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# Masoretic Lists and Biblical Scribal Exercises in the Vienna Papyrus Collection. Evidences of Learning and Study the Biblical Text in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Century C.E.

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While consulting the catalogue of the Erzherzog Rainer Collection of the National Library in Vienna,<sup>1</sup> we find respectively few descriptive elements for the fragments H8 and H168. A renewed examination of these two fragments was required to seek how these fragments could illustrate the way of transmitting, copying and understanding the Hebrew Bible during the Middle Ages, even after the appearance of the so-called Ben Asher codices (among them the Aleppo Codex and the Lenongrad Codex B19a, dated 1008)<sup>2</sup>. As the two fragments are of a different subject, I am presenting here a diplomatic edition of each item with their separated analysis.

\*

## Masoretic Lists on Psalms, Proverbs and Daniel: Masoretic Annotations Separately Copied from the Biblical Text (Fragment H 8)

In *Die Hebräischen Handschriften in Österreich*, this fragment is described as follow<sup>3</sup>:

131. Massoretische Bemerkungen zu den Psalmen und Daniel (von verschiedenen Teilen).
- 2 beschädigte Blätter. 24 Zeilen. Schriftspiegel 7 × 11.2 cm. Pergament.
- Orientalische kleine Quadratschrift. Teilweise punktiert. Vgl. A.-L., Nr. 20. – Signatur : H 8.

The study of this fragment enlightens the common scribal practice of masoretic lists and notes copied separately from the biblical text itself in separate quires. The text is therefore no masoretic treatise, as it could have been previously suspected at first sight. The few evidences we have on suggests masoretic annotations following the Standard Tiberian Masoretic tradition.<sup>4</sup>

### Codicological elements

The fragment H8 is a bifolio of a medium size page with the dimension double page open around 340 mm x 270 mm. A page measures circa 170 mm x 270 mm. It is made of parchment from which the hairy and flesh sides are clearly visible. The hairy side shows a darker color of parchment, plus

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I wish to express my gratitude to the Organizer Committee of the Orion-Vienna Symposium for having invited me to work on these fragments. I warmly thank also G. Khan and Yossef Ofer for their remarks and comments during the preparation of this article.

<sup>1</sup> A. Z. Schwarz, D. S. Loewinger, E. Roth, *Die hebräischen Handschriften in Österreich* (ausserhalb der Nationalbibliothek in Wien). Teil II A und B (New York: American Academy for Jewish Research, 1973), Anhang II A, 57–79.

<sup>2</sup> M. Beit-Arié, C. Sirat, & M. Glatzer, *Monumenta Palaeographica Medii Aevi, Series Hebraica. Codices hebraicis litteris exarati quo tempore scripti fuerint exhibentes. Tome I: jusqu'à 1020* (Turnhout: IRHT, Paris and Israël Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Jerusalem, 1997), Manuscrit 6 (Jerusalem, Makhon Ben Zvi, MS 1, kept at the Israel Museum, alias 'Aleppo Codex'), 65-72 and Manuscrit 17 (Saint Petersburg, Russian National Library, EBP. I B 19a, alias 'Leningrad Codex'), 114–131.

<sup>3</sup> Schwarz, Loewinger, Roth, *Die hebräischen Handschriften*, Anhang II A, n. 131, 75.

[http://aleph.onb.ac.at/F/LEXDML7AJQ3TH42MK9566QP4FDH84IDiMU9GE5P7AAQ1H4EFCQ-02908?func=full-set-set&set\\_number=030345&set\\_entry=000001&format=999](http://aleph.onb.ac.at/F/LEXDML7AJQ3TH42MK9566QP4FDH84IDiMU9GE5P7AAQ1H4EFCQ-02908?func=full-set-set&set_number=030345&set_entry=000001&format=999)

<sup>4</sup> The following of the Standard Tiberian manuscript tradition always includes the presence a small number of variants attesting of different channels of transmission of the masoretic lists. In this Vienna fragment, most of the variants concerns Daniel, in Aramaic, which explains that the masoretic notes are most likely heterogeneous in this section.

small points (the hairs), the flesh side is noticeably brighter. The fragment is very damaged at the top and the bottom. To write on it, the scribe has proceeded to the pricking on the external margin (visible only on one folio) by making at least 28 perforations. These prickings have helped to trace the ruling on the flesh side on all the bifolio with a hard point. The columns separating the internal and external margins are visible on the flesh side on each folio. The last ruled line on each folio seems to be written. The text is not following exactly the ruling pattern at the bottom of the pages. On the flesh side, 23-24 written lines are visible. On the hairy side, 24 to 25 written lines are visible.

