I-I should not be taken as standard models for this cultural area and for general conclusions, but only as samples for preliminary conclusions.[13]

c) Other systematically analysed Ashkenazic manuscripts may lead to a reappraisal according to which non-Sephardic manuscripts are seen not just as philologically deviant from the standard tradition or as products of ignorance, as claimed by certain grammarians,[14] but rather as being what they are: historical artefacts that reflect a different chain of post-Masoretic transmission of the Hebrew biblical text in Europe. Historically, these manuscripts have been used by Jews in European communities, copied with care from the exemplars on hand.[15]

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[12] Golinets (2012, 596); for the background see Khan (2017).

[13] As there were no systematic studies of the Ashkenazic Bibles, Pérez Castro, of course, had no choice but to take samples. The ANR MBH project (2016–2020) will provide new data on this corpus of Ashkenazic biblical manuscripts.

[14] Yequtiʾel ha-Naqdan refers to this according to Yarkoni (1965, II:x).

[15] See, for instance, fol. 256r in MS Vat. Ebr. 14 (on which, see below), where Elijah ha-Naqdan mentions the reading found במסורת ישן נושן מוגה 'in an old *masoret*, old corrected examplar (?)'; cf. Attia (2015, 109–111, 125).

2.0. Comparing Tiberian Standard Manuscripts with Ashkenazic Manuscripts

Between 2011 and 2014, within the framework of a project at Heidelberg University,[16] I prepared an edition of micrographic Masoretic notes appearing in MS Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Ebr. 14.[17] This manuscript is a Norman-Ashkenazic Bible that contains only the Pentateuch, the Five *Megillot* and the *Haftarot* (extracts of the Prophets). This codex was produced in Normandy in 1239 by a scribe named Elijah ha-Naqdan.[18] I will not discuss here the point of editing figurative Masorah—an enterprise considered non-philological *per se* by many scholars—but rather focus on a new question: *How do the earliest Ashkenazic manuscripts correspond to the Tiberian Masoretic text?*

The present analysis is not structured in exactly the same way as that of Pérez Castro, but some parallels can be drawn. The basis of this new analysis is the Ashkenazic Bible MS Vat. Ebr. 14 mentioned above. This manuscript preserves 63 folios of figurative Masorah, namely, drawings and figures made up of text (see illustration below). In this case study I have chosen to focus on thirteen folios from Exodus. In each folio (which do not always

[16] SFB 933 Materialen Text-Kulturen, Subproject B4, with Prof. H. Liss (HFJS), Kay Petzold, Sebastian Seeman.

[17] See Attia (2015).

[18] See Attia (2015, Appendix 2, Codicological and Palaeographical Description of MS Vat. Ebr. 14, 119–30) and also in the MBH Database.

present continuous text), the lemmas of words that are the subject of a *masora parva* (MP) or a *masora magna* (MM) are edited. For each lemma, MP variants and MM variants are recorded.

The lemmas of MS Vat. Ebr. 14 have been compared with those of seven other manuscripts divided into two groups: a group of four standard Tiberian manuscripts and a group of three of the earliest Ashkenazic manuscripts. The standard Tiberian group of Hebrew biblical manuscripts include here:

(i) The so called 'Leningrad Codex', i.e., the MS Saint Petersburg, National Library of Russia, I Firkovitch, B19a (henceforth L).

(ii) The MS London, British Library, Or. 4445 (henceforth O)

(iii) The so called 'M1', i.e. the MS Madrid, Complutense University Library 118-Z-42 [M1], (henceforth M), a thirteenth-century Sefardic Bible.

(iv) The so called 'Damascus Pentateuch', i.e., the MS Jerusalem, National Library of Israel, 24˚5702, (henceforth D). This is a Pentateuch dated to the tenth century, with some notes vocalized and accented according to the Babylonian system.

