

A Masoretic Note in the Aleppo Codex Concerning the Composite Words

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The Masoretic Annotations of the Aleppo Codex

The Aleppo Codex, the Bible MS vocalized and accented by the Masorete Aharon ben Moshe ben Asher, is the most important manuscript dating from the masoretic period. For this reason, any evidence relating to the lost parts of the Codex is extremely significant. According to various descriptions of the Codex, and especially according to the detailed description compiled by U. Cassuto,¹ we know that both at the beginning and at the end of the Codex there were pages of material resembling the "Grammar of the Masorah" as well as various masoretic lists.²

* Most of the issues dealt with in this paper were presented at the 15th Congress of the International Organization for Masoretic Studies (IOMS), that took place in Basel on August 6th, 2001, as a part of IOSOT XVIIth Congress.

The following is a list of abbreviations for biblical manuscripts cited:

א = the Aleppo Codex, photo-printed, Jerusalem 1976.

ב = MS St. Petersburg, the National Library of Russia, Evr I B 19a, the entire Bible.

בב = MS St. Petersburg, the National Library of Russia, Evr II B 10, the Pentateuch (Institute for Hebrew Manuscript Photocopies in Jerusalem: F 62964).

בבב = MS St. Petersburg, the National Library of Russia, Evr II C 144 (termed in Baer and Strack, *Dikduke Ha-T'amim*: T pap. 1; F 70095, F 46096), Prophets.

בבבב = MS Cairo, Gottheil 34, Prophets.

בבבבב = MS Jerusalem Heb 24° 5702 (in the past: Sasoon 507), the Pentateuch.

בבבבבב = MS Sasoon 1053, the entire Bible.

בבבבבבב = *Miqra'ot Gedolot* (printed), Venice 1524–1525.

¹ See Y. Ofer, "M. D. Cassuto's Notes on the Aleppo Codex," *Sefunot: Studies and Sources on the History of the Jewish Communities in the East* n.s. 4 (19) (Jerusalem, 1989) 277–344 (Heb.). Cassuto's description of the annotations to the Codex and the passages he copied from these annotations appear on pp. 291–308.

² There were seven pages at the beginning of the Codex, i.e., before the pages carrying the Torah text, and twenty additional pages at its end, i.e., after the end of

There is also evidence of copies having been made of this masoretic material: one copy was made for W. Wickes,³ who wrote a book about the accentuation rules. A second copy was made for A. Firkovich, and found its way to S. Baer and H. L. Strack, who made use of it in their edition of *Die Dikduke Ha-Te'amim*.⁴ The whereabouts of both of these copies are unknown today.

I have recently been successful in locating the archive of Yitzhak Seligman Baer amongst the manuscripts of the Ginsburg collection in Moscow.⁵ This archive contains a complete copy of the masoretic material included in the Aleppo Codex before the Bible text and after it. In this paper I propose to consider an important masoretic note from this material, concerning the

the last of the biblical books. Cassuto, who succeeded in viewing the Codex in its entirety in 1943, wrote up a full, detailed description of these pages, but copied over full only a small portion of the material.

See W. Wickes, *A Treatise on the Accentuation of the Twenty-one So-called Prose Books of the Old Testament* (Oxford, 1877; photo repr. New York: Ktav, 1970) preface, pp. 1–6] (the pages of the introduction at the beginning of the book are not numbered).

S. Baer and H. L. Strack, *Die Dikduke Ha-Te'amim des Ahron ben Moscheh ben Ascher und andere alte grammatisch-massorethische Lehrstücke* (Leipzig, 1879; repr. Jerusalem, 1970).

The archives are known as MS Moscow, Ginsburg 1500. The identifying mark of the film in the Institute for Photocopies of Hebrew Manuscripts is F 48538. In the institute's card-file the contents of the MS are defined as follows: "Copies of Yitzhak Baer." Yitzhak Baer's handwriting can be identified, for example, by a handwritten note he wrote in 1853 to Rabbi Elyakim Carmoly (MS Moscow, Ginsburg 1370 – F 447). The contents of the archive, too, confirm clearly the correctness of this identification, for it contains many letters written to Baer by H. Strack, his co-worker preparing the edition of *Dikduke Ha-Te'amim*, as well as copies of various MSS serving as the basis of this edition (See *infra*, n. 49). In the Baer archive there are hundreds of pages written in his handwriting, most of which deal with topics connected with the Masorah, and the rest, on topics concerning Hebrew poetry. The material of the archive has been classified into 27 sections, the contents of each being defined in French at the head of each section.

composite words of the Bible. The history of this copy of the Aleppo Codex will be reviewed in an appendix at the end of this paper.

The Masoretic Note Concerning the Composite Names

At the beginning of the Aleppo Codex, before the pages on which the Bible itself was inscribed, there were seven pages on which sections of the "Grammar of the Masorah" were written. These pages were lost when the Codex was damaged in 1947, but U. Cassuto, who had visited Aleppo four years earlier, wrote down in his notebook a detailed description of the Codex and of the masoretic material before it and after it. From Cassuto's description we know that on page 7b there was a masoretic note dealing with the composite names. Cassuto copied over only nine names from the beginning of the note, thus enabling us to see that in the Codex the names were written in three columns. I reconstructed a larger portion of this masoretic note on the basis of its being cited in a masoretic note in MS 1W.⁶

In the copy found in the Baer archive, this masoretic note was copied over in full, in Baer's handwriting. The following is the content of this note:⁷

⁶ For M. D. Cassuto's notes see Ofer, "Cassuto." For the masoretic note pertaining to the composite names, see *ibid.*, pp. 302–304.

⁷ The vocalization and the references adduced here do not appear in the original. At the top of the page Baer wrote in German that this list appears in the Aleppo Codex, after the pages containing "the ben Asher fragments" ("Ben-Ascher Stücke"; cf. the German name of Baer and Strack's edition of *Sefer Dikduke Ha-Te'amim: Die Dikduke Ha-Te'amim des Ahron ben Moscheh ben Ascher und andere alte grammatisch-massorethische Lehrstücke*). This description corresponds precisely to the description of the position of the list according to Cassuto.

