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THE STUDY OF MISHNAIC HEBREW GRAMMAR  
BASED ON WRITTEN SOURCES:  
ACHIEVEMENTS, PROBLEMS, AND TASKS

MOSHE BAR-ASHER

- I. Introductory Remarks
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## I. Introductory Remarks

I shall begin with three remarks:

1a. The present survey will concentrate primarily on the written sources of Mishnaic Hebrew, viz., Mishnaic manuscripts, and to a lesser extent, the printed editions. (The oral traditions require a separate discussion; see Morag, pp. 43-57 in the present volume).

1b. This paper will be divided into two parts: 1) a description of the research that has been conducted and its achievements, and 2) the problems and tasks that remain. Yet, because of the nature of the subject, it is impossible to separate completely the two aspects of the present study. Due to the size of the topic, I intend to present an outline and take up major points in the study of Mishnaic Hebrew grammar. Nonetheless, I shall also try to deal with several linguistic features, some more general in nature, some more specific, and others that have not been treated at all or have not been treated satisfactorily.<sup>1</sup>

1c. I shall focus on the modern scientific study of Mishnaic Hebrew, which began about 70 years ago. I am aware, of course, that in doing so, the contributions of earlier scholars such as A.H. Weiss, author of *Studien über die Sprache der Mischna*, are ignored.<sup>2</sup> I feel that it is justified, however, not only because of the limitations of space, but also because modern research is distinct from that which preceded it both in its scope and achievements. An important landmark is Segal's *Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew* from 1927, which was presaged by his 1908 article in the *Jewish Quarterly Review*. More importantly, during the same period, H. Yalon, the distinguished Hebrew scholar, began his research into Mishnaic Hebrew.

\* This paper was presented orally at the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem 1985 (= Bar-Asher 1988a: 4-37).

1 See, e.g., the use of the definite article on the noun and its modifier (§9), the orthography of the plural מִ- (§10), the 3 pl. pronominal suffixes וְתֵימָן/וְתֵימָן- (§11), the verbal noun קָבַל and the plural יִינֵן (§16), מִשְׁנָאִים/שׁוּנְאִים (§31), and agreement in the construct chain (§43). Additional points presented in a new manner can be found throughout this study.

2 See Segal 1936: XXII for literature on earlier works.

## THE STUDY OF MISHNAIC HEBREW - THE ORAL EVIDENCE: NATURE AND APPRAISAL

SHELOMO MORAG

### 1. Introduction

The study of the reading traditions of Mishnaic Hebrew still extant in various Jewish communities was first begun by Henoah Yalon. He sought to collect evidence on the morphology of Mishnaic Hebrew from these traditions, his ultimate aim being the vocalization of the Mishna. Yalon had the great privilege of being the first in this field. Not only did he recognize the significance and authenticity of these oral traditions, but he also noted the independent importance of forms that diverged from that of Biblical Hebrew. Yalon's work centered on the clarification of form and meaning in certain words, relating the oral evidence gained from the reading traditions to that provided by other sources, primarily reliable manuscripts. He also called upon his student Yitzhaq Shivti'el to record the pertinent forms of the Yemenite tradition of Mishnaic Hebrew. Yalon's primary concern was not, however, the overall system of the traditions of each community.

The situation changed in the next generation, and the reasons for the change are historical. Masses of new immigrants, who had immigrated to Israel in their hundreds of thousands, maintained their unique heritage. A need was felt among scholars to document and investigate the oral heritage of the past.

Thus, a multi-dimensional study, which was in general terms, on the one hand, anthropological, and, on the other, sociological, focused on the various ethnic groups which came to Israel from both the East and

\* An earlier Hebrew version of this paper was presented orally at the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem 1985 (=Morag 1988a: 39-53).

## THE CONDITIONAL CLAUSE IN MISHNAIC HEBREW

MOSHE AZAR

The aim of this paper is twofold: (1) to describe synchronically all the forms of the conditional clauses encountered in the Mishna according to MS Kaufmann<sup>1</sup> and their place vis-à-vis the main clause (the apodosis); (2) to distinguish real conditional clauses from other forms which, although expressing conditions, should not be considered syntactically as conditional clauses.

### 1. The Forms of the Conditional Clause

#### 1.1 The ׀-Clause

1.1.1 The particle ׀ is the usual morpheme which introduces a conditional clause. It is regularly omitted before a verb in the suffix conjugation ('פעל') when the conditional clause is at the head of a halachic discourse:<sup>2</sup> קברו את המת וחזרו: אם יכולין להתחיל ולגמור עד שלא [י]גיעו לשורה יתחילו ואם לא לא יתחילו "When they have buried the dead and returned: if they can begin and finished it before reaching the Row they begin it; but if they can not, they do not begin it" (Bš. 3:2);<sup>3</sup> היה רכוב על התמור, ירד. אם אינו יכול

- 1 MS Kaufmann as it is edited by the Historical Dictionary of the Academy of the Hebrew Language. All the examples are cited from this edition.
- 2 True, ׀ appears at the beginning of chapter 2 of *Rōš ha-Šānā*, but see Epstein 1964: 396-7, who says that there is here "an old error" concerning the division of the chapters, and the halacha להעידו אחר משלחין אותו מכירין אותו ("If the witness was not known another was sent with him to testify of him") belongs to chap. 1, mishna 9.
- 3 The translation of the mishnayoth to English is taken from H. Danby, *The Mishnah, Translated from the Hebrew with Introduction and Brief Explanatory Notes* (Oxford, 1933).