The 'Aleppo Codex' has not been chosen, because it does not include Exodus.[19]

The corpus of Ashkenazic manuscripts is composed of some of the earliest dated Ashkenazic Bibles (unlike the corpus of Pérez Castro), namely:

[19] http://www.aleppocodex.org/newsite/index.html

(i) MS London, Valmadonna Trust 1 (henceforth V). This is the earliest dated Ashkenazic Bible, 1189, only 180 years older than L.

(ii) MS Berlin, Statsbibliothek zu Berlin, Or. Qu. 9, 1233 (henceforth B). This was written by Elijah ha-Naqdan in a very small format, with Masoretic notes in a MM presented in an abbreviated manner. It appears to be a miniaturization of Vat. Ebr. 14.[20]

(iii) MS Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Ebr. 482 (henceforth R). This is one of the famous 'La Rochelle Bibles', copied in La Rochelle on the Atlantic coast, probably in 1216. The Prophets and the Hagiographs were copied by the same scribe who wrote the MS Vatican, Vat. Ebr. 468 (La Rochelle, 1215). It is a complete Bible, with Targum in the margins of the Pentateuch.[21]

Due to the large number of variations in the use of *rafe* between the manuscripts considered here, as well as some practical and technical editorial problems, it has been decided to mark *rafe* in the lemma when it appears in the lemma, but not to record variant uses of the *rafe*.

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[20] See Attia (2015, Appendix 3, Codicological and Palaeographical Description of MS Berlin Or. Qu. 9, 131–37).

[21] A new paleographical analysis of Vat. Ebr. 482 is in preparation, based on the software *Graphoskop*, examining the possibility that this manuscript is the product of two different scribes.

Following this procedure, in the thirteen folios studied in my monograph *The Masorah of Elijah ha Naqdan* (2015), 162 lemmas were found having a MP and/or MM. These present seventy variants. In the table below, I have applied the classification devised by Pérez Castro to my own list of variants.

Folio in Attia (2015)	**No. of lemmas with MP and/or MM**	**Variants in lemma, MP, and/or MM**	**Variants in consonantal form, *plene* vs. defective spellings, *ketiv-qere***
1	14	8	1
2	17	10	1
3	7	2	0
4	12	6	3
5	14	8	2
6	17	4	1
7	11	6	0
8	5	2	0
9	13	5	0
10	17	5	0
11	17	6	0
12	10	6	0
13	8	2	0
TOTAL	**162**	**70**	**8**

Based on this procedure, the distribution of variants is similar to the one in Pérez Castro's study (see table below). These include:

(i) a few variants in terms of consonantal form, *plene* versus defective spelling, and *ketiv-qere*;

(ii) some vowel interchanges, including, as in Pérez Castro's study, the replacement of *shureq* with *qibbuṣ* and *pataḥ* with *qameṣ*;

(iii) many variants concerning accents;

(iv) variations in the marking of *gaʿya*.

Folio in Attia (2015)	**Variants in vocalisation**	**Variants in accents, *dagesh*, *rafe***	**Variants in *gaʿya***
1	2	4	2
2	2	6	2
3	0	2	0
4	2	3	0
5	2	3	1
6	0	3	0
7	0	4	2
8	1	0	2
9	0	3	2
10	0	5	0
11	1	4	1
12	1	4	1
13	2	0	0
TOTAL (67*)	**13**	**41**	**13**

* Three variants cannot be classified according to these categories.

3.0. SELECT EXAMPLES

Key to table

| Separator between variants
= This case in Vat14 is the same in X
~ This case in Vat14 appears as variant in X

< This case in Vat14 is not found in X

// ‘corresponding to’