אלין מלין דכתיבין חדא מלה וקרין חדא מלה, כל שמות הנשיאים והקרואים

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Josh 15:30 etc. | ואלתולד | Num 34:21 | אלידר | Num 1:5 etc. | אליצור |
| Isa 7:6 | טבאל | Num 34:23 etc. | חניאל | Num 1:5 etc. | שדיאור |
| Ezra 4:7 | טבאל | Num 34:25 etc. | אליצפן | Num 1:6 etc. | שלמיאל |
| 1 Chr 7:18 | אישור | Num 34:26 etc. | פליטאל | Num 1:6 etc. | צורישדי |
| 1 Chr 8:11 | אביטוב | Num 34:28 | פדהאל | Num 1:8 etc. | נתנאל |
| 1 Chr 5:33 etc. | אחיטוב | Num 34:27 | אחיהוד | Num 1:9 etc. | אליאב |
| 1 Chr 12:21 | עדנח | Num 34:24 etc. | קמואל | Num 1:10 etc. | אלישמע |
| Job 6:5 | כלילו | Gen 10:26 etc. | חצרמות | Num 1:10 etc. | עמיהוד |
| Job 18:15 | מכלילו | Gen 10:28 etc. | אבימאל | Num 1:10 etc. | גמליאל |
| Job 24:6 | כלילו | Gen 14:1 etc. | כדרלעמר | Num 1:10 etc. | פדהצור |
| Num 24:23 | משמואל | Gen 20:2 etc. | אבימלך | Num 1:11 etc. | אבידן |
| 1 Chr 5:30 etc. | אבישוע | Exod 17:16 | כסיה | Num 1:12 etc. | אחיעזר |
| 1 Chr 8:33 etc. | מלכישוע | Josh 15:22 | ועדעדה | Num 1:12 etc. | עמישדי |
| 1 Chr 5:14 etc. | אביחיל | Josh 15:28 | וכזותיה | Num 1:13 etc. | פגעיאל |
| 1 Chr 2:29 | אביהיל | Josh 19:26 | ואלמלך | Num 1:7 etc. | עמינדב |
| 1 Chr 6:10 | אחימות | 2 Sam 8:3 etc. | הדרעזר | Num 1:14 etc. | אליסף |
| Prov 30:31 | אלקום | 2 Sam 12:25 | ידידיה | Gen 36:4 etc. | רעואל |
| Hab 2:6 | עבטיט | 2 Sam 23:31 | אביעלבון | Num 1:14 etc. | דעואל |
| 1 Chr 7:10 | ואחישחר | 1 Kgs 15:18 | טברמן | Num 1:15 etc. | אחירע |
| | ¹⁰ כיענת | 2 Kgs 17:3 etc. | שמנאסר ⁹ | | נתנאל ⁸ |
| Ps 102:4 | כמוקד | 2 Kgs 18:17 etc. | רבשקה | Num 26:9 etc. | נמואל |
| Dan 6:20 | בשפרפרא | 2 Kgs 17:30 etc. | נרגל | Num 13:12 etc. | עמיאל |
| Ps 45:3 | ¹¹ יפית | Jer 39:3 etc. | שראצר | Num 13:13 etc. | מיכאל |
| Jer 39:3 | סמגרנבו | 1 Sam 7:1 etc. | אבינדב | Jer 39:3 | שרסכים |
| | | | | Cant 8:6 | שלהבתיה |

⁸ This name has already appeared supra.

⁹ This should be read שלמנאסר (Shalman' eser).

¹⁰ Should apparently be כימות (kimot – Ps 90:15). See *infra*, n. 17.

¹¹ This should be read יפית (Yofyafita).

The Heading Preceding the Masoretic Note

The heading preceding the masoretic note contains two sentences: the first is written in Aramaic, the second in Hebrew. The first sentence explains the content of the list that follows: words written as a single word and read as a single word. The word מלה (=word) is used here in two ways: as a term referring to the item under consideration and as a term referring to the units composing this item. Such a lack of consistency in terminology is not unusual in the period of the early Masoretes and grammarians, and so is not surprising.¹²

The sentence in Hebrew conveys a general statement: "all names of tribal princes and leaders." There are some difficulties here. The statement in itself is unclear: does the term "tribal princes" (נשיאים) apply to anyone called *nasi* anywhere in the Bible (including נשיא הארץ הנחביה [=Shekhem, son of Hamor, the Hiwwite, prince of the country; Gen 34:2]), (=leader of the children of Merari, Suri'el son of Avihayil [Num 3:35]), and also the twelve spies of whom it is written כל נשיא כהם [Num 13:2]), or perhaps it is limited to the names of the princes of Israel listed in the Book of Numbers? The second term is more precisely defined: הקרואים (=leaders) are קרואי העדה (Num 1:16), i.e., the princes of the tribes listed in the first chapter of Numbers. However, these men were also termed נשיאים, and the term קרואים does not seem to add anything.

From the general statement itself it is impossible to deduce with any certainty whether it applies only to the personal names of the princes or if the names of their progenitors are considered part of their names. Masorete 15 who copied over the masoretic note from the Codex (see *infra*) sensed

¹² Cassuto quotes the sentence with minor changes: "These are words that are written חדה מלין and are read מלה חדה." Over the first חדה Cassuto wrote sic, apparently meaning to say that the word ends with a ה. It is not likely that an ungrammatical phrase like חדה מלין was actually written in the Codex; perhaps it was Cassuto who erred in copying (under the influence of וקרין?).

this difficulty and thus explained: "the princes and leaders and their progenitors (ואבותיהם)".¹³

The general statement made in the heading is expressed in detail in the list of names: in the right-hand column of the list there appear the names of קרואי העדה mentioned in the first chapter of Numbers, while in the middle column there appear the names of the princes who distributed the land, listed in Num 34:16–29. These details are thus, as it were, an explanation of the heading, and we may deduce from them that the names of the progenitors of the princes were included in the general statement comprising the heading. But, what was the purpose of the heading, if it was explained in full detail immediately thereafter? This was certainly not the custom of masoretic annotations.

Because of these difficulties, I should like to propose a theory outlining the various stages in the development of this masoretic note. At first, the sentence "All the names of the princes and the leaders [are indivisible]" was written as its own general statement.¹⁴ Later, this simplistic statement was 'translated' into a defined list of names containing the two existing lists from the Book of Numbers, which were written down in the right-hand and middle columns. This list was actually an initial nucleus which was expanded as time went on to include other names from the Bible, as well as other words which are not names but whose reading was disputed—as a single word or as two words. It is possible that the original statement was positioned at the head of this masoretic list at the end of the process.

The Principles of the List of Composite Names

A perusal of the complete list of names enables one to understand the principles upon which it is built:

1. The masoretic note contains 73 items written down in three columns of 24–25 lines each. According to the heading of the list, each of these items is to be written in the Bible as a single word and read as a single word.
2. As already noted, the statement in the heading of the list—*כל שמות*—is explained in detail in the list of names following it: in the right-hand column there appear the names of the princes mentioned in the first chapter of Numbers (and called there *קרואי העדה* [leaders of the assembly]). Eighteen names in this column are the names of the princes and their progenitors. All the names mentioned there in Numbers which can possibly be written in two words (excluding such names as *נחשון* and *צוער*) appear here. The middle column contains the names of the princes in charge of distributing the land, listed in Num 34:16–29. Seven names appear here, and here, too, the list is complete.
3. The rest of the first two columns and the entire third column include names of people and of places, as well as biblical words which are not names. One can discern here different groups with a common denominator, such a group almost always appearing in a single column. In other words, the words are connected with one another vertically, not horizontally.

We adduce here as examples a number of these groups:¹⁵ in the right-hand column there appears a group of two names of spies sent out by Moses (Num 13: *עמיאל* and *מיכאל*). In the middle column there appears a group of names from Genesis (*חצרמות*, *אבימאל*, *כדרלעמר* and *אבימלך*), a group of place names from Joshua (*ועדעדה* and *ובזיותיה* and *ואלמלך*¹⁶), a group of names from

¹⁵ Some of the names appear in various places in the Bible, and can be considered part of the groups in various ways—according to the choice of biblical verse.