## THE FORMATION OF THE *NIF'AL* III-Y PARTICIPLE IN MISHNAIC HEBREW

MOSHE BAR-ASHER

1. The present study is devoted to the masc. sing. form of the *nif'al* participle of verbs III-y. The investigation of this grammatical phenomenon sheds new light on the grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew as reflected in manuscripts and printed editions of the Mishna. The results of our study are interesting and unexpected and clearly demonstrate differences between the various traditions of the manuscripts and the oral traditions.

### The Readings Traditions in the Bible

2. In the two main traditions of the Bible, viz., the Tiberian and Babylonian vocalization traditions,<sup>1</sup> the dominant form of the *nif'al* masc. sing. participle of verbs III-y in the Tiberian system is vocalized with *səḡōl*, נִפְעָה, e.g., נִבְּוָה (Ps 15:4), וְנִקְלָה (1 Sam 18:23); and in the Babylonian vocalization (with)<sup>2</sup> e.g., הַנְּרָאָה, וּנְבֹאָה. Occasionally, however, you find in both traditions forms with *qāmeṣ*, נִפְעָה, e.g., הַנְּלִוָה (Isa 56:3), הַנְּרָאָה (1 Kgs 11:9; Dan 8:1), נִרְאָה אֹתָהּ (Num 14:14), וְנִקְלָה (Ps 38:8), וּבִסְפָה<sup>3</sup> etc. The original form is with *səḡōl* (as are all forms of the masc. sing. participle in all conjugations); at times it is replaced by *qāmeṣ* as the result of analogy with the form of the perfect. The form with *qāmeṣ* is

\* The Hebrew version of this article appeared in *Hebrew Linguistics* 33-35:39-52 (= Bar-Asher 1992a).

1 See §23a below.

2 See Yeivin 1985: 717.

3 See Yeivin 1985: 717, including material from the Tiberian Bible (in n. 39).

# MISHNAIC HEBREW IN A MEDIEVAL FRENCH-ITALIAN TRADITION: POINTS OF INTEREST

YAAKOV BENTOLILA

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Research into the Traditions of Mishnaic Hebrew

The study of Mishnaic Hebrew during the past 60 years has been based upon an examination of the different linguistic types of the Mishna as found in the best manuscripts of Tannaitic literature. By observing the important accomplishments stemming from research into the reading traditions of different Jewish communities, it has become apparent that the researcher should be interested in more than just discovering the “original” Mishnaic Hebrew as it appeared before it ceased to be used as a spoken, living language. Tracing the history of Mishnaic Hebrew through the various exiles of the Jews in both time and space is, in itself, a subject worthy of investigation for the researcher of the Hebrew language. It is understandable, therefore, that we should be anxious to investigate all ancient manuscripts, compare them to others which have already been described, and cull from them both details and general principles, which may then be considered as representative of those ancient linguistic types.<sup>1</sup> The scribes who transcribed such manuscripts as well as the vocalizers who vocalized them did not lack their own traditions, either oral or written. They were also unable to escape from influences, especially phonological, of their spoken languages. Hence,

\* I would like to thank Ms. Debby Lasker, who translated this paper, and Prof. Chaim Cohen, who proofread the translation and made some important comments concerning both form and substance.

1 In our case, we intend to compare our findings to the well-known MS Kaufmann and MS Parma A.

these manuscripts have preserved for us the traditions of both their time and place.

One of these manuscripts is MS Deinard,<sup>2</sup> a Geniza fragment of the Mishna, which represents a French-Italian tradition of Mishnaic Hebrew from the second half of the twelfth century. The determination of its time and place is due to both codicological considerations (Ashkenazic [= French?] features on the one hand, and Italian characteristics on the other), and to phonetic peculiarities (see §2 below), which are in accordance with what is known about the pronunciation of Hebrew in medieval France; also, note has been taken of linguistic similarities to Italian manuscripts.<sup>3</sup> Not long ago, I devoted an entire monograph to its description (Bentolila 1989). In this article, I would like to emphasize a number of issues of special interest.

## 1.2. MS Deinard

### 1.2.1 Location and Extent

MS Deinard is N<sup>o</sup> R. 1622 (Microfilm 8451) of the manuscript collection of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York. It contains 16 folios, which form two complete signatures. Each folio (9.5" x 11.5" in size) is made up of 32 to 33 lines written in one wide column covering an area of 7.5" x 8". In the first signature there are 16 pages of 32 lines each. In the second, there are 12 pages containing 33 lines and 4 pages containing 32 lines.<sup>4</sup>

In the aforementioned monograph, I had indicated a different label for MS Deinard, on the basis of what was known to me at that time. It was only in the summer of 1990, when I visited the library of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York and physically inspected the codex for the first time, that I noticed the current label. I was also able to determine some other details concerning this codex that I could not have known previously while working from a photograph.