3.1. Variants in Consonantal Form, *Plene* versus Defective Spelling, and *Ketiv-Qere*

	MS Vat. Ebr. 14	Apparatus reproduced from Attia (2015)
1	וַיָּ֫וֹשֶׂם Gen. 50.26 Different spelling and a *ketiv-qere* MP ויישם ק shared only by Vat14, V and B,[22] matching Tiberian codices וַיָּ֫וֹשֶׂם.	וַיָּ֫וֹשֶׂם] = V (but without *dagesh*) B | ~ O D L R M וַיָּ֫שֶׂם MP וַיָּ֫וֹשֶׂם] = V B | ~ L ל ומל | D M R ל | < O
2	עָלֵ֫יהֶם Exod. 5.14 Defective spelling only in Vat14; *plene* spelling in Ashk. mss V and B but B does not have a disjunctive accent.	עָלֵ֫יהֶם] = O D L M R ~ V B (without *zaqef qaṭan*) עֲלֵיהֶם
3	וְעַל־הַמַּשְׁקוֹף Exod. 12.7 Defective spelling in B (unique)	וְעַל־הַמַּשְׁקוֹף] = O D L V R | ~ B וְעַל־הַמַּשְׁקֹף

[22] Additional research on this form in other manuscripts shows that in the MS St John’s College, Cambridge, MS A1, the reading in this precise passage follows Vat14, B and V.

4	הַשְּׁבִּעִי Exod. 12.15 *Plene* spelling in B (unique)	הַשְּׁבִּעִי] = O D L R V(with graphic sign in the waw) | ~ B הַשְּׁבִּיעִי
5	בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן Exod. 12.16 Specific accents in Vat14; V displays a defective spelling.	בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן] ~ O D L R B וּבַיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן | ~ V וּבַיּוֹם הָרִאשׁן
6	הוֹצִיאֵךְ Exod. 13.09 *Plene* spelling unique to Vat14, not relevant to Ashk. MSS.	הוֹצִיאֵךְ] ~ B הוֹצִיאֵךְ | O D L V R הוֹצֵאךְ
7	וְבָאֲךָ Exod. 13.11 Different spelling and a *ketiv-qere*, with *waw* instead of *yod* (both lemma and Masoretic notes shared by V/B).	וְבָאֲךָ] = V B ~ O D L R יְבָאֲךָ
8	Exod. 20.25 וַתְּחַלְלֶיהָ *Plene* spelling with *yod* with *dagesh* in Vat14/B. The MP of this lemma in Vat14 notes ל וחס׳ (a *casus lêt* and defective spelling), and this Masoretic note follows the Tiberian codices.	וַתְּחַלְלֶיהָ] = B | ~ O D L V R וּתְחַלְלָהּ

3.2. Vowels

3.2.1. *Shureq/qibbuṣ* Interchange

9	חֲגֹרִים Exod. 12.11 In B *qibbuṣ* (short) replaced by a *shureq* (long).	חֲגֹרִים] = V | ~ O D L R חֲגֹרִים | ~ B חֲגוּרִים

10	עַמּוּדֵיהֶם Exod. 38.12 In B, from the same scribe, *qibbuṣ* in B against *shureq* in Vat14.	עַמּוּדֵיהֶם] = O L M D | ~ V עַמְּדֵיהֶם | ~ B
11	וְשָׁבוּ Exod. 32.27 *Qibbuṣ* only in Vat14, otherwise *shuruq*	וְשָׁבוּ] ~ O D L M V R B וְשׁוּבוּ

3.2.2. *Pataḥ/qameṣ* Interchange

12	לָמָּה תַּעֲשֶׂה Exod. 5.15 In V *pataḥ* is omitted in error.	לָמָּה תַּעֲשֶׂה] = O D L M R B < V לָמָּה תעשׂה־
13	נִתָּן Exod. 5.16 *Qameṣ* in a closed accented syllable; in B *pataḥ* instead of *qameṣ*	[1] נִתָּן] = O D L M V R ~ B נִתַּן
14	נָחֶם Exod. 13.17 Distinctive feature of B (*pataḥ* instead of *qameṣ*), *munaḥ* replaced by *merkha*.	נָחֶם] = O D L V R | ~ B נָחֵם
15	עֶנְךָ Exod. 40.38 *Pataḥ* in the lemma (this form is indicated in an additional MP note in Vat14 as one of four exceptions in the Pentateuch); replaced in B by *qameṣ* without an accent sign.	עֶנְךָ] = O D L M V R ~ B עָנָן