¹⁶ *ואלמלך* is the only word in the list whose first half ends neither with a *shwa quiescens* nor with a silent letter. Splitting it into two parts would thus necessitate eliminating the *dagesh fortis* in the letter מ. This word is not included in the lists corresponding to this one which will be discussed *infra*. The word, however, is included in the Babylonian masoretic note (in MS 70), where it is described as being

¹³ Two independent witnesses—Cassuto and the Baer copy—testify that the word *ואבותיה* was not written in the Codex, and so it may be assumed that this word appearing in MS 1 is an explanatory addition made by the Masorete.

¹⁴ C. D. Ginsburg, *The Massorah: Compiled from Manuscripts, alphabetically and numerically* (4 vols.; London, 1885–1905) section 634, adduced a masoretic note of this type, except that its wording was incorrect: *כל שמות השבטים חד מלך כל חסי בשבטים*. שלמיאל כל חסי חד קריי וחד כתב.

Samuel (אביעלכון and ידידיה, הדרעזר) and a group of Assyrian names from Kings and Jeremiah (שראצר and נרגל, רבשקה, שלמנאסר). In the left-hand column there appear two groups of names from Chronicles (אביטוב, אישהוד), and two groups of words that are not names (בלילו [twice], מבלילו and משמואל; עדנה and אבישוע; עדנה and אחיטוב). (יפיפית and בשפרפרא, כמוקד, [17] כימות [should read כיענת, עבטיט, אלקום]).

A number of isolated words in the three columns can—from the standpoint of their meaning—be appended to groups in other columns (כסיה; [col. 3] ואלתולד).

written and read as a single word. See Y. Ofer, *The Babylonian Masora of the Pentateuch, its Principles and Methods* (Jerusalem, 2001) 393 (Heb.).

¹⁷ I. Yeivin, *The Aleppo Codex of the Bible: A Study of its Vocalization and Accentuation*, (HUBP Monograph Series 3; Jerusalem, 1968) 82 (Heb.), notes that splitting the word into two (כי מות) may be found in MS 13L, as well as in a number of MSS vocalized with the signs of the Babylonian vocalization. In MS L a scribe wrote כי מות on two lines (!), while a second scribe corrected this and wrote the following masoretic note: 'ל' ומל' וחד מיל' (=unique, spelled *plene*, and written as one word). Baer seems to have erred in reading the word כימות, which was written in Sephardic writing in the copy made in Aleppo, and read mistakenly כיענת. Compare the word סתומות written by a scribe from Aleppo, in the photograph that appears in Ofer, "Cassuto," 342, col. 2, line 11.

Furthermore, it should be noted that under the word כיענת there appears the word כמוקד (Ps 102:4) which itself appears near the word כימות (Ps 90:15) in Psalms. In many places in this masoretic note similar words or words appearing near one another in the biblical text are written under one another.

From the Psalms commentary of the Karaite Solomon ben Yeruhim (10th century), it can be seen that his version was כי מות (Ps 90:15) and כמו קד (Ps 102:4), each in two words. See S. Pinsker, *Liqqute Qadmoniyot* (Vienna, 1860) 2:131 (Heb.); A. Avrunin, "The Midrash of Words," *Leš 1* (1927) 92–93 (Heb.).

The form כיענת is somewhat similar to the word כיענים (Lam 4:3). There is no evidence as to the way this word was written in the Codex, but the MSS (such as L, 1ש) show that this word was written as two words (כי ענים) and was read as a single word, and the word is also included in the masoretic list containing words of this type (*Okhla ve-Okhla* [ed. Fransdorf; Hanover, 1864] sect. 100; and parallels). It is similarly impossible that the Masorah intended the Aramaic word וכענת appearing 3 times in Ezra (4:10–11; 7:12), for there is no way this word can be split into two words.

[2], שלהכתיה [1]—to the words which are not names in col. 3; שרסכים [1], סמגרנבו [3]—to the Assyrian names in col. 2).

4. It is also possible to point out pairs of similar names which appear together (in the same column): רעואל and דעואל (the former appears because of the appearance of the latter), טבאל and טבאל, אביטוב and אחיטוב, and בלילו, אבישוע, מבלילו, מלכישוע, אבישוע, אביחיל, אביהיל, and perhaps also כימות and כמוקד (words from Psalms which are not names and begin with the letter כ), בשפרפרא and יפיפית (words in which two root-letters are doubled).

5. Two of the items were repeated in the list: נתנאל (appears twice in col. 1), בלילו (appears twice in col. 3). This may result from an error in the process of the copying from the Codex.

The Masoretic Note as compared with its Parallels

Parallels have been found to this masoretic note in three other manuscripts, but in each of these parallels there appear only about half the number of items appearing in the note in the Codex (which, as already noted, is 73).

a. Ms 1ש Num 1 (Yeivin, *Codex*, sect. 9.1; Yeivin states that the MS was written in the tenth century.¹⁸):

נאלין מל[ין]¹⁹ דכתיב חדה מלה וכן קורין ומצאנו אותם כמעשה המלמד הגדול אהרן בן משה בן אשר כמעשיו במחזור המכונה באלתאג כל שמות הנשיאים וה[קרואים] ואבותיהם אליצור אלידד ואל תולד שדיאור [חניאל טבאל שלמיאל אליצפן צורי שדי פלטי אל אישהוד נתנאל פדהאל אביטוב אליאב אחיהוד [אחיטוב] אלישמע קמואל עדנה עמיהוד חצומות בלילו גמליאל אבימאל מבלילו פדהצור כדרלעמר אבידן אחיעזר אבישוע מלכי שוע פגעאל עמי שדי.

b. Ms 14ל (St. Petersburg, The National Library of Russia Evr II C 144; was designated T pap. 1 in Baer and Strack, *Dikduke Ha-T'amim*).²⁰ The MS was

¹⁸ Yeivin, *Codex*, 363; idem, *An Introduction to the Tiberian Masora* (Jerusalem, 1976) 18 (Heb.).

¹⁹ Yeivin reconstructed: [אלין], but according to Baer's note and the vacancy in MS 1ש, the reading נאלין מל[ין] seems better.

²⁰ It is difficult to know where precisely the note was located in the MS. According to Baer (adduced *infra*), it appeared at the end of the MS; indeed, in a film numbered

written in Alexandria in the year 1122. The note is written in large letters on full pages, and fills three whole pages. In each line there appear two names only (the ends of the lines are marked here with oblique lines):

[First page]

יראה זרע יאריך ימים / [יוסף] הסופר בן רבי / יעקב הפסגי ח'ן / וחפץ והוה בידו יצלח /
 אלין מלין שמות / שאינן נחלקין אלא / נכתבין חדה מלה וקור' / חדה מלה / כל שמות
 הנשיאים והקרואים

[Second page]

וסימנהון אליצור / אלידד ואלתולד / שדיאור חניאל / טבאל שלמיאל / אליצ[פן]
 צורישדי / פלטיאל אישהוד / נתנאל פדהאל / אביטוב אליאב / אחיהוד אחיטוב /
 אלישע²¹ קמואל

[Third page]

עדנח עמיהוד / הצרמות בלילו / גמליאל אבימאל / מבליל²² פדהצור / כדרלעמר תובלקין
 (כר', ד, כב) / אבידן אבימלך / משמואל כסיה / שלהבתיה ובזיותיה / אחיעזר ועדעדה.²³

F 70095 (at the Institute for Photocopies of Hebrew Manuscripts in Jerusalem) it appears at the end of the MS. [In the film numbered F 46096, which was made before the other, the pages of the MS were photographed in complete disorder, and the masoretic note appears in the last third of the film.]