2 The manuscript is thus entitled (see, e.g., Epstein 1964: 1224) after the author and collector of Hebrew manuscripts, Ephraim Deinard (1846-1930). See G. Kressel, "Deinard", EJ 5:1462.

3 See n. 1 above.

4 The third folio in the second signature is smaller than the others (8.5" x 10.5") and its lines are narrower than usual, covering an area of 6.4" x 7.7".

### 1.2.2 Contents

The first signature begins at the end of the fourth mishna of the fourth chapter of the Tractate *Šeqālīm* and ends with the fifth mishna of the second chapter of the Tractate *Taʿānūt*. It contains, in the following order, part of *Šeqālīm*, all of *Sukkā*, *Bēšā*, *Rōš ha-Šānā*, and part of *Taʿānūt*.<sup>5</sup> The second signature begins at the end of the fifth mishna of the eleventh chapter of *Kēṭubbōt* and stops in the middle of the third mishna of the seventh chapter of *Giṭṭīn*.<sup>6</sup> It includes, in the following order, the end of *Kēṭubbōt*, all of *Nēḏārīm* and part of *Giṭṭīn*.<sup>7</sup> The second signature is almost totally intact, but the first is torn at the lower part of the pages (the first folio was especially damaged) and, therefore, I estimate that about 12% of the text is missing. In the second signature, only the first folio was partially damaged.

### 1.2.3 Paleographical and Codicological Aspects

The existence of eight folios in a signature is a trait of Ashkenazic manuscripts.<sup>8</sup> The fact, however, that the signatures are numbered<sup>9</sup> is characteristic of Italian manuscripts.<sup>10</sup> The outer margins of the manuscript are perforated in order to obtain straight margins; perforation only on one side, the outer margin of the page, is another characteristic of Italian manuscripts.<sup>11</sup> The form of writing the Tetragrammaton,

5 In the printed editions, Tractate *Yōmā* is usually located between *Šeqālīm* and *Sukkā*. The order of the Tractates in MS Deinard is the same as the order in MS Kaufmann (see Epstein 1964: 983).

6 In the lower left-hand corner of the last page, the words  $\text{מחמם אא}$  are written to show that these are the words at the beginning of the next signature: *šōmēr qunṭrēs* “keeper of signature” (Beit-Arié 1980: 86; idem 1981: 51-59).

7 The order of the tractates in MS Deinard is similar, therefore, to that of MS Kaufmann. In the printed editions, *Nāzīr* and *Sōṭā* are usually located between *Nēḏārīm* and *Giṭṭīn* (cf. Epstein 1964: 984-985).

8 Beit-Arié 1980: 87; idem 1981: 43.

9 The sign  $\text{י}$  (= *wāw*) in the upper right corner of the first page of the first signature is very clear in the original. At the beginning of the second signature, a  $\text{ט}$  (= *tēt*) is recorded.

10 Beit-Arié 1980: 87; idem 1981: 61.

11 See Beit-Arié 1981: 70, who remarks that this was the custom in Ashkenaz as well until the middle of the twelfth century. Keeping the margins straight is done by various means. Some of them indicate an Ashkenazic origin from the middle of the twelfth century. See the discussion in my book (Bentolila 1989: 7), and the literature cited there.

## STUDIES IN DETERMINATION IN MISHNAIC HEBREW

GABRIEL BIRNBAUM

### 1. The Phenomenon of Determination

It is not an easy task to define determination in its linguistic sense, in spite of its existence in most languages of the world and the fact that many non-linguist speakers of languages are conscious of the phenomenon. To formulate exact rules for its application is even more difficult.<sup>1</sup> Linguists of previous generations as well as contemporary ones have attempted to define several syntactic-semantic conditions according to which determination applies in certain languages. When such categories of determination are formulated, it is possible to examine any statement or text to discover whether the determination in these categories was completely, partially, or never realized.

As an example, I will mention what appears to be the most basic category, anaphoric determination. A noun is determined in this category when it is the second occurrence of a noun which was previously mentioned. For example: "I saw a dog. The dog wagged his tail." The latter occurrence of "dog" has the definite article because it is the second occurrence of this noun in a statement. Other categories of determination are logical anaphora, "obvious determination," cataphoric determination, and generic determination.<sup>2</sup>

It follows that the status of noun determination in a certain language may be described only after examining the realization or non-realization

1 For example, see H. Sweet, *A New English Grammar, Logical and Historical 2: Syntax* (Oxford, 1898) 56-61; O. Jespersen, *The Philosophy of Grammar* (London, 1924) 109ff.; L. Bloomfield, *Language* (New York, 1933) 203ff.; J. Lyons, *Semantics* (Cambridge, 1977) 174-197.

2 They are dealt with in detail in the writer's dissertation. See Birnbaum 1983.

of determination in its different categories. However, such an isolated description is not very interesting unless it is contrasted with determination in another language or, preferably, other languages. We may also compare determination in different historical strata of one language. Only through the medium of comparison can a statement that a certain language or a certain language stratum make much or little use of determination have any meaning.

