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Inscribing Piety in Late-Thirteenth-Century Perpignan

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When a certain Solomon ben R. Raphael signed the Masoretic Bible currently held in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France (BNF), Hébreu 7, the day after Shavuot in the year 1299 CE, he named himself as the sole scribe of his codex:

I, Solomon son of Rabbi Raphael, have written this book for myself, and I have arranged in it the Torah, the Prophets and the Hagiographa in one volume. And I have completed it here, in the city of Perpignan, in the month of Sivan, the day after Shavuot, in the year 5509 after the creation of the world [1299]. May God in his mercy realize for me, my seed and the seed of my seed that which is written in the passage: “This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then thou shalt make thy ways prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. [Josh. 1:8] And it is also written: “My son, forget not my teaching; but let thy heart keep my commandments; for length of days, and years of life, and peace, will they add to thee.” [Prov. 3:1–2]. Amen amen.¹

Did he indeed “complete” the book all by himself, including the Masorah magna and parva and the masoretic and calendrical treatises in the preface and the postface of the biblical text? If, as is likely, he was a man of leisure rather than a hireling, why did he copy his own bible? In his recent study of the typology of Hebrew Bible codices in medieval Europe, David Stern cautioned us that “we know very little for certain about

¹ Paris, BNF, Hébreu 7, fol. 512v, column 2. A full digital version is available on <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b9002997b>. Photo in Gabrielle Sed-Rajna and Sonia Fellous, *Les manuscrits hébreux enluminés des Bibliothèques de France* (Leuven: Peeters, 1994), 29. The manuscript is analyzed, and further pages reproduced, in Katrin Kogman-Appel, *Jewish Book Art Between Islam and Christianity: The Decoration of Hebrew Bibles in Medieval Spain* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 131–40. My thanks to the staff of the BNF for their kind assistance.

the precise functions that any of these books served for their owners, and we know the least of all about the functions of the masoretic Bible.”²

Although a halakhic obligation existed to write one’s own Torah, the copying of the Masoretic Text had become a highly specialized and often labor-divided undertaking.³ Professional copyists were often required for the task. Nevertheless, some nonprofessionals, like Solomon ben R. Raphael, tried their hand at copying not only the Pentateuch, but the complete Bible. The question that underlies this study is this: why did some (though by no means all) laymen copy their own copy of the Bible, despite being manifestly able to afford the services of a professional scribe? What did it mean for them to not only own but produce (or, to be precise, co-produce) such a Bible? And why did Solomon ben Raphael hide the fact that he actually did employ, as I will detail, a team of unnamed artisans?

Stern suggests that most of the deluxe Bibles, especially the illuminated ones, were what he calls “‘trophy-books,’ commissioned specifically for conspicuous display of their owner’s wealth.”⁴ Stern has brought back to our attention the fascinating and ambivalent testimony of the grammarian and Bible scholar Profiat Duran of Perpignan (Isaac ben Moses ha-Levi, 1360–1412). Profiat Duran, who as Stern points out is our most eloquent source for understanding Bible study in late medieval Catalonia, satirized a class of wealthy but ignorant book owners, for whom “possessing these books is sufficient as self-glorification, and they think that storing them in their treasure-chests is the same as preserving them in their minds.”⁵ And yet, Duran admits that when directed

² David Stern, “The Hebrew Bible in Europe in the Middle Ages: A Preliminary Typology,” *Jewish Studies, an Internet Journal* 11, <http://www.biu.ac.il/js/JSIJ/11-2012/Stern.pdf>, 4. My thanks to David Stern for having shared his research with me prior to publication.

³ I review the sources and development of the commandment in Eva Frojmovic, “The Patron as Scribe and the Performance of Piety in Perpignan during the Kingdom of Majorca,” in *Patronage, Production, and Transmission of Texts in Medieval and Early Modern Jewish Cultures*, ed. Esperanza Alfonso and Jonathan Decter, 299–337 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014).

⁴ Stern, “Hebrew Bible,” 37.