²¹ Sic in the MS. It should be אלישמע. This is the way Baer wrote it (either correcting it on the basis of logic or according to the copy of the Codex he had in his possession).

²² This should be: מבלילו.

²³ There is a copy of this list in the Baer archive, as Baer himself says: "At the end of Bible MS T1 there appears: חדה מלה וקורין חדה אלא נכתבין חדה מלה וקורין חדה מלה כל שמות הנשיאים והקרואים וסימנהון אליצור ואלתולד שדיאור חניאל טבאל שלמיאל אליצפן צורישדי פלטיאל אישהוד נתנאל פדהאל אביהוד אחיהוד אחיטוב אלישמע קמואל עדנח עמיהוד הצרמות בלילו גמליאל אבימאל מבלילו פדהצור כדרלעמר תובלקין אבידן אבימלך משמואל כסיה שלהבתיה ובזיותיה אחיעזר ועדעדה. It seems evident that this Masorah is based on the Eastern school."

Compared with the original (MS T1), the name אביהוד (1 Chr 8:3) has been added here, while the names אביטוב and אליאב are missing. However, these are all merely Baer's (or whoever copied the note for him) copying errors. Baer's statement that the

c. There is yet another parallel to this note located in the Baer archive, with no explicit mention of its source. Baer wrote:²⁴

In a biblical MS I found a masoretic note referring to words which are split into two words each and those which are not split, as follows:

אלין מלין שאינן נחלקין אלא נכתבין חדה מלה ונקרין חדה מלה, כל שמות הנשיאים והקרואים, כגון אליצור בן שדיאור, אלידד, אליצפן, חניאל, טבאל, שלומיאל בן צורישדי, פלטיאל אישהוד, נתנאל, פדהאל, אביטוב, אליאב, אחיהוד, אחיטוב, אחיעזר, אלישוע,²⁵ אליפלט, קמואל, עמינדב, עמיהוד, חצרמות, בצלאל, גמליאל, אבימאל, מהללאל, פדהצור, אבידן, אביאסף. ואלין פלוגתא כדרלעמר, שלהבתיה, ובזיותיה (יהושע ט"ו), בשפרפרא, למדנחאי תרתין מלין כתיבן למערבאי מלה חדה כתיבן; וחלופיהן תובל קין, כסיה, משמו אל (במדבר) עד עיה,²⁶ למדנחאי חדה מלה כתיבן ולמערבאי תרתין מלין עכ"ל.

This masoretic note lacks the following:

אלין כתיבין תרתין מלין ואינן חד שמא פטי פרע, מלכי צדק, בעל חנן, צפנת פנח.

The note of 1ש was copied from the Codex, and explicitly ascribes the note in the Codex to "the great teacher, Aharon ben Asher." However, it contains

Masorah "is based on the Eastern school" seems to be based on a similar masoretic list printed by Ginsburg (Ginsburg, *Masora*, 2:713, addenda to section 634ש), according to which the names חצר מות, כדר לעמר, תובל קין, חצר מות, are each a single word according to the Eastern school, but two words each according to the Western school (see Yeivin, *Codex*, 85). Baer could also have compared the 14ל note to the masoretic note he found in the MS (here adduced in section c), and had he done so he would have found three names based on the Eastern school (כסיה, תובלקין, משמואל) and three others based on the Western school (שלהבתיה ובזיותיה).

²⁴ C. D. Ginsburg, *Introduction to the Masoretico-Critical Edition of the Hebrew Bible*, with Prolegomenon by Harry M. Orlinsky (2nd ed.; New York, 1966) 204, cited this masoretic note on behalf of Baer (who refrains from stating in which MS he found it), and expressed doubts as to Baer's reliability and the accuracy of the masoretic note (and see Yeivin, *Codex*, 83).

²⁵ 2 Sam 5:15 etc. Perhaps this name derives from the name אלישמע which appears in the Codex list.

²⁶ 1 Chr 7:28. In the Codex list the name ערעדה (Jos 15:22) appears, written as a single word.

only about half the number of items that were in the Codex: the first nine lines are copied over in full (26 items²⁷), the next five lines are copied over only in part (8 items), while the last 11 lines are not copied over at all.

In the note appearing in MS 14^ל, no indication is given of the source from which it was copied. However, its similarity to the Codex is very great, and there is no doubt that the list of names is derived from a note arranged in three columns (in the right-hand column—names from ch. 1, and in the middle column—names from ch. 34), rather than two, for the arrangement in two columns leads to complete chaos. It is thus very likely that this note, too, was copied over from the Codex. Here, too, the first nine lines were copied over in full (26 items), the next five lines in part (9 items), one additional item from the end of the list (שלחבתיה), and one which did not appear in the list at all (תובלקין).²⁸

The masoretic note adduced by Baer from an unknown source is substantively different from the note of the Codex; nevertheless, it is clearly derived from it. In its first part there appear 29 items: 24 of these appear in the Codex list, and the order in which they appear generally matches that of the Codex note, line by line. Five items are not included in the Codex note (אביאסף, מהללא, בצלא, אליפלט, אחיעזר). In the second part of the masoretic note there appear eight items whose lettering is in dispute between the Eastern (*Medinħa'e*) and Western (*Ma'arba'e*) schools. Six of these appear in the note of the Codex, while two do not appear there (עד עיה, תובלקין). The compiler of this masoretic note may have made use both of the Codex and

²⁷ The names חניאל and אחיטוב did appear in MS 1^ש, but were damaged. The name טבאל, appearing in the Codex list at the end of line 2 and at the end of line 3, was copied over only once in 1^ש. In the original, the intention was to include two different names (טבאל — Isa 7:6; טבאל — Ezra 4:7), but the Masorete of 1^ש was apparently unaware of the significance of the two names.

²⁸ Perhaps the word תובלקין did appear in the Codex list, and was copied from there into MS 14^ל, but then the list was altered, and in its place the word בלילו was written, though it already appears in the Codex two lines above. There is no evidence as to the way the word תובלקין was written in the Codex (in Gen 4:22). See Yeivin, *Codex*, 84–85.

of additional masoretic sources that transmitted the disputes, and on the basis of all these he formulated his own masoretic note.²⁹

In all the lists paralleling the Codex there are signs of the material having been revised in the list heading. The Masorete of 1^ש wrote כל שמות הנשיאים והקרואים ואבותיהם, adding the last word for the sake of precision. In addition, he mentioned the source from which he copied over the masoretic note: "And we found them to be the same as the work of the great teacher, Aharon ben Moshe ben Asher, in the book called El-Tag." A note such as this is extraordinary in the Masorah, and it apparently indicates that the Masorete had encountered a large number of disputes regarding the subject of composite words, and so decided to rely on a prestigious authority, and resolved the problems accordingly.