## 2. Determination in Mishnaic Hebrew

It is appropriate to begin by mentioning those who have already taken up the study of determination in Mishnaic Hebrew. H. Yalon asserted:

One may make a general observation, that the rules of the definite article in the Mishna (as well as in the Bible) cannot be described in a few pages; it is a subject for a book. There are difficulties with exceptions and rules within rules, "possible both ways" (and very difficult for the vocalizer!) and it is all but impossible to avoid contradictions. Only I know how much I have toiled at vocalizing the prepositions ב, ב, ב.<sup>3</sup>

Indeed, Yalon contemplated the phenomenon of determination, and although he did not study it systematically, he did make some important remarks on it.

There is an important chapter concerning determination in A. Bendavid's *Biblical Hebrew and Mishnaic Hebrew*.<sup>4</sup> However, his assertion that employment of the definite article in Mishnaic Hebrew was reduced through the influence of Syriac<sup>5</sup> has been criticized; J. Blau rightly contended that there was no contact between Syriac and Mishnaic Hebrew and, thus, no mutual influence.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, in Blau's opinion, considering the state of determination in Palestinian Aramaic, one should rather expect nouns preceded by a definite article to be used even when not semantically determined.<sup>7</sup>

3 Yalon 1964: 47 n 3.

4 Bendavid 1971: 630-631.

5 Bendavid 1971: 630.

6 Blau 1970-1971: 426.

## ON THE HEBREW DIALECT OF THE ʿĀMŌRĀ ʿĪM IN THE BABYLONIAN TALMUD

YOḤANAN BREUER

A

Although the study of Mishnaic Hebrew is still a relatively new field, it has already experienced upheavals and shifts of direction. One of the more important of these concerns the differentiation of the corpora of the language. At first, all Mishnaic Hebrew literature – the Mishna, Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds, aggadic midrashim and even later texts – was considered to have been written in the same language. This is the view presented in M.H. Segal's grammar,<sup>1</sup> the most recent comprehensive grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew, and in all dictionaries that deal with this literature.

Since the necessity of subdividing Mishnaic Hebrew was first recognized,<sup>2</sup> it has been the Hebrew of the *Tannā ʿīm* – and mainly that of the Mishna<sup>3</sup> – that has been studied. There are important reasons for this development, but they do not justify ignoring the language of the other subdivisions.

The Hebrew of the *ʿĀmōrā ʿīm*, which strongly influenced the development of the Hebrew language (like the literature of the *ʿĀmōrā ʿīm*, which, from its very inception, was central to Jewish culture), has not been sufficiently studied;<sup>4</sup> this is especially true of Amoraic Hebrew

\* The Hebrew version of this article appeared in *Language Studies* 2-3: 127-153 (= Breuer 1987)

1 Segal 1936.

2 Kutscher 1972: 40.

3 Bar-Asher 1984: 187.

4 The main work dealing with Amoraic Hebrew is Sokoloff 1969. It treats the language of the Palestinian *ʿĀmōrā ʿīm*. Chaps. 21-22 (pp. 171-238) in Bendavid 1967-1971 are also especially significant.

as preserved in the Babylonian Talmud.<sup>5</sup>

This paper takes up a number of linguistic features found in Amoraic Hebrew and investigates them in the light of Tannaitic Hebrew.<sup>6</sup> There are two aims to this comparison: firstly, to point out the novelty and innovation in Amoraic Hebrew and, secondly, to demonstrate the problems involved in describing the evolution of Amoraic Hebrew from Tannaitic Hebrew.

In particular, two important questions arising from the comparison of the two languages will be considered. The first deals with the generally recognized difference between Tannaitic Hebrew and Amoraic Hebrew: the difference between a living, spoken language and a dead one. Since Amoraic Hebrew was never spoken, as is commonly assumed, it may be expected to show no internal, natural changes, which occur only in spoken languages; Amoraic Hebrew is expected to show only those changes that have originated in the contemporary vernacular (in other words, Aramaic), or in some other literary language (Biblical Hebrew).<sup>7</sup>

The second problem constantly encountered in comparing Amoraic Hebrew with Tannaitic Hebrew is that of the nature of original, authentic Tannaitic Hebrew. The dominant role of Amoraic Hebrew in Judaism (primarily that of the Babylonian Talmud) gave rise to its strong influence upon the transmission of Tannaitic Hebrew.<sup>8</sup> Thus, when treating a detail that is characteristic of Amoraic Hebrew, yet rare in Tannaitic Hebrew, the question arises whether it originated in Tannaitic Hebrew and then spread through Amoraic Hebrew, or whether Amoraic Hebrew has penetrated the transmission of Tannaitic Hebrew. This is true even in cases where the relevant feature occurs in reliable Tannaitic texts

5 Note must be taken of Moreshet 1972, 1974a-b, which deal with the language of the *bārāyētōt* in the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds, as compared with "their sources." These works deal, however, with *bārāyētōt* reflecting Tannaitic Hebrew (not pure Tannaitic Hebrew, since they were strongly affected by Amoraic Hebrew, as Moreshet shows), and not Amoraic Hebrew.

6 See my M.A. thesis on this subject written at the Hebrew University under the guidance of Professor Moshe Bar-Asher. I take this opportunity to thank him for his guidance, advice, and helpful comments.