### Palaeographical elements

According to palaeographical analyse, this fragment is written in an Egyptian Oriental square script, Southernwestern Oriental style, datable from circa 1100 CE.<sup>5</sup> The scribe does not follow the ruling, which indicates certainly a private writing for self-use. The script is personal and semi-cursive, irregular on both sides. In addition, the size of the script varies and becomes smaller at the bottom of some pages.

### Reading order of the text in the fragment

The fragment presents discontinuous text between versos and subsequent rectos. Consequently, this is not a fragment of a bifolio that would have been placed at the centre of a quire. In this case, the text would be entirely consecutive at least from one verso to the text recto. In this fragment, the order of reading seems to follow the rabbinic order of biblical books (TBb 14b). We are editing the masoretic notes in the order of Psalms (written on f. 1r-v), and on Proverbs and Daniel (written on f. 2r-v).

### Graphic signs

Three different graphic signs confirm the order of the text. First, a circle (see Graphic Sign 1) separates each masoretic note or annotations and is used only on ff. 1r-v. In the ff. 2r-v, graphic signs looking like a number 6 (see Graphic Sign 2) separate the masoretic annotations. There are also another graphic sign used to mark stronger sections of the biblical text (see Graphic Sign 3).

[Place illustration 1 here]



*Graphic Sign 1, only in ff. 1r-v, ◦ in the edition*

[Place illustration 2 here]



*Graphic Sign 2, only in ff. 2r-v, • in the edition*

[Place illustration 3 here]

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<sup>5</sup> See for instance M. Beit-Arié, *Specimens of Mediaeval Hebrew Scripts, Vol. I. Oriental and Yemenites Scripts* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1987), n° 36 (Cambridge UL T-S K6.78). I warmly thank Judith Schlanger for her confirmation on this matter.



Graphic Sign 3, beginning of a seder, only ff. 2r-v, ○ in the edition

## Contents

The content is related to all kind of masoretic annotations that are generally copied in the margins of “masoretic Bibles” (such as in Leningrad Codex, Aleppo Codex, Ms BL Or. 4445 or Damascus Pentateuch).<sup>6</sup> Here is the structure of the contents:

In the folio 1 are written only Masoretic Notes on Psalms. From f. 1r, Lines 1 to 14, the text is composed of a very long note on the occurrences of the accentuated preposition **כִּי**. Lines 10 to 12 involve the vocalization *qamats* and *atnah* of the word **זָכַר**. The second note, on Lines 2 to 14, deals with the readings rules (*Qere Ketiv* and *Ketiv Qere*) between the terms **עֲנִיִּים** and **עֲנִיִּים** giving two lists appearing in several codices as well as in *Sefer Okhla we-Okhla*. From f. 1r, Lines 11 to 19 have masoretic notes on lemmas taken from Psalms 10:8 to 18:43, including a list from *Sefer Okhla we-Okhla* (see line 16-17). From Lines 20 to 22, these are probably masoretic notes because of the terms **בַּר מִן ג** on Line 1. From Line 23 until the end, there is probably masoretic notes (with a lemma mentioned four times). The folio 1v begins with a very long masoretic note (Lines 1 to 6) and its lemma is illegible. From f. 1v Line 6 to the end of the page, there are again masoretic notes on Psalms 26:1 to 56:8 as far as I could identify. The end of the folio is hardly legible, but Line 23 contains the lemma **הוֹרֵךְ** and some of its *simanim*.

