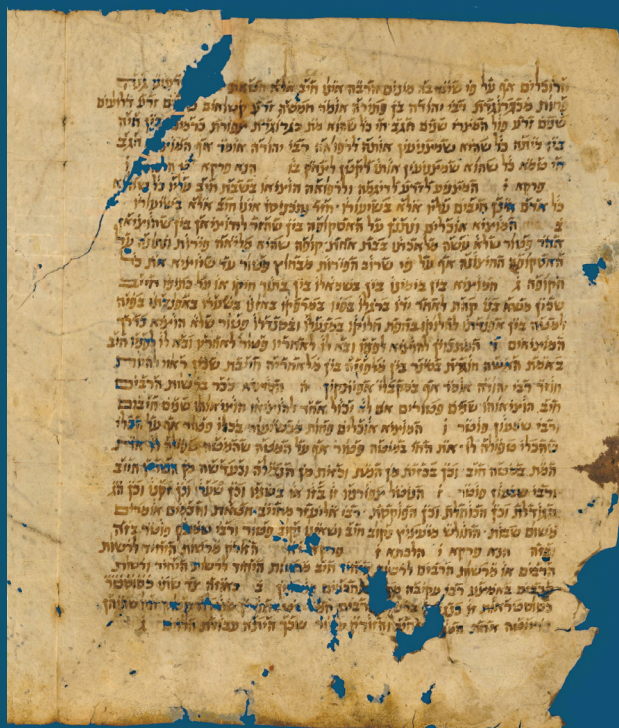


Studies in Rabbinic Hebrew

EDITED BY SHAI HEIJMANS



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

Faculty of Asian and Middle
Eastern Studies



<https://www.openbookpublishers.com>

© 2020 Shai Heijmans. Copyright of individual chapters is maintained by the chapters' authors.



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license (CC BY 4.0). This license allows you to share, copy, distribute and transmit the text; to adapt the text and to make commercial use of the text providing attribution is made to the authors (but not in any way that suggests that they endorse you or your use of the work). Attribution should include the following information:

Shai Heijmans (ed.), *Studies in Rabbinic Hebrew*. Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0164>

In order to access detailed and updated information on the license, please visit, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0164#copyright>

Further details about CC BY licenses are available at, <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

All external links were active at the time of publication unless otherwise stated and have been archived via the Internet Archive Wayback Machine at <https://archive.org/web>

Updated digital material and resources associated with this volume are available at <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0164#resources>

Every effort has been made to identify and contact copyright holders and any omission or error will be corrected if notification is made to the publisher.

Semitic Languages and Cultures 2.

ISSN (print): 2632-6906

ISSN (digital): 2632-6914

ISBN Paperback: 978-1-78374-680-4

ISBN Hardback: 978-1-78374-681-1

ISBN Digital (PDF): 978-1-78374-682-8

ISBN Digital ebook (epub): 978-1-78374-683-5

ISBN Digital ebook (mobi): 978-1-78374-684-2

ISBN XML: 978-1-78374-768-9

DOI: 10.11647/OBP.0164

Cover image: A fragment from the Cairo Genizah, containing Mishnah Shabbat 9:7-12:4 with Babylonian vocalisation (Cambridge University Library, T-S E1.47). Courtesy of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library.

Cover design: Luca Baffa

INTRODUCTION

The present volume contains eight articles on topics related to Rabbinic Hebrew. Seven out of the eight are revised versions of papers read at the Rabbinic Hebrew Workshop that was held at the University of Cambridge on the 5th and 6th of July, 2016. The eighth, my own article, is a translated and revised chapter from my doctoral dissertation.