7 See, e.g., Kutscher 1972: 61.

8 See, e.g., Kutscher 1963: 3.

## CONSTRUCTIONS OF PURPOSE AND INTENDED RESULT IN THE HEBREW OF THE MISHNA

STEVEN E. FASSBERG

In the Mishna, purpose and intended result may be expressed by a number of different constructions, all of which fall into one of two categories. The first category consists of syntagms based on the infinitive לקטול, which itself may express purpose, but may also follow the particles כדי or בשביל<sup>1</sup>: כדי לקטול, בשביל לקטול. The second is made up of the imperfect יקטול with proclitic -ש either standing alone or preceded by כדי or בשביל: בשביל שיקטול, כדי שיקטול; on occasion one finds purpose marked by the imperfect and the conjunction וַיִּקְטֹל – וַיִּקְטֹל.

Expressions of negative purpose are also based on either the infinitive or the imperfect. In both types of construction the negative is expressed simply by the insertion of the negative לא into the positive syntagm. In the case of the infinitive, one finds the syntagms לא לקטול and כדי לא לקטול;<sup>2</sup> in the case of the imperfect, the syntagms attested are כדי שלא יקטול, ולא יקטול, שלא יקטול, בשביל שלא יקטול, יקטול. The one-to-one correspondence between positive and negative syntagms is disrupted by the attestation of an additional negative syntagm that expresses purpose, but does not contain לא – שמא<sup>3</sup> יקטול – which seems to be a negated counterpart of

\* I would like to thank Professors M. Bar-Asher and M. Azar for their comments on an earlier version of this paper.

1 The syntagms על מנת לקטול, על מנת שלא לקטול, על מנת שיקטול are not included in this study because they express condition and not purpose in Mishnaic Hebrew (unlike in Modern Hebrew). Even though Segal 1927: 242 and 1936: 231 cites syntagms with על מנת under the rubric of final clauses, commentators to the Mishna and lexicographers take על מנת as "on condition that." See, e.g., Kohut 1878-1892, 5:181; Ben Yehuda 1910-1960: 3105-3106.

2 בשביל לא לקטול is unattested in the Mishna.

3 On (מה) מא as a negative particle, see n. 40 below. שמא, of course, also functions as an adverb "perhaps" and as an interrogative particle.

שלא יקטול, like שיקטול.<sup>4</sup>

The richness and variety in Mishnaic forms is curious. What is the frequency of the different syntagms? When did the editor(s) of the Mishna prefer one construction to another? Were all or some of the different syntagms interchangeable? Are purpose constructions syntactically conditioned in Mishnaic Hebrew as are some in Biblical Hebrew, where one finds, for example, that *וַיִּקְטַל* and not *למען יקטל* or *למען יקטול* predominates after modal expressions, or that *פן יקטל* occurs almost exclusively after imperatives, unlike *ולא יקטל*, which is found in other environments? This study seeks to investigate the frequency of purpose constructions in the Mishna (MS Kaufmann) and to establish what syntactic and semantic conditioning factors, if any, determine their use.<sup>5</sup>

## A. Positive Purpose Constructions

### Infinitive

#### לקטול

The most common construction used to express purpose and intended result is the Mishnaic infinitive *לקטול*.<sup>6</sup> It is the only construction used in the Mishna following verbs of motion (such as *בא*, *הלך*, *יצא*, *ירד*, *גבנס*, *נכנס*, *הוֹלֵךְ לַשְׁחוֹט אֶת* (*Suk.* 2:9); *למה הדבר דומה? לעבד שבא למווג לקוניו* (*עמד*, *עמד*), e.g., *מי שיצא לילך לעיר* (*Ēr.* 4:10); *ירד לטבול* (*Bĕr.* 3:5); *משעה* (*Pš.* 3:7); *אין עומדים להתפלל* (*Bĕr.* 5:1).<sup>7</sup> *לקטול* is the predominant form in the protasis of the frequent legal formulae that begin with a determined singular participle, e.g., *השוכר את הפועל*, e.g., *השוכר את הפועל* (*Ma.* 2:7); *הנותן שיקלו לחבירו לשקול על ידו* (*Šĕq.* 2:2); *השוחט* (*Mš.* 2:4); *את הזבח לאכל ממנו* (*Kēl.* 19:1); *המרעיד את* (*Öq.* 2:5). Forms of the

4 Cf., e.g., the alternation in manuscripts and printed editions between *שלא יקטול* and *שיקטול* (Yalon 1964: 117).

5 When relevant, data will also be drawn from the related Tannaitic corpus of the Tosefta (MS Vienna).

6 See Segal 1936: 136. There are roughly 180 examples.

7 There is one example of *כדי לקטול* following a verb of motion in the Tosefta: *אין רצין* *בשבת כדי להתעמל* (*t. Šab.* 17:22).

THE BABYLONIAN BRANCH OF TANNAITIC HEBREW  
AND AN ANCIENT SCROLL FRAGMENT  
(*B. HULLĪN* 101a–105a)

SHAMMA FRIEDMAN

In attempting to identify the authentic linguistic forms of Mishnaic Hebrew, scholars have listed surviving archaic orthographies (J.N. Epstein<sup>1</sup>) and chosen select representative texts such as MS Kaufmann of the Mishna (E.Y. Kutscher<sup>2</sup>). In order to refine this process, forms common in the Babylonian Talmud are often discounted since they may have been introduced by copyists influenced by the style of the Babylonian Talmud.