In the folio 2 are copied only Masoretic Notes on the end of Proverbs and the Beginning of Daniel. On folio 2r, Line 1 is difficult to read and uncertain. In folio 2r, Lines 2 to 13, there are masoretic notes on Proverbs 24:26 to Proverbs 30:7. Then in f. 2r, Lines 12 to 14 seems to be a kind of *masora finalis* closing the book of Proverbs. Then follow masoretic notes from lemmas taken from the book of Daniel, from f. 2r line 15 to f. 2v, line 14. The text from Lines 21 to 23 of the folio 2r is very lacunary but displays a masoretic note on the lemmas **מְשֻׁרְקָתָא** and **בְּאֵיִן**. From f. 2v, Line 14, the text is often illegible. It seems to be always masoretic notes because of the use of the terms in Line 19 **אֶבְרַת מִן א** (except once accentuated with *patah*). Line 20 presents the graphic sign separating notes and the lemma **אֶבְרַת**. Lines 18 and 19 (f. 2v) support a masoretic note on the term **נְאֻדְבַר** found in Ginsburg's Work on *Masorah*.

## Diplomatic Edition

<sup>6</sup> The Masorah is, in a broader sense, “an apparatus of notes of a textual nature that was transmitted together with the biblical text or independently, with the aim of preserving its integrity”, cf. Elvira Martín Contreras, “1.5 Medieval Masoretic Text, 1.5.1 Background,” *Textual History of the Bible, Vol. 1: The Hebrew Bible, Part A: Overview Articles* (eds. Armin Lange and E. Tov; Leiden: Brill, 2016), 420–429 (420). Consulted online on 17 November 2016 [http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2452-4107\\_thb\\_COM\\_0001050000](http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2452-4107_thb_COM_0001050000). See also H. Hyvernath, “Petite introduction l'étude de la Massore.” *Revue Biblique* (1902): 1–136 ; I. Yeivin, *Introduction to the Tiberian Masorah* (trans. and ed. E. J. Revell; SBLMasS 5; Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1980) ; I. Yeivin, *The Biblical Masorah (in Hebrew)*, (Jerusalem: Academy of the Hebrew language, 2011) ; E. Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, (Mineapolis, MN and Assen and Maastricht: Fortress and Van Gorcum, 1992), 72–76; E. Martín Contreras, G. Seijas de los Ríos Zarzosa, *Masora: La transmisión de la tradición* (Navarra: Verbo Divino, 2010) ; G. Khan, *A Short Introduction to the Tiberian Massoretic Bible and its Reading Tradition* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2012); V. Golinets, “Tiberian Masorah,” in *Encyclopedia of Hebrew language and linguistics, Volume 2, G—O*, ed. G. Khan (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2013), 588–598.



- 10 / שופט (Ps 7:12) בשמך (Ps 54:3) שמע (Ps 54:4) זנחתנו (Ps 60:3) אל תרחק (Ps 71:12) מלכי (Ps 74:12) בקדש (Ps 77:14) ° זָכַר  
[ל] (Ps 9:13)
- 11 / וכל לשון זכורה פתחין בר מן א קמ כי דור[ש] (Ps 9:13) יכל לשון
- 12 / זכר דכוות' יהון <קמצין><sup>12</sup> ° ה כתבין עניים וקריין ענוים וס[[ימנהון]]
- 13 / שכח (Ps 9:13) תשכח (Ps 10:12) ללצים (Prov 3:34) בָּז (Prov 14:21) טוב (Prov 16:19) והילופיהון ב כתבין<sup>13</sup>
- 14 / ענוים וקריין עניים וסימ'נהון <תקות (Ps 9:19) להקבל (Is 32:7)><sup>13</sup> ° במסתררים (Ps 10:8)
- 15 / ג <וסימנהון> [[יִשְׁבֹּא]] (Ps 17:12) לירות (Ps 64:5) יִשָּׁב (Ps 10:8)<sup>14</sup> ° סביב ג רא פס <וסימנהון> שמונה עשר (Ezek 48:35)
- 16 / ית[ה]לכון (Ps 12:9) בעתיהו בלהות (Job 18:15)<sup>15</sup> ° ישועת (Ps 14:6) ישועות (Ps 53:7) גופת (1Chr 10:12)
- 17 / גופות (1Chr 10:12) גוית (1Sam 31:12) גויות (1Sam 31:12) (כ)ערוגת (Cant 5:13) (ל)ערוגות (Cant 6:3)<sup>16</sup> ° אָמַרְתָּ ל (Ps 16:2) [לשון]
- 18 / זכר וכל שום נקבה דכו' <תהון><sup>17</sup> ° פריץ ב <וסימנהון> והוליד (Ezek 18:10) ארהות (Ps 17:4)<sup>18</sup> ° ויגלו
- 19 / ב <וסימנהון> שניהם (1Sam 14:11) מוסדות (Ps 18:16)<sup>19</sup> ° אריקם ל (Ps 18:43) וחד אדיק[[ם]] (2Sam 22:43)<sup>20</sup> [[ ]] [[.]]
- 20 / לא[לכ'א] מְצוֹת בר מין ג לא-עֹבְתֶם (מצות 3:22) (Jos 22:3) [[ ]]
- 21 / שמאל [[ ]] [[. . .]] פת בר מן ג [[ ]]
- 22 / [[. . .]] [[ ]] רי [[. . .]] ה [[. . .]] וני °
- 23 / אֶשְׁחֹרֵךְ [[ ]] תווינו (Deut 23:17) [[ ]] מִן מִן מִן
- 24 / ששת [[ ]] ע ד ויגר ב. [[.]] זה ענִי צַעַן [[.]]