Yosef "Ha-Pisgi" (the Masorete of 14^ל) inserted after the words אילין מלין the expression שמות שאינן נחלקין which originates in the *y. Meg.* (1, 11; 72a). Similarly, he inserted the masoretic term וסימנהון between the heading כל שמות הנשיאים והקרואים and the name list. However, the use of this term here is not clear, for in the list there appear items which have no connection whatever with the princes and the leaders (such as the third word in the list, אלחולד, which is the name of a place in the tribal inheritance of Judah).³⁰

The Contradictions between the Masoretic Note and the Text of the Codex

An examination of the masoretic note quoted from the Codex in Baer's copy gives rise to a serious difficulty: three unique names appearing in the list were written in the Codex itself as two words and were read as two words, contrary to the rule of the Masorah: אביעלבון (2 Sam 23:31); שרסכים (Jer 39:3 — written in the Codex on two lines!); סמגרנבו (Jer 39:3). The name מלכישוע,

²⁹ Theoretically, the opposite may also be the case: that the Masorete of the Codex made use of a list which adduced the disputes, and resolved them.

³⁰ The opening of the masoretic note adduced by Baer is very similar to that of 14^ל.

too, appears twice in the Codex as two words.³¹ Regarding the writing of another phrase in the Codex, *משמוראל* (Num 24:23), there are mutually contradictory testimonies.³²

The question thus arises: how could the Masorete of the Codex open his book with a masoretic list that contradicts explicitly the text of the book itself? In this context, the prominent position occupied by the masoretic note must be stressed: in the seven-page prologue to the Codex there appeared chapters of *Diqduq Ha-Masorah* ("Grammar of the Masorah"), and this masoretic note is the only one adduced there.³³ From the fact that the

³¹ The name *מלכישוע* appears in the Bible five times. Twice it is written in the Codex as two words (1 Sam 14:49; 1 Chr 9:39). It is written as a single word once (1 Chr 8:33), and twice it seems that the spelling of this name in the Codex was corrected from two words to a single word (1 Sam 31:2; 1 Chr 10:2).

³² Ya'aqov Sappir asked R. Menashe Sithon of Aleppo regarding this word: *ב' מלין*, and received the reply: "Yes" (See R. Zer, "R. Ya'aqov Sappir's Meoroth Nathan (MS JTS L 729)," *Leš* 50 (1986) 151–213 (Heb.), at p. 171, question 295). In contrast, R. Moshe Yehoshua Qimḥi, an emissary sent by R. Shalom Shachna Yelin to Aleppo, examined the Codex and wrote: "and in the Codex—one word" (See Y. Ofer, "The Aleppo Codex and the Bible of R. Shalom Shachna Yelin," in *Rabbi Mordechai Breuer Festschrift: Collected Papers in Jewish Studies* [ed. M. Bar-Asher; Jerusalem, 1992] 295–354 (Heb.), at p. 338 to Num 24:23). Qimḥi did not note explicitly if the accent *מרכא* is written under the letter *מ* (like the *ש* version) or not (like the version of *ש*).

According to Yeivin (*Codex*, 80), the Codex has *מבלי לו* (Job 18:15) written as two words, and if so, here, too, the text of the Codex contradicts the masoretic note. However, in the photocopy of the Codex, the letter *yod* is seen to be touching the *lamed*, and the spelling is thus as a single word.

As for the word *כסיה* (Exod 17:16), it does indeed appear in the Codex as a single word, as can be seen from the testimony of Ya'aqov Sappir (see Zer, "Meoroth Nathan," 165, question 137).

For the unintelligible word *כיענה* appearing in the masoretic list, see *supra*, n. 17.

³³ Two short dedications to the Karaite Synagogue in Jerusalem were inscribed in the eighth page of the Codex in the second half of the eleventh century. The date of these dedications can be learned from the fact that the Codex was dedicated "provided it does not leave the possession of the two great princes... Prince Yoshiyahu and Prince Yehizqiyahu," and from a document found in the Geniza we learn that Yehizqiyahu was alive in the year 1064. The Codex was removed forcibly from Jerusalem and brought to Cairo by the Seljuks (in 1071) or by the Crusaders (in

Masorete of the MS placed this note at the beginning of the book, it would seem that he considered it of special importance. Why, then, did he not examine his book systematically and ensure that the text, i.e., the spelling and the vocalization, corresponded everywhere to this masoretic note? Such an act does not require special expertise or effort, for most of the words appearing in the masoretic note appear only once or very infrequently in the Bible. Moreover, from the Codex itself it is clear that the Masorete made considerable efforts to adjust the text everywhere to match the masoretic notes, and was almost always successful in this.³⁴ The problem is especially acute because the Masorete of MS 1 Ψ , who lived in the tenth century, copied this list from the Codex and attributed it explicitly to R. Aharon ben Asher: "And we found them to be the same as the work of the great teacher, Aharon ben Moshe ben Asher, in the book called El-Tag."³⁵

1099). For this see I. Ben-Zvi, "The Codex of Ben Asher," *Textus* 1 (1960) 6 and n. 11. Incidentally, it should be noted that Kahle's remark that the Codex was returned from Egypt to Jerusalem (P. Kahle, *Masoretien des Westens* [2 vols.; Stuttgart, 1927] 1:9–11) is based on the short inscriptions in the Codex, which state that the Codex was dedicated to the rabbinical community in Jerusalem. Kahle, however, did not know that the words *הרבנים* and *התלמוד* in these inscriptions are actually a later correction, and that the original inscriptions told of the dedication to the Karaite community in Jerusalem, which took place before it was taken to Egypt.

³⁴ See M. Breuer, *The Aleppo Codex and the Accepted Text of the Bible* (Jerusalem, 1976) 139–141 (Heb.). Maimonides, too, said of the book that "it was proofread by Ben Asher, who devoted years of meticulous attention to it, and proofread it many times according to the tradition" (*Hilkhot Sefer Torah* 8:4). For the identification of the book used by Maimonides with the Aleppo Codex, see M. Goshen-Gottstein, "The Authenticity of the Aleppo Codex," *Textus* 1 (1960) 17–58; I. S. Penkower, "Maimonides and the Aleppo Codex," *Textus* 9 (1981) 39–128; Ofer, "Cassuto," 325–330.

³⁵ The list cited in MS 1 Ψ is shorter than that of Baer copy. But this is apparently because the space available on the page to the Masorete of 1 Ψ did not suffice for him to copy over the entire list. The name *מלכישוע*, which appears twice in the Codex as two words, is included in the masoretic note of 1 Ψ . The disparity between the Codex and the masoretic note of the complicated words is thus revealed also from the testimony of 1 Ψ .

We can try to resolve the difficulty by questioning the authenticity of the Baer copy. There seems to be some grounds for such questioning: a number of sections of the *Diqduq Ha-Masorah* appearing in the Baer copy do not match Cassuto's notes, and it is possible that they do not accurately reflect what was originally written in the Codex.³⁶ It may thus be claimed, that this masoretic note, too, was emended, especially in its last section, and foreign elements were incorporated into it. However, this idea is contradicted by the fact that the beginning of the list is indeed documented by Cassuto, and its first half – by MS 1W, sources which were unfamiliar to Firkovich and Baer! Nor did Baer deal with this list in his own publications. For this reason it seems reasonable to assume, despite the difficulty, that the list in the Baer archive is extremely similar to what the Codex contained.