3.2.3. Other Cases

16	הָרִאשֹׁ*ו*ן Exod. 12.15 Problematic spelling: graphic signs in V14, L and V. R is defective.	הָרִאשֹׁ*ו*ן] = L(erased *waw*) V(graphic sign in the *waw*) | O D R הָרִאשֹׁן | < B הָרִאשׁוֹן
17	וְכָל Exod. 13.13 Vowel *qameṣ qaṭan* in Ashkenazic MSS // *ḥolem haser* in Tiberian MSS.	וְכָל] = V B | ~ O L ... וְכֹל D... וְכֹל
18	לְאֵפֹדׇ Exod. 35.9 In Tiberian manuscripts *plene* spelling; in Anglo-Norman manuscripts (Vat14, V, B and others[23]) defective spelling (*ḥolem haser*) with an accompanying Masorah note. Vat14's MP and MM figurata refer to three defective cases, while there is a lack of agreement with the m*asorah* of Tiberian codices, which mentions three cases, two *plene* and one defective.	לְאֵפֹדׇ] = V B ~ O D L M R לְאֵפוֹד MP on לְאֵפֹדׇ] ~ D ג׳ | L M V R ג׳ ב׳ מל׳ וחד חס | < O B MM on לְאֵפֹדׇ] M (see p. 144) < O D L V B R

[23] This lemma in Vat14 is indeed three times defective: Exod. 25.7; 35.9, 27. The same is true in V and B, and also in the Ashkenazic manuscript MS. BL Or. 4227 (dated to 1300). In V the lemma follows the Anglo-Norman group, but its MP (ג׳ ב׳ מל׳ וחד חס) refers to the Tiberian codices O, D, L and R (where only Exod. 25.7 is defective). See Attia (2015, 101 on לְאֵפֹדׇ Exod. 35.9).

19	קָרְבָּן Lev. 1.2 *Qameṣ qatan* instead of *ḥaṭef qameṣ* (both are short *qameṣ* vowels), followed only by V. The *masorah* in V alone refers to *qameṣ qaṭan*.	קָרְבָּן] = V | ~ O D L M R B קָרְבָּן

3.3. Accents and Diacritical Signs

In this category B is the manuscript that generally exhibits differences.

3.3.1. Erroneously Omitted or Differently-placed *Dagesh*

20	בִּרְכֵי Gen. 50.23 Absence of *dagesh* in B.	בִּרְכֵי] = O D L M V R | ~ B בִּרְכֵי
21	וַתִּמָּלֵא Exod. 1.7 *Dagesh* different in B (in the *lamed*) (mistake?).	וַתִּמָּלֵא] = O D L M V R | ~ B וַתִּמָּלֵא
22	כַּלָּוּ Exod. 5.13 *Dagesh* omitted in B (same scribe).	כַּלָּוּ] = O D L M V R ~ B כַלָּוּ
23	יִנָּחֵם Exod. 13.17 Absence of *dagesh* in B.	יִנָּחֵם] O D L V ~ B יִנָחֵם
24	קְטֹרֶת סַמִּים Exod. 30.7 Absence of *dagesh* in B.	קְטֹרֶת סַמִּים] = O L D M V | ~ B קְטֹרֶת סַמִים

3.3.2. Isolated Variants in the Accents

25	וְאֶל־הַזְּקֵנִים Exod. 24.14 Accent changed in B.	וְאֶל־הַזְּקֵנִים] = O D L M V | ~ B וְאֶל־ הַזְּקֵנִים

26	וַיִּשְׁכֹּן Exod. 24.16 Accent changed in B.	וַיִּשְׁכֹּן] ~ O D L M B וַיִּשְׁכָּן [[V?]]
27	וּמַרְאֵה Exod. 24.17 Absence of accent in B.	וּמַרְאֵה] = O D L M V | ~ B וּמַרְאֵה
28	וְיִקְחוּ Exod. 25.2 Accent changed in B.	וְיִקְחוּ] = O D L M [[V]] | ~ B וְיִקְחוּ

3.3.3. Word-final *Shewa*

Valmadonna 1 includes the isolated feature of *shewa* on word-final *yod* and *waw*.