In applying this method, it is necessary to define "Babylonian forms." Due to insufficient research in the field of Babylonian Talmud linguistic studies, the linguistic information from late manuscripts and the printed editions is often the main source in supplying this definition. This approach partially harks back to an assumption that the Babylonian Talmud itself represents a static and somewhat corrupt linguistic tradition, due to the removal of the creators of this Talmud from the popular, authentic Palestinian style. Consequently, there was little incentive for uncovering older Babylonian forms.

We have initiated a historical study of the Babylonian tradition that examines the linguistic typology of extant complete manuscripts and investigates specific Geniza fragments of great antiquity that appear to contain early linguistic traditions, so that we can begin to approach an assessment of linguistic features of the earliest surviving texts of the Babylonian Talmud, and be able to distinguish between this level and

\* A fuller version of this paper appears in *JQR* 86 (1995).

1 Epstein 1948.

2 Kutscher 1963.

the standardized language of late medieval texts.<sup>3</sup> Preliminary conclusions can already alter the above picture, making it more variegated synchronically and diachronically.<sup>4</sup>

During the Talmudic period, the Babylonian schools probably possessed a linguistic tradition containing many forms currently considered exclusively Palestinian, as can still be demonstrated from early surviving Babylonian Talmud texts. Secondary forms, or emphases,

- 3 The investigation of complete manuscripts was based upon 81 units (unit = one manuscript per tractate) in the Sol and Evelyn Henkind Talmud Text databank at the Saul Lieberman Institute for Talmudic Research of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, which I had designed with specific consideration for linguistic research. See S. Friedman, "A Typology of the Manuscripts of the Babylonian Talmud Based upon Orthographic and Linguistic Features," *Lěšonénu* 57 (1992) 123-124; idem, "Manuscripts of the Babylonian Talmud – An Orthographic and Linguistic Typology," *S. Morag Festschrift*.
- 4 In the course of preparing the typology, I have uncovered various orthographic patterns, which often relate to the so-called Palestinian and Babylonian types. This research may reopen categories of classification and pose questions regarding the various Babylonian centers, their relationship to Palestine, the evolution of linguistic forms within Babylonia, and the types of linguistic environments in the major centers which served as tradents of the Babylonian Talmudic text. For example, a study of the spelling of the names Rabbah and Rava ("The Orthography of the Names רבא and רבא in the Babylonian Talmud" *Sinai* [1992] 140-164 [Hebrew]) indicates similarity between Ashkenazic and Yemenite manuscripts, which maintain, each in their own way, the earlier practice of non-differentiation, versus the Spanish manuscripts, which contain a secondary scholastic differentiation. Similarly, with regard to one of the characteristic markers of the Palestinian /Babylonian division, M. Bar-Asher (1987: 8; based upon Rosenthal 1981: 74) has suggested the plural form תרנגולין for Palestinian versus תרנגולים for Babylonian. It is quite clear that this constitutes a distinction of linguistic types. However, it would be difficult to argue that תרנגולים goes back to the Babylonian Talmud. The prevalent form in Babylonian manuscripts is תרנגולין. The so-called Babylonian form תרנגולין occurs in less than 10% of all occurrences. Of these, most are in late or Ashkenazic manuscripts. The same applies for תרנגולא, which occurs in late Ashkenazic manuscripts, as against תרנגולא. Clearly preference for this form is a late medieval phenomenon, in which the base form תרנגול influenced the plural and the Aramaic, displacing the older Aramaic -נגא, which was, as far as I can determine, prevalent in early texts of both the Palestinian and Babylonian type. תרנגולין is subjectively exotic in that it does not appear in the late printed editions of the Babylonian Talmud. Thus, its disappearance, a post-medieval phenomenon, creates the illusion of תרנגולים being a Babylonian form. Rather, its exclusiveness is later than the Babylonian period, and its sporadic occurrence is early and Palestinian! It occurs in the Reḥov inscription: ותרנגולה (alongside תרנגולה; Sussmann 1973-1974: 152 n. 472).

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW CONJUGATIONS FROM BIBLICAL ROOTS THAT SURVIVED IN MISHNAIC HEBREW

ISAAC GLUSKA

### 1. The Nature of the Root

There are different conceptions of the root. Brockelmann<sup>1</sup> distinguishes between: 1) *root* (Wurzel), which refers to the three consonants that represent the basic meaning of a group of words; 2) *base*, which refers to basic noun and verb forms, which he assumes to be even more ancient than the grammatical categories of noun and verb;<sup>2</sup> and 3) *stem* (Stamm), which refers to what is generally known as בניין or משקל. When discussing the verb, Gesenius<sup>3</sup> uses the term *stem* for בניין. Moscati<sup>4</sup> considers the root to be a group of consonants (usually three) which are connected with the basic meaning of the word. In the present work, we will use the operative definition adopted by Bergsträsser:<sup>5</sup> "Denjenigen Lautbestandteil, in dem die Bedeutungsgemeinschaft der Glieder einer Wortsippe ihren Ausdruck findet, der, ihnen allen gemeinsam, den ihren Bedeutungen gemeinsamen Vorstellungselementen entspricht, nennen wir die Wurzel dieser

1 GVG 1:285.

2 "Vielleicht sind diese Basen überhaupt schon älter als die grammatischen Kategorien Nomen und Verb" (GVG 1:287). Brockelmann is probably referring to the basic forms of קָטַל and קָטַל.