This difficulty – together with additional difficulties arising from an examination of the Codex annotations in the Baer copy – leads me to the hypothesis that another Masorete – not Aharon ben Asher, the Masorete of the Codex – wrote the pages of the Masorah at the beginning and at the end of the Codex and added them to it. It would seem that this was done not long after the writing of the Codex, before it was dedicated to the Karaite community in Jerusalem. The Masorete of 1W saw the masoretic notes at the beginning of the Codex and attributed them to Aharon ben Asher, the Masorete of the Codex.

This hypothesis may shed light on yet another problem, connected with the chapters of *Diqduq Ha-Masorah* which made up part of the pages at the beginning of the Codex: A. Dotan, who published the *Sefer Diqduqe Ha-Te'amim*, claimed that Aharon ben Asher composed the *Sefer Diqduqe Ha-Te'amim* on the basis of ancient masoretic material which lay before him.³⁷ Here arises a major problem: why didn't Aharon ben Asher copy

³⁶ For the disparity between the Baer copy and other testimonies regarding the Codex in chapters of *Diqduq Ha-Masora* and the lists of the sectional divisions, see my article "קונטרסי המסורה של כתר אדם צובה – לפי העתק בארכיונו של יצחק זליגמן בר", in *Studies in the Bible and Its Commentaries* 7 (Bar-Ilan University; in press).

³⁷ A. Dotan (ed.), *The Diqduqe Ha-Te'amim of Aharon ben Moshe ben Asher* (Jerusalem, 1967) 1–14 (Heb.) (see in particular the bottom of p. 11).

over the book he had compiled into his special Bible copy, i.e., the Aleppo Codex, instead of copying over some other collection of paragraphs in an order and in a wording completely different from those of his book?

Dotan resolved this difficulty by expressing doubts as to the correctness of ascribing the Codex to Aharon ben Asher.³⁸ D. S. Loewinger accepted the ascription of the Codex to Ben Asher, but felt that the attribution of *Sefer Diqduqe Ha-Te'amim* to Aharon ben Asher is both late and not valid.³⁹ There may be a third way to resolve the difficulty, and this possibility too was suggested by Dotan:⁴⁰ the Codex itself was vocalized and transmitted by Aharon ben Asher, but the masoretic annotations at its beginning were written by someone else and added to the Codex some time after Aharon ben Asher had completed his work on it.

³⁸ A. Dotan, "Was the Aleppo Codex really Vocalized by Aharon ben Asher?" *Tarbiz* 34 (1965) 136–155 (Heb.); Dotan, *Diqduqe Ha-Te'amim*, 23: "One must also take into account the possibility, which is not popular at the present time, but – in my opinion – has not been denied absolutely and with certainty, that attributing the Aleppo Codex to Aharon ben Asher is late, like the colophon itself, and does not reflect the truth."

³⁹ D. S. Loewinger, "The Aleppo Codex or *Diqduqe Ha-Te'amim*?" *Tarbiz* 38 (1969) 186–204 (Heb.).

⁴⁰ "In order to complete the discussion one must also consider the possibility that there is no connection between the biblical text of the Aleppo Codex and the masoretic pages opening it" (Dotan, *Diqduqe Ha-Te'amim*, 23).

I will add that there is still another way (a fourth way) to solve the question raised: Aharon ben Asher may have first written the Codex and the masoretic material appended to it, including ancient material of *Diqduq Ha-Masorah*. Only later, in this case, did Ben Asher compile the *Sefer Diqduqe Ha-Te'amim*, i.e., he arranged some of this early grammatical material in a way and in words that seemed proper.

The Masorete of 1 Ψ and the Composite Words

An examination of MS 1 Ψ reveals that, in contrast to the situation in the Codex, the Masorete of 1 Ψ implemented faithfully the masoretic note concerning the composite words. All the names appearing in the Codex as two words were written in MS 1 Ψ as single words. The Masorete of 1 Ψ did so not only with the names he himself copied at the beginning of Numbers, but also with the names he did not copy over there.⁴¹

The following are the data referring to the writing of 1 Ψ :⁴²

a. Phrases written in the Codex as two words and in MS 1 Ψ as a single word: משמואל (Num 24:23),⁴³ מלכישוע (in all five occurrences of the name), אביעלכון (2 Sam 23:31), שרסכים (Jer 39:3) and סמגורנבו (Jer 39:3).

b. Names written as one word both in the Codex and in MS 1 Ψ : כסיה (Exod 17:16), ועדעדה (Jos 15:22) ובזיוחיה (Jos 15:28) ואלתולד (Jos 15:30; 19:4), ואלמלך (Jos 19:26), הדרעזר (many occurrences), ואלמלך (many occurrences), בלילו (Job 24:6) etc.

c. The puzzling word כיענה in the Baer copy. I suggested above that the word written here in the Codex was כימות (Ps 90:15).⁴⁴ In the text of 1 Ψ *ibid.*, it is written as a single word, the short masoretic note there (ל') reinforces this spelling, and this matches the note in the Codex.⁴⁵

⁴¹ I do not know whether the text, the vocalization and the masoretic notes of 1 Ψ were written by a single person or by more than one person.

⁴² The data are based upon Yeivin, *Codex*, 78–85; Breuer, "The Text and its Sources" at the beginning of the books of the *Da'at Miqra* Bible series; and also upon my own examinations.

⁴³ For the way the word was written in the Codex, see *supra*, n. 32.

⁴⁴ See *supra*, n. 17.

⁴⁵ If this refers to the word כיענים (Lam 4:3), the 1 Ψ text reads *ibid.*: כיענים, and in the margin there appears the following masoretic note: [כיענים ק]. The very appearance of this note referring to the correct reading teaches us that the word should be written as two words, as it is in most MSS, contrary to the masoretic note in the Codex. However, if this is so the *maqef* is unnecessary. Perhaps its purpose

d. The list in MS 14 ל also includes the word תובלקין that does not appear in the Baer copy. It is difficult to decide with any certainty if the word was included in the Codex list and how it was written in the Codex text. We also have no idea how it was written in MS 1 Ψ , for this word appears twice in Gen 4:22, whereas this MS survived only from Gen 10 on.

The system reflected by 1 Ψ is especially noticeable in light of the tendency of other MSS to spell some of the items in the list as two words. For example: כדר לעמר (ש Gen 14, in all five occurrences; ד Gen 14:9,17), פדה צור (ש Num 1:10; ל Num 7:54; ש, ל Num 10:23), צורי שדי (ד, ל Num 2:12; ש Num 7:36,41), מלכי שוע (ק, א, ל, א 1 Sam 14:49; ד עמי שדי (ד Num 2:25); ואל תולד (ק Jos 15:30; 19:4); שר סכים (א, ל, א, ק Jer 39:3), סמגר נבו (ד, ל 1 Chr 8:33; 9:39; 10:2); שר אצר (א, ל, א, ק, ד, ל 1 Sam 31:2; ד, ל 1 Chr 8:33; 9:39; 10:2); כמו קד (ל Ps 102:4).