Folio iv (corresponding to the image Fragment H 168, f. 1 v, right page)

- 1 / [[. . .]] [[ ]] שלמה לעם [.]. ° [מב] [אתנהת[[יא בפ]]ת בס <יפרא><sup>21</sup> <וסימנהון> אספרה (Ps 2:7)
- 2 / [[האויב]] (Ps 9:7) ידעו (14:4) ויט (18:10) הטאות (Ps 25:7) שפטני (Ps 26:1) שאלתי (Ps 27:4) דיבת (Ps 31:14) ריבה (Ps 35:1)
- 3 / ישמחו (Ps 35:19) שלימי (Ps 35:20) <ראיתה> (Ps 35:22) עזרתי (Ps 40:18) עזרי (Ps 70:6) <כשמך> (Ps 48:11) יכבידוני (Ps 50:23)
- 4 / נָחַר (Ps 69:4) <רבון> (Ps 69:5) הרפה (Ps 69:21) בצרה (Ps 81:8) שיתמו (Ps 83:14) בחצריך (Ps 84:11) שמרה (Ps 86:2) ואני (Ps 88:14)
- (Ps 102:26) <למנות> (Ps 90:12)

<sup>12</sup> A similar MP note recorded in the BHS appears in A. Beck, D. N. Freedman, & J. A. Sanders, *The Leningrad Codex: A facsimile edition*. (Grand Rapids and Mich. and Leiden and New York: Wm. B. Eerdmans : Brill Academic Publishers, 1998), visible in color in BibleWorks 10 (facsimile images further called "B19a"), f. 367r: ' לִי קַמִּי וְכָל זָכָר וְנִקְבָּה דְכוּתִי .

<sup>13</sup> Identified in the Ms. Paris, BnF, hébreu 148, cf. S. Frensdorff, *Das Buch Ochlal we-ochlah* (Hannover: Hahnsche Hofbuchhandlung, 1864), n° 144 and 145; also in the manuscript Halle 1, see F. Diaz Esteban, *Sefer 'Oklah wē-'Oklah* (Madrid: CSIC, 1975), 166, n°127. I thank Sebastian Seeman for the confirmation of this identification. Also Weil Mm 3549 and in B19a's facsimile or Bible Works 10 (f. 367r).

<sup>14</sup> This list seems correct if it is just a reference to the three places where the lemma במסתררים occurs in Psalms. Otherwise, there are two spelling of במסתררים, with dagesh in the *mem* or with *rafe*. In the list Weil Mm 3737, the list records three instances (Ps 17:12, Jer 13:17, Lam 3:10) where the lemma occurs with a *rafe* above the *mem* (replacing the dagesh). In the Codex B19a, there are also three other instances of the lemma במסתררים with *dagesh* in the *mem* (like in Ps 10:8, Ps 64:5 and Jer 23:24).