3 GKC 114.

4 S. Moscati et al., *An Introduction to the Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages* (Wiesbaden, 1969) 71. Cf. L. Bloomfield, *Language* (New York, 1935) 243: "In the Semitic languages the roots consist of an unpronounceable skeleton of three consonants; accordingly, every primary word adds to the root a morphologic element which consists of a vowel-scheme."

5 G. Bergsträsser, *Hebräische Grammatik* (Leipzig, 1918-1929) 2:1.

Wortsippe." Accordingly, we would like to point out that when we use the term שורש, we refer to the sound components which are common to a group of words and which represent its shared meaning. This definition of the term requires that we also discuss those words which appear in the Bible only in nominal use, e.g., the assumed root of כתף or בשם. In Kutscher's opinion,<sup>6</sup> the composition of such a group of words is determined by the relationship between the two kinds of sound components, namely, the consonants, including both affixes and suffixes, and the vowels. The affixes and vowels serve as markers for different grammatical aspects and secondary meanings. The groups of words also include different verbal forms according to their stems.

## 2. Aims , Methods, and Corpus

The verb in Mishnaic Hebrew has been studied, to the best of our knowledge, much more than any other linguistic subject. At first, research was carried out within the framework of scholarly grammar books on this dialect.<sup>7</sup> In the past few decades, a number of studies have been devoted to the subject. The most comprehensive studies are those of Moreshet,<sup>8</sup> who considers the Tannaitic language *in toto*, and Mishor,<sup>9</sup> who investigates the Tannaitic tense system and whose work sheds light on its morphological-syntactical aspects. Studies that consider linguistic aspects of Rabbi Yehuda ha-Nasi's Mishna in a specific manuscript have been carried out by Haneman (MS Parma A)<sup>10</sup> and by Schwarzwald (MS Cambridge).<sup>11</sup>

Yalon<sup>12</sup> and Kutscher<sup>13</sup> deal with the verb within the framework of their general research, as does Bar-Asher in his introduction to MS

6 E. Y. Kutscher, *The History of the Hebrew Language* (ed. R. Kutscher; Jerusalem-Leiden, 1984) 5.

7 See the bibliography in Moreshet 1980a: 13 and Bendavid 1971: 476-566.

8 See the bibliography at the end of this volume; Moreshet also studied the language of the *Āmōrā īm* (Moreshet 1972a; idem 1974b).

9 Mishor 1983. See also Sharvit 1980.

10 Haneman 1980.

11 Schwarzwald 1969.

12 Yalon 1964: 125-185.

13 Kutscher 1963: 277.

## ON DEONTIC MODALITY IN MISHNAIC HEBREW

MENAHEM ZEVI KADDARI

This study seeks to examine the lexical means by which the Hebrew of the Mishna expresses the existence of deontic modality as well as the lexemes that are used for this purpose. It will not investigate how Mishnaic Hebrew expresses morphologically the contents of those norms.<sup>1</sup> It is possible to present schematically the sentences (propositions) which declare that one of the norms is valid (this does not include illocutional expressions for accepting obligations such as oaths and vows, in which the norm is created by its very formulation.)<sup>2</sup> For this reason I will organize the deontic-normative concepts in the following hierarchy: something (an action or state of affairs) is either permissible (מותר = מ), not permissible (אסור = א), or obligatory (חובה = ח; it is forbidden that it not be; א שלא יהיה = ~מ~). The internal relationships between these concepts may help distinguish between different types of norms. For example, א means: 1) ח to act in such a way that a particular state of affairs will not come about as the result of that action, or 2) ח to make sure that a particular state of affairs will not come about.<sup>3</sup> Semantic shifts between expressions of deontic modality and expressions of logic modality sometimes occur. As a result there may be ambiguity in the area of the modality. The following table attempts to resolve this problem: a) a noun that describes the person to whom the modal proposition applies; b) a noun that describes the object to which the content of the modal proposition applies; c) an abstract noun which describes the

\* The translations of the mishnayoth are taken from P. Blackman, *Mishnayoth* (New York, 1964).

1 See Mishor 1983: 19ff.

2 See Azar 1981.

3 See G.H. von Wright, *An Essay on Deontic Logic* (Amsterdam, 1972).

contents of the modal proposition.

Deontic Modality:<sup>4</sup>

- a. permitted מותר [רשאי]  
 prohibited אסור  
 obligatory חייב
- b. permitted מותר [רשות]  
 prohibited אסור  
 obligatory [obligation, commandment] חייב [מצוה, מצוה] חובה
- c. permission היתר [רשות]  
 prohibition איסור  
 obligation [commandment] חובה [מצוה]

And in contrast, Logical Modality:

- a. [not applicable]
- b. possible אפשר[י]  
 impossible אי אפשר\*  
 necessary הכרח[י]\*
- c. possibility אפשרות  
 impossibility העדר אפשרות\* [נמנעות]\*  
 necessity הכרח\*

This study will deal only with deontic modality in the Orders *Zērā'im* and *Mō'ed*. The modality of permission will be discussed first, followed by that of prohibition and of obligation.