It should be noted that 1 Ψ writes as single words the names רבמג (Jer 39:3), רבסריס (1 Kgs 18:17), contrary to MSS א, ל, א. These names are not included in the list of the Codex, and it can accordingly be stated that the Masorete of 1 Ψ had a general tendency to write names as single words, independently of the masoretic list in the Codex. However, this claim is easily disproved: first of all, 1 Ψ writes as two words a number of phrases which are not included in the masoretic note of the Codex, such as all four occurrences of כל-אמים (Ps 44:15 etc.). Secondly, he writes the two aforementioned names as two words in other occurrences of these names: רב מג (Jer 39:13), רב סריס (Jer 39:3,13). On the other hand, he made sure to write the words appearing in the Codex note as single words in all their occurrences.

Summary

The list of composite words that was part of the masoretic note at the opening of the Aleppo Codex is the broadest list we know of in this regard, and it has a number of parallels in other MSS. The way the list appeared in

was to indicate that these two words are read as one word (See M. Breuer, "Towards the Clarification of Issues in Biblical Accentuation and Punctuation," *Leš* 45 [1981] 260–269 [Heb.], at p. 267).

the Codex, in three columns, is the original way it was written, serving as the basis for all parallel notes. Of these notes, the masoretic note of 1W undoubtedly quotes from the Codex, and states this explicitly. The Masorete of 1W ascribes the masoretic note of the Codex to Aharon ben Asher, and was careful to apply it in practice to all the biblical occurrences of the words appearing in the masoretic note.

This, however, is not the case in the text of the Codex itself. Though in most cases there is a correspondence between the list and the text of the Codex, there are at least four words written in the Codex in a way that does not correspond to what appears in the masoretic note. This is extremely surprising, and there may be no way to escape the conclusion that the masoretic note was not written by the Masorete of the Codex (Aharon ben Asher), who was not familiar with it or did not consider himself bound by it absolutely.

It may be assumed, that the masoretic pages were appended to the Codex some time after the Codex itself was written, probably after the death of Aharon ben Asher, by another Masorete who did not find it necessary to adjust the text of the Codex to what was said in the masoretic additions to it. When the Masorete of MS 1W saw the Codex, perhaps a few decades later, he made no distinction between the text of the Codex and the pages at its head, and attributed both to Aharon ben Asher. He copied over the masoretic note at the beginning of the Codex, and was careful to write accordingly all the composite names, without realizing that the Codex itself did not correspond in every detail to this masoretic list.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ The evidence for the age of the pages closing the Codex is not as strong as it is for that of the pages at its beginning. However, this section includes the masoretic list referring to the spelling of biblical Aramaic, and was most likely copied over from the Codex by the Masorete of MS 1W (see my aforementioned article, *supra*, n. 36), and so the final pages were already part of the Codex in the tenth century. On the other hand, it should be noted that the list of words in dispute between the Eastern and Western schools, which was part of the Codex, was not suited to the method of the Codex Masorete—to ignore all variant methods and to adduce his own decisions only. This may be evidence of the final pages, too, not having been

Appendix: The History of the Copy of the Codex Masoretic Notes

Yitzhak (Seligman) Baer (1825–1897) was a scholar whose expertise was in the Masorah and in Jewish liturgy.⁴⁷ In 1879 Baer published, together with the German scholar Hermann Strack, an edition of chapters of the Grammar of the Masora, which they called *Sefer Dikduke Ha-T'amim* and attributed (partly) to the well-known Masorete, Aharon ben Moshe ben Asher.⁴⁸ This edition was based on twenty ancient biblical MSS including chapters of the Grammar of the Masorah, one of the most important of these being the Aleppo Codex.

In Baer's recently discovered archive there appear copies of chapters of the Grammar of the Masorah from some of these MSS.⁴⁹ The most important

written by the Masorete of the Codex. The errors and omissions in the list of *paseq* signs in the Baer copy strengthen this hypothesis.

⁴⁷ See "Baer, Seligman Yitzhak," *Ha-Encyclopedia Ha-Ivrit* 9:385 (Heb.); "Baer, Seligman Isaac," *Encyclopaedia Judaica* 4:80–81.

⁴⁸ See Baer and Strack, *Dikduke Ha-T'amim*. In 1967 A. Dotan published another edition of the book (Dotan, *Diqduqe Ha-Te'amim*). For the substantial differences between the two editions and the question of its ascription to Aaron ben Asher, see the introduction to Dotan's edition, pp. 1–6, 15–25, and, in contrast, Loewinger (*supra*, note 39).

⁴⁹ These MSS include: MS Rome from the Sicilian synagogue—a copy prepared by Abraham Berliner and marked with an S in the Baer and Strack edition; MS Copenhagen—"copied by Rabbi R. Wolf" and marked with a K; two MSS from Chufut-Kale, A. Firkovich's home town: MS T17 (=37), and MS T pap. 1 (=147) which was copied by David Oppenheim, as is written at the top of the copy; and also a Yemenite MS of Ya'aqov Sappir which is not included in the Baer and Strack edition. MS S is the MS of the Jewish community of Rome no. 16 (in the past its number was 2) from the year 1496 (F 46305); see Baer and Strack, *Dikduke Ha-T'amim*, xxvi–xxvii; Dotan, *Diqduqe Ha-Te'amim*, 95ff. MS K is the MS of the Royal Library of Copenhagen no. 15 (in the catalog its mark is: Cod. Hebr. 34; P 430); see Baer and Strack, *Dikduke Ha-T'amim*, xxiii–xxiv; Dotan, *Diqduqe Ha-Te'amim*, 88. For MS 37 see Baer and Strack, *Dikduke Ha-T'amim*, xxxiv–xxxv; Dotan, *Diqduqe Ha-Te'amim*, 73–74. MS 147 contains the books of the Prophets, and was written in Alexandria in 1122 by the scribe Yosef, son of R. Ya'aqov "Ha-Pisgi". See Baer and Strack, *Dikduke Ha-T'amim*, xxxi; Dotan, *Diqduqe Ha-Te'amim*, 101.

copy in the archive is that of the Aleppo Codex, marked A in Baer's edition. With a certain reservation, stemming from the fact that this MS is a copy of a copy, one might say that this copy reveals almost completely what was written in the pages attached to this Codex at its beginning and at its end.

The copy of the Codex notes was made for the well-known Karaite traveler, Abraham Firkovich. The first source for this is *Even Sappir*, a book written by the Jerusalemite scholar Ya'aqov Sappir. Sappir describes the Aleppo Codex and cites the inscriptions with which it opened, as they had been copied for him by a traveler known as Ya'aqov Ze'ev, and then states:⁵⁰

And then the rules of the vowel-signs and the accentuation marks begin in a very logical way...