<sup>15</sup> Recorded by Weil Mm 3215. Ginsburg 1883, II, 323, n. 22.

<sup>16</sup> Only identified in Frensdorff, *Das Buch*, 125, n. 207. I thank Sebastian Seeman for the confirmation of this identification.

<sup>17</sup> This is rather a MP note. In B19a, the MP on Ps. 16:2 records ל לשון זכר meaning that אָמַרְתָּ is a hapax and a *lashon* masculine (despite the feminine form). The masoretic notes of this fragment indicates furthermore וְכָל שׁוֹם נִקְבָּה דְכוּ meaning "when it is a noun, it is always feminine like this" (like in Ps. 18:31 and Ps. 105:19).

<sup>18</sup> In B19a, recorded ב as a MP only in Ez 18:10. Idem in Weil.

<sup>19</sup> In B19a, recorded ב as a MP. Idem in Weil.

<sup>20</sup> It is a MM note. In L19a, the note records ב as a MP, but Weil gives the Mm 1849, indicating pairs, in which is quoted the second term אַדִּיקָם (2 Sam 22:43) appearing in this fragment.

<sup>21</sup> "There are 42 times a word with *patakh* in *atnakh* in this book (Psalms)". I warmly thank Yossef Ofer for his help on this note and his verification made in the Israeli Software Ha-Keter.

5 / דעו (Ps 100:3) ישם (Ps 107:35) בשפתי (Ps 119:13) מלמדי (Ps 119:99) הצילה (Ps 120:2) נשאתי (Ps 123:1) רבת קדמיה (Ps 129:1) גבה (Ps 131:1)

6 / תדבק (Ps 137:7) הקשיב>ה (Ps 142:7) שמע (Ps 143:1) הללו ראשון (Ps 148:1) ° לדודו i בט בט וסימ

7 / שפטני (Ps 26:1) אורי (Ps 27:1) ריבה (Ps 35:1) אל תתחר (Ps 37:1) אודף (Ps 138:1) ברכי (Ps 103:1) ברוך (Ps 144:1) ° 23 קטוב

8 / ד רפ >וסימנהון< יחליפנו (Lev 27:10) נפשו (Ps 25:13) אנסכה (Eccl 2:1) ביום (Eccl 7:14) ° 24 פתחת ב >בקררה וסימנהון< לי (Ps 130:2) למוסר>י< ° 25 (Ps 116:16)

9 / עיניו i בספ>ר >וסימנהון< אשכילך (Ps 32:8) עששה (Ps 6:8) מכל צרה (Ps 54:9) דמעה (Ps 116:8) דאבה (Ps 88:10)

10 / ותבט (Ps 92:26) ° בקבר >יהוה< >וסימנהון< ה נגלה (1Sam 3:21) ואיש אחד (1Kgs 20:35) הובישו (Jer 8:9)

( וגם נעשו (Ps 33:6) וכל

11 / פרשת איש האלהים (2Chr 30:12) דכוו בר מן א ויתנהו אל האריה (1Kgs 13:26) ° 27

12 / נאנה (Prov 17:7) ד >וסימנהון< רננו (Ps 33:1) זמרה (Ps 147:1) וחד כתרצה (Cant 6:4) ° 28 לדוד ל בט וכל דס>מיד<

13 / למנצה (Ps 68:1) דכו ° 29 הציילני ג >וסימנהון< דויד (1Sam 17:37) דרשתי (Ps 34:5) מכל צרה (Ps 54:9) ° 30 והביטו ב

14 / הביטו >ב בקריה וסימנהון< אליו (Ps 34:6) ארהת (Job 6:19) ° 31 חנה ב >וחסרי וסימנהון< אשר הוא (Exod 18:5) מלאך יי ° 32 (Ps 34:8)

15 / בעשי ג >וחסרי וסימנהון< המשכן (Exod 36:8) תתחר (Ps 37:1) זכרם (Ps 34:17) >וכל כתוב i< ° 33 קעם ב פת>ח >וסימנהון< כבד (Num 20:20) עצום (Ps 35:18)

16 / וכל קעם דכו>ו< תהון פת>ח >בר מן ג קמ>ז< >וסימנהון< קחול (1Sam 13:5) יבין (Hos 4:14) יחרדו ° 34 (Amos 3:6)