## The Modality of Permission

### Nouns Used to Indicate the Person Who Has Permission

A person who has no obligation (חובה, מצוה) and has not been prohibited from doing a particular act is רשאי to perform that act (as opposed to obligated, חייב) or he is מותר to do it (as opposed to prohibited אסור).<sup>5</sup>

- 4 The lexemes used in this table are the ones that appear in the Mishnaic corpus of this study; the order of their appearance, however, is based on modern language usage. An asterisk appears beside the lexemes that do not appear in the Mishnaic corpus (even if they are found in later Mishnaic Hebrew).
- 5 The discussion should not include the other antonym of חייב – פטור – even in its meaning "not obligated to perform," because what is being referred to is permission

## YEMENITE TRADITIONS OF MISHNAIC HEBREW IN THE TRACTATE *KĒLĪM*

YECHIEL KARA

### A. The Yemenite Traditions

1. Research in Mishnaic Hebrew over the last half century has concentrated on two primary areas which have proved complementary: the analysis of the best Mishnaic manuscripts and the careful study of oral traditions preserved by Jewish communities. The inspired scholarship of E.Y. Kutscher set high standards of manuscript analysis. His work has been continued by his students, especially Professor Moshe Bar-Asher, and their students, all of whom are leading figures in the study of the Hebrew language in general and Rabbinic Hebrew in particular.

The recording of reading traditions has become an essential element of language research. S.D. Goitein and H. Yalon were instrumental in developing this new field, and it received a great boost at the Hebrew University in 1958 with the establishment of the Hebrew University Language Traditions Project by Prof. S. Morag for the study of language traditions of Jewish communities.

2. Hebrew linguists have for some time been aware of Yemenite reading traditions, particularly for the study of Mishnaic Hebrew.<sup>1</sup> Some

\* This research was facilitated by a grant from the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my teacher, Professor Shelomo Morag, for introducing me to the study of language traditions. In addition, the Hebrew University and National Library's Manuscript Division enabled me to make use of the Mishna from the Goitein Collection, and I am grateful to them for their assistance.

The following abbreviations are used in this study:

A *Talmūd Bavli Mēnuqqād* vocalized by Y. 'Amr (Jerusalem, 1980)

A<sub>1</sub> Margins of *Talmūd Bavli Mēnuqqād* vocalized by Y. 'Amr

researchers highly value the Yemenite oral tradition of Mishna recitation. In their view it is as important as the available manuscripts.<sup>2</sup> There are several reasons for this: it is an ancient tradition rooted in the language traditions of Babylonian Jewry during the Geonic period;<sup>3</sup> the Yemenites stand out among Jewish communities for the accuracy of their oral language traditions; the relative isolation of Yemenite Jewry from other Jewish communities shielded them from the influence of other traditions. In Yemen the text of the Mishna continued to be transmitted orally even after printed copies reached that country.

Scholars of Mishnaic Hebrew placed special emphasis on the Jews of central Yemen, particularly the capital Ṣan'ā. The informants from the capital, the most important community in the country, played a crucial role in the preservation of oral traditions. These scholars recorded and notated the transmitted text from Ṣan'ā, they described some of its grammatical features,<sup>4</sup> and used it as a basis for comparison with other traditions which they were researching.

A<sub>2</sub> Y. Ṭamr's recording

B<sub>v</sub> Babylonian vocalization

G Mishna printed according to the photocopy of the Szczecin edition [1863] (Jerusalem, 1937) in the S.D. Goitein Collection at the National and University Library, Jerusalem. Some vocalization was added in 1949/1950 by Ṭ. A. Qoraḥ.

J MS Jerusalem of the Mishna

K MS Kaufmann of the Mishna

L Text of the Mishna vocalized by Sh. Y. Halevi (Jerusalem, 1972)

L<sub>1</sub> Margins of the Mishna vocalized by Sh. Y. Halevi (Jerusalem, 1972)

M Text of the Mishna vocalized by Y. Ṣaloḥ with an introduction by Y. Ratzaby (ed. Sh. Ṣaloḥ; Bnei Brak, 1987)

M<sub>1</sub> Margins of the Mishna vocalized by Y. Ṣaloḥ (ed. Sh. Ṣaloḥ; Bnei Brak, 1987)

P<sub>b</sub> MS Parma B of the Mishna

T Y. Tobi Mishna Collection

- 1 See e.g., Morag 1963: 24 (introduction); Kutscher 1963: 65; Bar-Asher 1980: 11.
- 2 See S. Morag, "The Language Traditions of the Yemenite Jewish Community," *The Jews of Yemen: Studies and Researches* (ed. Y. Yesayahu and Y. Tobi; Jerusalem, 1975) 358 (Hebrew).
- 3 For several examples of phenomena which attest to Babylonia as the source of the Yemenite tradition of Mishna recitation, see Morag 1963: 25.
- 4 The most comprehensive description of the Yemenite traditions for Mishnaic Hebrew is that of Shvitiel. However, Shvitiel himself did not consider his work a truly comprehensive study of the Yemenite tradition, and it certainly is not a grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew as it is reflected in the Yemenite tradition. See: Shvitiel 1937: 8.