⁵ Profiat Duran, *Ma’ase Efod: Einleitung in das Studium und Grammatik der Hebräischen Sprache von Profiat Duran*, ed. Samuel David Luzzatto, Jonathan Friedländer, and Jakob Kohn (Vienna: J. Holzwarth, 1865), 21, and translation in Stern, “Hebrew Bible,” 36. See Irene Zwiep, “Jewish Scholarship and Christian Tradition in Late-Medieval Catalonia: Profiat Duran on the Art of Memory,” in *Hebrew Scholarship and the Medieval World*, ed. Nicholas de Lange (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2001),

towards the patronage of Bible codices, this acquisitiveness of the wealthy still constitutes a form of Torah devotion: “There is merit for their actions, since in some way they cause the Torah to be magnified and exalted; and even if they are not worthy of it, they bequeath a blessing to their children and those who come after them.”⁶

Many surviving bibles, especially decorated and illuminated ones, which include colophons where professional scribes extol the generosity of wealthy “lords” and wish their patrons’ children future enjoyment of the book, were indeed very likely such trophy-books. Duran’s incisive and ambivalent comments, however, were directed at the society of his time, around 1400. He was writing a full century after the Masoretic Bible in Paris, BNF, Hébreu 7, and a very similar one in Copenhagen, Det Kongelige Bibliotek (KB), MS 2 (dated 1301), were produced. Profiat Duran was writing some time after the ‘golden age’ of the lavishly illuminated Miqdash-yah Bibles, most of which were produced between 1300 and the 1360s (when he was a child). Arguably, a man like Solomon ben R. Raphael—and there were others like him—was a different type of owner, learned enough to be able to copy his own “Torah, the Prophets and the Hagiographa in one volume.” But was he learned enough to also vocalize and add the Masorah?

In addition to the wealthy patrons satirized by Profiat Duran, who commissioned Bible copies which they were well-equipped to display and enjoy but ill-equipped to seriously study, I propose that there was also a different group of wealthy men who sought to perform their devotion to Torah by taking on the role of scribe themselves. Abraham Cresques’s Bible, the object of a study by Katrin Kogman-Appel in the present volume, is a late example of this type of Bible; Paris, BNF, Hébreu 7 and Copenhagen, KB, MS 2 are early examples. The fruit of their labor is known by the technical term “user-produced codex”—the most common type of Hebrew codex. I believe some of the “user-produced” Bibles were only partly so and owe their direction to a professional vocalizer and masorator who remained unnamed in the colophon. So these—and I stress that I have not undertaken a survey—are user-coproduced codices made in collaboration with a (presumably) hired vocalizer-masorator. Copying the biblical text was not easy, but it was considerably easier than the complex and highly

224–39; and Maud Natasha Kozodoy, “A Study in the Life and Works of Profiat Duran” (PhD diss., Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 2006).

⁶ Duran, *Ma’ase Efod*, 21, and translation in Stern, “Hebrew Bible,” 36.

abstract task of adding the vowels, the cantillation marks, and the multitude of masoretic notes and lemmata as well as the appropriate liturgical cross-references (to haftarah readings for the various occasions throughout the year). Although it was a halakhic commandment to copy the Torah, these ‘finishing touches’ were best left to professionals.

In revisiting the Masoretic Bible BNF, Hébreu 7, I aim to attend more holistically to the book as a project of collaboration in writing and drawing. The collaboration I wish to describe is that between Solomon himself and an (unnamed) team responsible for corrections, vocalization and Masorah, auxiliary masoretic texts, and the decoration of the volume. Unlike this professional team, Solomon was not a professional scribe, but an educated and wealthy layman who arguably wrote his codex to perform a commandment and to display both his piety and his social status. The members of this vocalizer-masorator team, by contrast, were highly skilled in their work and possessed an impressive command of drawing; it is among this team that we should seek the most likely designer of the well-known sanctuary implements frontispiece.

Despite the colophon’s assertion of a single scribal identity, it is unlikely that BNF, Hébreu 7 is the work of a single person. I will substantiate this argument here with reference to three features: firstly, the extensive corrections of the scribe’s numerous errors, showing him to be anything but a professional; secondly, the decoration of the paratextual elements such as parashah and haftarah markers, Psalm numbers and verse counts; and thirdly, the division of labor between the decorator(s) and the main vocalizer-masorator. To anticipate my findings, after a renewed study of the decoration of parashah marks, haftarah marks, Psalm numbers, and the decorated verse counts separating the biblical books, and a comparison with the Masorah figurata, I no longer believe that these were the work of one hand. Following and elaborating on Kogman-Appel’s assessment that this work entailed a division of labor between more than one person,⁷ I will argue for the presence of a professional team involving the vocalizer-masorator(s) and more than one rubricator or filigree artist. In his colophon, Solomon ben Raphael is silent about this ‘support team.’ Colette Sirat cautioned that “the most difficult cases to detect are those where the scribe does not tell what we would consider ‘the whole truth.’ A relatively frequent case is where the scribe of the

⁷ Kogman-Appel, *Jewish Book Art*, 132–33.

colophon ‘forgets’ to mention that he has only written part of the book...’’⁸ BNF, Hébreu 7 is such a case of a scribe “forgetting” to tell “the whole truth,” which is that Solomon was a patron as well as a scribe.