29	וּבְאָחֶיו Exod. 32.29 V with *shewa* on final *waw*.	וּבְאָחֶיו] = O D L M R B | ~ V וּבְאָחֶיִו
30	וְאֶת־קְרָשָׁיו Exod. 35.11 V with *shewa* on final *waw*.	וְאֶת־קְרָשָׁיו] = O D L M R B | ~ V וְאֶת־קְרָשָׁיִו
31	בְּרִיחָיו Exod. 35.11 V with *shewa* on final *waw*.	בְּרִיחָיו] = O D L M R | ~ V בְּרִיחָיִו | ~ B בְּרִיחָו
32	וְאֶת־בַּדָּיו Exod. 35.12 V with *shewa* on final *waw*.	וְאֶת־בַּדָּיו] = O D L M R B | ~ V בַּדָּיִו

3.3.4. Variants Shared by Ashkenazic Manuscripts

Four variants are shared by at least two manuscripts of the Ashkenazic Group Vat14/B/V (R generally follows L, O and D).

33	וְֽכֻלָּהּ Exod. 12.11 Accent variants (*darga*) only in Vat14 and V.	[וְֽכֻלָּהּ] = V | O D L B R וְכֻלָּהּ
34	חֲגֻרִֽים Exod. 12.11 *Revia*ʿ in Ashkenazic MSS corresponds to *zaqef qaṭan* in Tiberian MSS and B.	[חֲגֻרִֽים] = V | ~ O D L R חֲגוּרִֽים | ~ B
35	לְמוֹעֲדֵֽהוּ Exod. 13.10 Ashkenazic MSS have *mappiq* below the *he* and not inside.	[לְמוֹעֲדֵֽהוּ = V B | ~ O? D L R לְמוֹעֲדֵֽהוּ
36	שְׁאֵרָהּ כְּסוּתָּהּ וְעִנָּתָהּ Exod. 21.10 The *mappiq*s are placed belows the letter *he* in Vat14, V, and B	[שְׁאֵרָהּ כְּסוּתָּהּ וְעִנָּתָהּ] = O L | ~ D וְעִנָּתָהּ | ~ V B שְׁאֵרָהּ כְּסוּתָּהּ וְעוֹנָתָהּ

3.3.5. *Gaʿya*

Many variants involve the absence of *gaʿya* in B.

37	נָּתְתַּחְכְּמָה Exod. 1.10 *Gaʿya* is absent in B; this example is also in Pérez Castro's study. Paris 1-3 does not have *gaʿya* here.	[נָּתְתַּחְכְּמָה] = O D L M V R | ~ B נִתְחַכְּמָה
38	צֹעֲקִים Exod. 5.8 Absence of *gaʿya*; present only in D, L, and V.	[צֹעֲקִים] = O L M R B |~ D L V צֹעֲקִים

4.0. Concluding Remarks

These new data show that when Tiberian sources, such as the Damascus Pentateuch and earlier Ashkenazic Bible manuscripts,

are added to the comparative corpus, the question of the relationship of the Ashkenazic manuscripts to the Ben Asher tradition becomes more complicated than previously believed by scholars. The Tiberian Ben Asher vocalisation tradition cannot be reduced to L. Irregularity in the variants shows that more than one model was followed and that even among the oriental Tiberian codices variants already existed. For instance, with regard to *gaʿya*, the *gaʿya* is absent from O, but present in V. Hence, it may be concluded that the principles of the Tiberian Masoretic tradition were followed with varying degrees of faithfulness, as can only be expected in a manuscript culture.