The scribe who wrote this description has no knowledge whatsoever of grammar or of masoretic material, and so did not make an effort to copy over all the introduction and the rules. The famous wise man who recently traveled from here, Jerusalem, R. Abraham the Karaite known as Ibn Reshef, was just there (=in Aleppo), and though he did not succeed in seeing this Bible with his own eyes, despite all his efforts, by spending money and effort he had them copy over for him everything that was written before the Codex and after it. I have seen it all in the home of my friend, this wise man, and they (=the rules) are from R. Aharon ben Asher. He (=Firkovich), out of good will for the public, will make an effort to print them out and distribute them amongst the Jews with adequate commentary. For these things are hard to understand, like those early sages who concealed their explanations in riddles and hid them behind hints.

Abraham Firkovich's own letters have recently been discovered in the Russian National Library at St. Petersburg. From these letters it is clear that Abraham Firkovich's visit to Aleppo was towards the close of 1863, when he was 76 years old.⁵¹ According to Firkovich, the rabbis of the Aleppo

⁵⁰ Ya'aqov Sappir, *Even Sappir*, Part I (Lyck, 1866) 12b, n. 1.

⁵¹ Avraham Firkovich's letters are kept in the National Library of Russia at St. Petersburg, and are marked F. 946, Lichnyj arhiv A.S. Firkovicha. I am grateful to M. Ben-Sasson and Z. Elkin who provided me with a copy of his letter describing his

community first let him see the Codex and even suggested that he serve as rabbi in their community. But later their attitude towards him changed and became more suspicious:

And the rabbis of the Aleppo community, when they heard that Michael, the caretaker of the synagogue, had secretly shown me the Codex and also the list at its end, and that I had recognized from its language and from the names appearing in it, that it, too, was a Karaite list resembling the list in the Bible in the town of Krakow—they decided amongst themselves not to show it to me any more, lest I find additional indications and signs that the book was of Karaite origin, and that I take it from them with the backing of the authorities. For this reason I could not view it any more with my own eyes. They only acceded to my request to have their scribe copy over for me the lists at the head of the Bible and at its end together with the invaluable masoretic notes, and the disputes of ben Asher and ben Naftali and so on also at the head of the Bible and at its end. I paid the scribe's wages generously twelve and a half *duganim*. I also paid R. Moshe Sethon three *polimperial* golden coins—a gift for his efforts in obtaining a permit from the leaders of the community, the sixty elders of the community headed by the chief rabbi, when it was almost impossible to get a permit to copy the lists from the Codex because a vow had been taken not to bring it out of the cave of Elijah the Prophet even into the synagogue, as they put it. In my opinion, this was all for the same secret reason, that the Codex was written by a Karaite, i.e., so as not to reveal the secret of the vow that I have already mentioned above.

Firkovich's testimony confirms that of Sappir: a scribe of Aleppo copied for him all the material preceding the biblical text and following it. It would

trip to Aleppo, and enabled me to publish the excerpt adduced here. For Firkovich's letters see also: Tapani Harviainen, "The Cairo Genizot and Other Sources of the Second Firkovich Collection in St. Petersburg," in *Proceedings of the Twelfth International Congress of the International Organization for Masoretic Studies* (ed. E. J. Revell; Masoretic Studies 8; Atlanta, Ga., 1996) 25–36; idem, "Abraham Firkovich, the Aleppo Codex and its Dedication," *Jewish Studies at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (ed. J. Targarona Borrás and A. Saenz-Badillos; 2 vols.; Leiden, 1999) 1:131–136.

seem from this that the copied material consists of a number of different types: "the lists at the head and the end of the Bible" are the inscriptions of dedication and redemption of the Codex; "the masoretic notes" refers, apparently, to the rules of the grammar of the Masorah, which Sappir called "the rules of the vowel-signs and the accentuation marks"; "the disputes of ben Asher and ben Naftali etc."—here Firkovich seems to have written from memory but did not do so accurately—he was referring to lists that compare similar verses in the Bible and the lists of the disputes between the sages of the West (*Ma'arba'e*) and those of the East (*Medinha'e*).⁵²

In their introduction to their edition of *Sefer Dikduke Ha-Te'amim*, Baer and Strack relate (p. xxi) that in Avraham Firkovich's archives there was a copy in which masoretic notes and grammar were written, having been transmitted by a scribe of eastern origin, and that Firkovich's son, Sarja, had left it in Strack's safekeeping in the autumn of 1874 (i.e., a short time after his father's death, which had occurred in the very same year). They note here that the copy consisted of two parts: the first contained 7 pages and the second 21 pages. For some reason Baer and Strack do not state explicitly that their MS A is itself a copy of the Aleppo Codex, though they hint that this is so in remarking that the inscriptions at its beginning were printed by Sappir (p. xxii), and that from their contents it would seem that they were copied (directly?) from an original MS written by Aharon ben Moshe ben Asher. At any rate, MS A served Baer and Strack as an important source in their edition. They make mention of it in eight sections, in six of which it served as an only source and in the other two—together with another manuscript.⁵³

⁵² From the writings of M. D. Cassuto and from the description of the copy of the Codex in Baer and Strack's book (pp. xxi–xxiii), it may be concluded that in the pages added before and after the Codex, there appeared no list of differences between ben Asher and ben Naftali.

⁵³ MS A served as an only source in sections 6, 11, 12, 13, 32 and 35 of the Baer and Strack edition and as one of a number of sources in sections 33, 52. See Dotan, *Dikduke Ha-Te'amim*, 100–101.

The copy now found in Baer's legacy is a copy of Firkovich's copy, for it is not written in an easthand, but rather in Baer's own handwriting.⁵⁴ Baer seems to have prepared this copy for his own use, maybe because he handed over the copy of the Codex itself to his partner, Strack, or because he had to return it to its original place in the Firkovich collection.⁵⁵ The copy found in Baer's archives includes the larger part of the masoretic material which was found in the Codex annotations.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ For the identification of Baer's handwriting, see *supra*, n. 5.

At the top of section 26 (XXVI) of Baer's archives, where the copy of the Codex annotations is to be found, the following is written in French: Notes du ms. d'Alep - certaines copiees par J. Sapir (The notes of MS Aleppo—some of which were copied by J. Sapir). I do not know who wrote these words, and who classified the material in the archives after it reached the Ginsburg collection. At any rate, in light of the testimony I have presented here, his statement is to be rejected.

⁵⁵ It is possible that the original copy (that was made in Aleppo) will yet be found in the Firkovich collection and will answer a number of the questions I ask here. However, locating the MS in Firkovich's collections—or stating with certainty that it is not to be found there—are not simple tasks.

⁵⁶ From the pages which appeared at the beginning of the Codex, Baer's copy includes twenty chapters of the Grammar of the Masorah and the list of words written as one and read as one, which was considered *infra*. From the pages which appeared at the end of the Codex, the copy includes a list of the writers of the books of the Bible, the midpoints of biblical sections and the number of verses they contain; most of the long lists of biblical variant readings; a list of the *paseq* signs in the biblical text; and the masoretic note concerning words ending in *heh* and in *alef* in the sections of the Bible written in Aramaic (I discussed this masoretic note in my article mentioned *supra*, note 36).

The Baer copy does not include the three short dedication inscriptions which headed the Codex or the long colophon that ended it; nor does it include the section *סימן לשון ברכה* at the end of the Codex, nor the list of variant readings disputed by Eastern and Western authorities in Prophets and Hagiographa which appeared at the end of the Codex.