17 / דום ב >חסרי< >וסימנהון< שמש (Jos 10:12) ויהתחולל (Ps 37:7) ° 35 וקניי>יי< ב >וסימנהון< וחד וקויי יי (Isa 40:31) ° 36 בית אלהים

18 / ה >בקררה< דס>מיכין וסימנהון< [[(Gen 28:17)]] ולאבן >האבן< (Gen 28:22) והאיש (Jdg 17:5) המובא (2Chr 34:9) אלה אזכרה ° 37 (Ps 42:5) טבקה ל

19 / [[ ]] לא מפק הי (Ps 44:23) וחד מפיק הי טבקה טבקה (Prov 9:2) ° 38

20 / [[ ]] לעולם ועד ט המלך ולכו יזהירו

21 / [[ ]] גערה א [[ ...]] רה ארוממך

<sup>22</sup> See Ginsburg 1883, II, 303, n° 576.

<sup>23</sup> See Ginsburg 1880, I, 228, n. 132. Weil Mm 3429.

<sup>24</sup> See Ginsburg 1880, I, 617, n. 83. Weil Mm 825.

<sup>25</sup> See Ginsburg 1883, II, 462, n. 360. Weil Mm 3398.

<sup>26</sup> See Weil Mm 2501 (giving 29 occurrences); Ginsburg 1883, II, 384, n. 283 gives 7 occurrences (Ps 31:10 is missing in the fragment).

<sup>27</sup> See Ginsburg 1880, I, 226, n. 90. "The lemma occurs five times like this [...], except once as "קדבר". Weil Mm 1549.

<sup>28</sup> See Ginsburg 1883, II, 270, n. 25.

<sup>29</sup> Not found in Ginsburg nor Weil's works. The note remains unclear. The accents on this lemma are *revya'* and *rafe* on the dalet (twice). In B19a, f. 371v, the lemma is placed alone at the beginning of the line, which remains blank apart the number 34 ('ד') and it is not a hapax. The note may mean: "This lemma with those accents appears only here (Ps. 34:1) and in each lemma *di-semikh* (as such constructed) for instance in למנצה (Ps. 68:1), also with this accent". This note seems to not exclude the case of Ps 24:1 (in B19a, a MP note mentions three instances with these accents).

<sup>30</sup> See Ginsburg 1883, II, 285, n. 341. « The lemma הציילני occurs three times, twice with *qamats* and once with *patakh*."

<sup>31</sup> See Ginsburg 1883, II, 271, n. 50. Weil Mm 3177.

<sup>32</sup> See Ginsburg, 1880, I, 493, n. 312. Weil indicates directly Ps 34:8 in the BHS.

<sup>33</sup> See Ginsburg 1883, II, 424, 867. Weil indicates only a MP.

<sup>34</sup> See Ginsburg 1883, II, 410, n. 617. "This lemma קעם occurs twice with *patakh* in [...] and the lemma ועם is written similarly with *patakh* except three times with *qamats* in 1Sam 13:5, Hos 4:14 and Amos 3:6". Weil Mm 3260 indicates only the first part of the note.

<sup>35</sup> "This lemma is twice <defective> in Jos 10:12 and Ps 37:7". Ginsburg 1880, I, 231, n. 188, and Weil Mm 3263 record these two occurrences with an additionnal defective spelling in Ezek 24:17.

<sup>36</sup> "This expression occurs twice one in Ps 37:9 and once in Is 40:31". See Weil Mm 10 of the BHS, p. 1118. Apparently not in Ginsburg.

<sup>37</sup> "This lemma occurs five times in the all the Bible (קריה) in this manner sustained or in the construct-state (*dismikhin*, Hyvernat 1902, 89-90)". See Ginsburg 1880, I, 179, n. 251.

<sup>38</sup> "The lemma טבקה [...] appears once without *mappiq* in the *he* and with a *rafe*, and once with *mappiq* in the *he* in Prov 9:3". *Rafe* indicates here an absence of consonantal value of the *he* visible in the spelling of טבקה טבקה.









instances, beginning of the pericope, middle of the book, counts of verses in a book (especially in Proverbs and Daniel, ff. 2r-v).