The adjustments or disagreements between the Masoretic notes and the consonantal text remind us that a post-Masoretic medieval biblical manuscript is the result of a complex process involving sources and different people. The *sofer* was responsible for the consonants and may have used a different exemplar from that used by the *naqdan* or the *masran*. This is the case in Valmadonna 1, where many Masoretic annotations contradict the consonantal text.[24] Moreover, some grammatical explanations offered by the grammarian Yequtiʾel ha-Naqdan in his *ʿEn ha-Qore* correspond to the variants I have described.[25] It is highly likely, however, that, despite Yequtiʾel ha-Naqdan's opinion, the Ashke-

[24] See also Beit-Arié, Sirat, and Glatzer (2006, 82–87, especially 83).

[25] The second part of the work (a grammatical treatise) propounds rules for word-stress, *methigot* (i.e., *gaʿyas*), *maqqef*s, and warnings against errors in the reading of a *Sefer Torah* (Yarkoni 1965, II:i–ii). Further research is required.

nazic Bibles remain fundamentally Tiberian and should be considered a medieval development of that tradition. This forces us to abandon the idea of a monolithic 'standard' Tiberian tradition (or a family of manuscripts made up of L, O, and D) opposing a 'non-standard' or 'non-conventional' one. We should rather conceive of post-medieval Tiberian texts, including some groups of variants inspired by local pronunciations, customs, and scribal practices.

In addition, the study of the variants shows both specificities of each manuscript as well as families of manuscripts or scribal traditions. For instance, compared to Vat. Ebr. 14, La Rochelle shares fewer variants with Ashkenazic manuscripts (for instance, in the case of לְאֵפֹּ֫ד, it does not correspond to the group). It is possible that this manuscript was copied from a Spanish exemplar in La Rochelle and not from an Ashkenazic one.[26] Also, MS B is an odd case. This is a manuscript that appears to have been produced by the same scribe as wrote MS Vat. Ebr. 14. The codicological and palaeographical features reflect the same hand. MS B, however, follows different rules of vocalization from what are found in MS Vat. Ebr. 14, viz. the interchanges *qameṣ/pataḥ* and *shureq/qibbuṣ*; omission of *dagesh*; *gaʿya* generally different from MS Vat. Ebr. 14. Why is this? The local pronunciation of Hebrew may have influenced early medieval Ashkenazic Bibles

[26] This manuscript seems to have been transported to Spain after 1294 (when the Jews were expelled from the town). See Richler and Beit-Arié (2008, 406–7).

and prayer books.[27] It is possible that MS B was copied from a different examplar. Moreover, its very small format suggests that it may have been intended for use as a prayer book.

One interesting hypothesis, supported by case 18 (לְאֶפֹד Exod. 35.9), is that manuscripts that exhibit the strongest Anglo-Norman variants, i.e., cases where MSS Vat. Ebr. 14, V, and B share similar variants, furnish evidence for the existence of a uniform scribal tradition as a subgroup within the Ashkenazic area. A group of Anglo-Norman variants emerged from this corpus, specifically in cases 1, 2, 4, 7, 17, 18, 19, 33, 35 and 36. In my opinion, this group could constitute a basis for further study on Ashkenazic Bibles from England or Northern France.

The *Manuscripta Bibliae Hebraicae* Project (MBH Project) seeks to study Ashkenazic biblical manuscripts in depth, linking textual features, such as the specific variants noted in the above group of Ashkenazic manuscripts, to extensive material features, such as codicological and palaeographical parameters. This should help us locate and reconstruct families of manuscripts and scribal traditions within western medieval Europe, as well as construct a new typology of medieval Hebrew biblical manuscripts in this geocultural area.

5.0. References

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[27] See Eldar (1978, 16) on *qameṣ/pataḥ* interchanges; Olszowy-Schlanger (2003, 129).

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