1. The Corrections

Solomon ben Raphael almost managed to conceal “the whole truth” from the most recent cataloguer. Despite his initial assessment that “this manuscript constitutes a single codicological unit and is the work of a sole scribe,”⁹ Javier del Barco clearly recognized the separate identity of the masorator in at least one egregious case of the scribe’s miscopying.¹⁰ His observation that the scribe had omitted a whole Psalm verse and that the masorator had filled it in opened for me a new avenue of inquiry: textual corrections as evidence of a division of labor.

Solomon ben Raphael copied his Bible with a fine calligraphic hand, but this aesthetic accomplishment is misleading. Although copied by somebody who must have known the Bible well, the codex is full of copying mistakes and thus deviates from the high standard of accuracy achieved generally by the copyists of medieval Sephardi Bibles, who, as Stern reminds us, lived in an environment where biblical Hebrew was studied intensively.¹¹ For example, another scholar active in Perpignan, Menahem Meiri (1249–1316), ascribed so much authority to a model Torah scroll written and corrected by Rabbi Meir Abulafia (Ramah, ca. 1170–1244) that a great Ashkenazi rabbi by the name of Samuel ha-Qatan ben Jacob travelled all the way to Toledo to acquire a hummash copied from it to serve as a model for Ashkenazi Torah scroll copyists.¹²

Against this background, we note that the biblical text in BNF, Hébreu 7 is marred by numerous errors. In some parts an error is found on every other folio, though the frequency of errors varies. Altogether, I have thus far found forty-six corrected

⁸ Colette Sirat, *Hebrew Manuscripts of the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press), 209.

⁹ Javier del Barco, *Bibliothèque nationale de France. Hébreu 1 à 32. manuscrits de la Bible hébraïque* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 46.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 47.

¹¹ Stern, “Hebrew Bible,” 14. The term ‘Spanish’ should be understood for our purposes as ‘Sephardi,’ and to include Catalonia, Languedoc-Roussillon and Provence.

¹² Menahem Meiri, *Kiryat sefer*, ed. Moshe Hirschler (Jerusalem: Vagshel, 1996), 48. See also Stern, “Hebrew Bible,” 15.

errors in the Pentateuch section of the Bible, that is, on folios 14v–140r. In Table 1 in the appendix, I have listed the folios on which these errors and corrections are to be found. It is very likely that more will come to light. Casual perusal indicates that the errors continue throughout the remainder of the codex.¹³ The errors in BNF, Hébreu 7 should not be taken as a matter of course, but used as evidence for an understanding of the making of this codex.

The errors can be divided into three categories. The first type of error, and the most frequent, consists of words dropped, more often than not at the end of lines. The second type of error, much less frequent, occurs where the scribe has chosen an incorrect divine name, although to be fair it is not impossible that his model was defective or exhibited a variant recension. The third type, very infrequent, consists of spelling errors.

These errors were subsequently corrected in the intercolumnia and margins in a contemporary script only slightly larger than the tiny script of the Masorah, and of about the same size as the haftarah indicators in the second part of the codex. It is my contention that these corrections were carried out by the vocalizer-masorator. My reason for ascribing the corrections to him is the similarity of the script of the corrections to the script of the Masorah. It is the same font that also supplies the masoretic notes indicating middles of books and the masoretic/calendrical texts preceding and following the biblical text. But even more crucial is the fact that all the corrections are vocalized. It seems to me most plausible that the vocalizer-masorator discovered the errors in the process of vocalization, a task which was impeded by missing words in the text, which it would have been relatively easy for the vocalizer-masorator to supply, since he was working from a model codex, just like Solomon ben Raphael had done, only of necessity with greater precision than the latter. To the vocalizer, every letter counts.

2. Decoration of Textual Divisions (Parashah Markers, Psalm Numbers, Verse Counts, Haftarah Markers) and Its Relation to the Masorah figurata

¹³ The omission, on folio 368r, of a long Psalm passage has already been noted by Del Barco, Hébreu 1 à 32, 47: “Lacunes et notes marginales: au f. 368r, le massorète a ajouté le passage manquant dans le Ps 18 dans un espace laissé vacant par le texte consonantique.”