The fragment is not recording all the possible masoretic notes existing in those books and is not being exhaustive on the matters.<sup>88</sup> For instance, in the f. 2r-v, the beginnings of the *sedarim* are not exhaustively quoted : between the 7<sup>th</sup> seder of Proverbs and the 2<sup>nd</sup> seder of Daniel, the 8<sup>th</sup> seder of Proverbs and the 1<sup>st</sup> of Daniel are not listed. As well, the masoretic notes are more clearly numerous after the beginning of the 8<sup>th</sup> *seder* of Proverbs and rather less after the mark of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> seder of Daniel.

Hypothetically, the fragment H 8 could be an evidence of a private booklet. The intention is maybe to gather only specific masoretic notes, from a “Masoretic codex” or from a specific booklet already dedicated to specific Masoretic notes on Psalms, Daniel and Proverbs. These elements were required for the copy of a manuscript Bible or for exegetical purposes. Moreover, in the f. 2r-v, the use of a different graphic signs compared to f. 1r-v remains also unclear, maybe these parts were copied for different purposes and from different sources as well. In addition, the uses of vowels and accentuations signs are much more frequent in Daniel, probably to distinguish more easily the Aramaic lemmas.

Finally, this fragment, produced around 1100 CE in an Oriental context, is clear evidence of the transmission of masoretic notes in a separate *mise par écrit*, even after the appearance of the so-called Ben Asher codices.<sup>89</sup> The fragment H8 shows lists and annotations that were still written and preserved separately from the biblical text and from the biblical manuscript it was related to. À propos, Aron Dotan remarks that such practices may have been very ancient, dating back probably to the time when the writing of the Masorah in the margins was forbidden.<sup>90</sup> Other practices have been also discovered such as the system of *serugin*, topical lists according specific subjects, spellings, issues about vocalization, or about unique words.<sup>91</sup> The fragment H8 highlights then that there were parallel existing ways to record Masoretic annotations in writing.

*Illustration 4 : Fragment H 168, f. 1r (in our edition 1r at the left (beginning of our edition) and folio 2v at the right)*

*Illustration 5 : Fragment H8, f. 1v (in our edition 1v on the right and 2r on the left)*

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<sup>88</sup> See for instance, the folio 1v, lines 14 and 15, the note on the lemma from Psalms הַזֶּה 34:8 is followed by a note on the lemma בְּעֵשֶׂי from Psalms 34:17.

<sup>89</sup> The integration of the Masorah into the margins of biblical codices dates itself back probably to the ninth century, see J. Olszowy-Schlanger, “The Hebrew Bible,” in *The New Cambridge History of the Bible. Volume 2: From 600 to 1450*, eds. R. Marsden & E. Ann Matter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 2: 19–40 (31).

<sup>90</sup> “Fragments of such manuscripts were discovered in the Cairo *Genizah* which appear to be remnants of independent works of Masorah. That is, works which contain masoretic notes in the order of the book of the Bible but without an accompanying biblical text. It is possible that these works go back to a very ancient period, perhaps even to the time when it was not permitted to write the Masorah in the margins.” in Dotan, A. (2007), “Masorah”, in *Encyclopaedia Judaica - vol.13*, eds. F. Skolnik & M. Berenbaum (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA in association with the Keter Pub. House), 603–656 (621).

<sup>91</sup> On the *serugin*, see I Yeivin, “A fragment of the Bible in the Abbreviated System”, *Textus. Studies of the Hebrew University Bible Project*, 2, 1962, 120–139.