Since the establishment of the Regius Chair of Hebrew by Henry VIII in 1540 the study of Hebrew has occupied a permanent place in the Cantabrigian curriculum.¹ As might be expected, Rabbinics and Rabbinic Hebrew were of lesser interest to the academic community in Cambridge than Biblical Hebrew, at least during the first five centuries of the University's existence. But the second half of the 19th century saw important developments which secured Cambridge's place on the world map of Rabbinic studies: in 1875 Schiller-Szinessy was appointed Reader in Talmudic and Rabbinic literature; in 1877 Charles Taylor, the Master of St. John's College, published the Hebrew text of Tractate *Aboth* from Codex Cambridge of the Mishnah with an English translation; in 1883 William Henry Lowe published the entire text of the Cambridge Mishnah codex; and in 1890 Solomon Schechter was appointed as Schiller-Szinessy's successor, in which capacity, a few years

1 The study of Hebrew in Cambridge had begun even before that. For example, the statutes of St. John's College from 1524 and 1530 made provision for a lecturer in Hebrew (at an annual salary of £4–£5) to tutor the senior students each day. In fact, in 1535 and again in 1537 the lectureship in mathematics had to be suspended to provide the salaries for the Hebrew and Greek lecturers; see Stefan C. Reif, *Hebrew Manuscripts at Cambridge University Library*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 3. Whether the University would nowadays prioritise thus is unclear.

later, he examined the *genizah* of the Ben-Ezra synagogue in Cairo — a collection that after its transfer to Cambridge would have an unparalleled impact on the world of Rabbinic studies in general and Rabbinic Hebrew in particular. It is my hope that this volume will be an additional contribution to Cambridge's long and distinguished history of Hebrew research.

The modern academic study of Rabbinic Hebrew, which originated in the first half of the 20th century with Moses Hirsch Segal's seminal article on Mishnaic Hebrew and his subsequent *Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew*,² shifted to the new-born state of Israel in the second half of that century. The ground-breaking works of Jacob Nahum Epstein, Hanoch Yalon and Eduard Yechezkel Kutscher, as well as the works that followed them, were and continue to be written almost exclusively in Modern Hebrew,³ making the field quite inaccessible to those unfamiliar with the language. Fortunately, the situation seems to be changing, and works on Mishnaic Hebrew appear more often in English. Special mention should be made to the volume of collected articles in the 37th instalment of *Scripta Hierosolymitana*, edited by Bar-Asher and Fassberg, and to the proceedings volume of the Yale Symposium on Mishnaic Hebrew, edited by Bar-Asher Siegal and Koller.⁴

2 Moses Hirsch Segal, "Mišnaic Hebrew and its Relation to Biblical Hebrew and to Aramaic", *Jewish Quarterly Review* (Old Series) 20 (1908), pp. 647–737; idem, *A grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927.

3 For an up-to-date description of research into Rabbinic Hebrew and its achievements, see Yehudit Henshke and Moshe Bar-Asher, "Mishnaic Hebrew" (in Hebrew), in: Menahem Kahana et al. (eds.), *The Classic Rabbinic Literature of Eretz Israel: Introductions and Studies*, Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi, 2018, vol. 2, pp. 601–634.

4 Moshe Bar-Asher and Steven E. Fassberg (eds.), *Studies in Mishnaic Hebrew* (*Scripta Hierosolymitana*, vol. 37), Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1998;

It is a pleasure to express my gratitude to Prof. Geoffrey Khan, for wholeheartedly supporting the idea of holding a Rabbinic Hebrew Workshop, and for making it financially possible to organise it. It is largely due to his encouragement that both the Workshop and the present volume came into being. I would also like to thank all invited lecturers for their contributions and for meeting various deadlines, rendering the editing process smooth and effective.

I am especially grateful to the administrative staff of the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern studies, as well as the staff of Gonville and Caius College, for their kind yet indispensable assistance, both before and during the Workshop. Special thanks go to Open Book Publishers, and especially to Alessandra Tosi, for her patience and guidance, and to Luca Baffa, for expertly typesetting this challenging volume. And finally, I would like to express my special thanks to Aaron Hornkohl, for correcting the English language of the articles, for preparing the index, and for making numerous suggestions that improved the manuscript considerably.

Shai Heijmans
Cambridge, September 2019

Elitzur A. Bar-Asher Siegal and Aaron J. Koller, *Studies in Mishnaic Hebrew and Related Fields: Proceedings of the Yale Symposium on Mishnaic Hebrew, May 2014*, Jerusalem: Magnes Press and the Academy of the Hebrew Language, 2017.