The Masorah magna and parva were written presumably by the vocalizer. Then there is the question of who wrote the paratextual numberings and verse counts. As far as I can tell, these were written in two very different scripts. The parashah markers (pe-resh-shin) in the Pentateuch appear to have been written by Solomon ben Raphael, though decorated separately in red ink. It is not clear why, when the scribe had erroneously inserted a parashah marker on folio 65v at Exodus 32:15, that parashah marker was decorated prior to being erased; but this sequence of events also suggests that more than one, possibly more than two persons were involved in the making of the codex. The Psalm numbers—letters written in the margin alongside the incipit of each Psalm—can equally be ascribed to Solomon.

By contrast, the haftarah markers in the Prophets and Hagiographa, which specify the weekly or festival Torah portion for which the haftarah is destined, were written in a smaller module by a masorator's hand, although not as small as the Masorah parva interspersed between the text columns; I do not believe they are by the hand of Solomon ben Raphael, but that the vocalizer-masorator wrote them. Finally, the verse counts between biblical books, which effectively serve as book divisions, were written in a very small module, the size of the Masorah magna, presumably by the masorator as well. Whatever the precise individual attribution of the verse counts and the haftarah markers, with their slightly different sized modules, it seems clear that a complex process for the annotation of the biblical text was followed.

While the parashah markers and Psalm numbers were written by a different hand from that of the haftarah markers and verse counts, their decoration cannot usually be distinguished along the same lines. It appears that although more than one decorator was involved, the stylistic differences do not correspond to the different scripts visible in the parashah markers and Psalm numbers, on the one hand, and the haftarah markers and verse counts, on the other.

Katrin Kogman-Appel discussed the authorship of the decoration of the paratextual markers for parashah, haftarah, Psalm numbers, and verse counts,¹⁴ and I wish to elaborate on her assessment in more detail here. Kogman-Appel found that “the work was divided according to quires” but that in some quires more than one hand was at work. She further demonstrated how different the styles of the different draftsmen were in their drawing style:

¹⁴ Kogman-Appel, *Jewish Book Art*, 132–33.

... the first skilled and secure, working in a very delicate technique and producing a refined design, and the second stiffer, creating thicker and cruder lines. The repertoire of forms applied by the first decorator is richer and includes stylized foliage designs, spared ground interlace patterns, abstract facial features, and stylized animal heads.¹⁵

Kogman-Appel suggested that the more accomplished hand took the lead on the initial folios of some quires. There are indeed differences in style among the decorative rubrication of the biblical text. There are also important stylistic differences between the drawn elements of the Masorah magna, on the one hand, and the parashah/haftarah markers and Psalm verses and verse counts, on the other. These differences support Kogman-Appel's view that a division of labor was operative. However, I do not believe that the artistically superior rubricator worked with an artistically inferior assistant, or at least I do not believe that this question can be approached without considering the Masorah magna. Rather, in reviewing all the pen-drawn decorations in the codex in relation to the writing of the codex, I conclude that the division of labor largely followed function. The vocalizer-masorator and at least one rubricator shared the work of decorating all the paratexts, be they Masorah figurata or the text markers mentioned above.

It may be noted that the decorated verse counts, although functionally explicit, effectively provide decorative head pieces to most books subsequent to Genesis (whose incipit is unadorned because it follows immediately upon the painted sanctuary pages and a Masorah figurata carpet page). This function as decorative book separator is especially evident on folio 72r, where the verse count is written in a simple zigzag micrography at the bottom of column one, whereas the filigree decorative band, with a pair of birds perched on loops suspended from either end, has been placed at the top of column two (fig. 3.1). Similarly, on folio 206v there would have been enough space to add the decorated verse count at the bottom of the column ending Samuel; instead, this decorative element has been moved to the top of folio 207r, where the beginning of Kings starts on line four, making space for the decorative panel as a kind of heading device. Exceptionally, at the end of Proverbs, at the bottom of folio 417r, the verse count has been left entirely undecorated, whereas a filigreed Star of David ornament

¹⁵ Ibid., 132–33.

enclosing a masoretic note heads the book of Job on the opposite folio. The verse count panels were decorated in the same red rubricator's ink as the parashah and haftarah markers were. The question is whether the design of the Masorah figurata is due to the same person.