## Learn to Write with the Bible: Scribal Exercises with Biblical Verses (Fragment H 168)

In *Die Hebräischen Handschriften in Österreich*, this fragment is described as follow<sup>92</sup>:

187. (H 168 = 128) Schreibübungen. 22 Zeilen. Schriftspiegel  
16 × 17 cm. Namen : בר משה.. שר שלום ברבי יוסף ברבי ערמם אברהם בר סהלאן

This one-sided written fragment is made of paper, 200 mm x 170 mm (the upper and lower part of the fragment have been cut). According to palaeographical features, this fragment is written in an Oriental Egyptian square script, datable to the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>93</sup>

The text resembles features representative of scribal exercises to improve the ductus of certain letters within words. This is clearly visible when the scribe repeats letters, combinations of certain letters or words, and even tries to improve the ductus of certain letters by partially writing them. For instance:

- Lines 3 and 5: words are repeated twice.
- Line 7 and 21: the letters צ and א are combined several times, then the letter צ is repeated 5 times, then again the combination of צ and א.
- Line 8 and 19 : the ductus of the letter ש is worked by writing the first stroke (the basis of the letter).
- Line 13 : the difference between the letter ג and ג is repeated; the difference between the עה and the combination ינו is worked (source of confusion).
- Line 14 et 19 : the word ארץ is worked, written partially in several steps, and repeated several times.
- Line 14: the difference between the writing of שה and טה at the end of a word (source of confusion).
- Line 15: the difference between the writing of ה and ד at the end of a word (source of confusion). Idem for פי and פו.
- Line 16 : some letters are partially written.
- Line 20: the name of Abraham written is written partially in several steps, especially the א and the א, partially repeated (the א appears several times without any basis line). The same occurs for the א of Abraham.

The editorial rules are the same for fragment F8. We are adding the use of the symbol \* to indicate the presence of a letter partially written by the scribe to improve the ductus of the letter.

- 1/ אדם כי יקריב מכם קרבן (ליהוה) מן הבהמה מן הבקר [ומן הצאן תקריב]
- 2/ את קרבנכם (end of Lev 1:2) אם [ע<sup>94</sup>לה קר[בנו] מן הבקר זכה (זכר) תמים יק[ריבנו] אל פתח אהל]
- 3/ מועד מועד \* \* מועד יקריב [או]ת(ו) א אותו (part of Lev 1:3)

<sup>92</sup> Schwarz, Loewinger, Roth, *Die hebräischen Handschriften*, Anhang II A, n. 187, 79 (and not 789 as mentioned in the on-line catalogue).

[http://aleph.onb.ac.at/F/LEXDML7AJQ3TH42MK0566QP4FDH84ID1MU0GE5P7AAQ1H4EFCQ-00705?func=full-set-set&set\\_number=029493&set\\_entry=000001&format=999](http://aleph.onb.ac.at/F/LEXDML7AJQ3TH42MK0566QP4FDH84ID1MU0GE5P7AAQ1H4EFCQ-00705?func=full-set-set&set_number=029493&set_entry=000001&format=999)

<sup>93</sup> I thank Judith Schlanger for the confirmation of this estimated date.

<sup>94</sup> Difficult to read.



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### Concluding Remarks

The two fragments H 168 and H 8 are evidences of ‘parabiblical’ tools: they are no direct copy of the Hebrew biblical text as such, but they are attesting of the study, learning and copying of the Hebrew Bible at the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century in the Jewish Community of Egypt, and more than a century after the production of the so-called Ben Asher codices.<sup>98</sup> The fragment H 168 reminds with no surprise that the learning of the writing of Hebrew was traditionally made via the copy of biblical verses. The fragment H 8 shows that, long after the integration of the Masorah within the margins of the biblical codices, the ancient tradition of copying masoretic materials on separate booklets was still in use in Egypt near 1100. It reminds us that 1) during the middle ages, the biblical text and the masoretic tradition were not copied uniformly (as a masoretic bible looks like wit the Codex Leningradensis B19a), but rather according to different functions and uses, and 2) that after the formal normalization of the well-known Ben Asher manuscripts, the Masoretic lists were a corpus of information that was not standardized and homogenous up to the 14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> In this frame, the Codex Leningradensis B19a is not unique but is the earliest dated and most complete biblical manuscript preserved nowadays. Cf. Beit-Arié, Sirat, Glatzer, *Monumenta*, Manuscrit 17, 114–131 (114). See its features in Yeivin, *Introduction*, 18–19 among other biblical manuscripts 16–29.

<sup>99</sup> Martín-Contreras & Seijas de los Ríos-Zarzosa, *Masora*, 33–34. Khan, *A Short Introduction*, 10.

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