The paratextual markers were not the only outlet for ornamentation. The Masorah magna was sometimes shaped into patterns to form Masorah figurata, which occasionally included pure drawing (i.e. not composed of letters). The Masorah magna, especially that written out in the *bas-de-page*, is shaped into Masorah figurata on the first and last folios of each of the 43 quires. The designs on the last page of a quire and the first page of the subsequent quire sometimes match, but by no means always. The Masorah magna also takes the form of Masorah figurata at the principal divisions of the Bible: at the beginning of Genesis (fol. 14v–15r), the end of the Pentateuch (fol. 140r), the end of the Prophets (fol. 364v–365r), and the end of Chronicles (fol. 512v).¹⁶ Is the design of the Masorah figurata due to the same person who drew the verse count panels and the ornaments surrounding the parashah and haftarah markers? With one exception, a clearly definable difference can be observed between the Masorah figurata articulating the quires and the Masorah figurata articulating the main divisions of the Bible: the former commands a varied range of relatively simple geometric motifs, with a predilection for the six-pointed Star of David.¹⁷ The geometry of the Masorah figurata is often lacking in perfect symmetry; one might call it charmingly lopsided. Some of these Masorah figurata forms are either outlined or filled with drawn (rather than written) motifs. The design and drawing is generally very simple (small circles and crosshatched fields) and characterized by lines that are as careless as the masorator's handwriting is careful. In sum, the Masorah figurata is largely a work of fine writing but of less-than-impressive draftsmanship.

The general mediocrity of the Masorah figurata design contrasts with the skillfulness of the exceptional examples of Masorah figurata found at the beginning of Genesis, and at the ends of the Pentateuch, Prophets, and Hagiographa. Here, an accomplished draftsman has designed large stylized fleur-de-lis shapes akin to the Aaron's rod found in the painted sanctuary page on folio 12v; this design is also closely

¹⁶ Fols. 14v, 140r, and 512v are reproduced in Sed-Rajna and Fellous, *Les manuscrits hébreux*, 26, 27, and 29.

¹⁷ See for example fols. 457v–458r, full pages reproduced in Del Barco, *Hébreu 1à 32*, 44–45.

related to the floral ornamentation of many of the paratextual markers (parashah, haftarah and Psalm numbers). On folio 140r, the end of the hummash, a pair of ferocious birds' heads, of very fine draftsmanship, has been incorporated into the fleur-de-lis design.¹⁸ These are the kind of beast abounding among the rubricator's designs of parashah and haftarah markers throughout the codex. The elaborate fleur-de-lis Masorah figurata designs occur only at the beginning and end of the Bible and at major textual junctions. There is one exception to the consistent difference between the simple, even lopsided geometric Masorah figurata articulating quires and the fleur-de-lis Masorah figurata articulating main biblical divisions: on folios 25v–27r, the end of the first quire and the beginning of the second, the Masorah figurata is designed in fleur-de-lis shapes. I account for this exception by supposing that the rubricator provided the underdrawing and was then followed by the masorator who wrote out the Masorah following the underdrawn outlines. This conclusion I draw from a disjunction between the overall design of the Masorah and the drawn details. On folio 26r, the masorator filled the design with a very lopsided line-and-dot pattern out of kilter with both the fleur-de-lis design of that page itself, and of the elegant drawn elements of the Masorah figurata (fig. 3.2). The interaction between the rubricator and the masorator on these pages—beginning and end of the Bible, principal divisions, and the junction of quires 1 and 2—can be described as a true collaboration, where two people are working together on one design, one drawing and the other writing.

Elsewhere in the codex, we find a less coordinated division of labor (where each person 'does their own thing'): where Masorah figurata at quire beginnings and ends happen to coincide with parashah or haftarah marks on the same folios, the designs are entirely independent of each other. Where we find both a decorated parashah or haftarah marker and Masorah figurata of any ambition, the latter, though often including some element of drawing (i.e., not by means of letters, but drawing in addition to lettering), is invariably designed in a pattern independent of the former. I suspect that the masorator wrote his Masorah figurata first, and that the quire subsequently came into the hands of the rubricator for the decoration of the parashah and haftarah markers, and the latter gave vent to his own, very different design ideas. At any rate, they are always wholly unconnected. Very occasionally, the fine filigree lines radiating from a design will cut across and interfere with an already written Masorah magna. Mostly, the two

¹⁸ Sed-Rajna and Fellous, *Les manuscrits hébreux*, 27 (with photo).

independent design ideas keep out of each other's way, such as for example on folio 72r, at the beginning of the book of Leviticus: two birds on perches are suspended from the decorated panel at the top of column two; the one on the right finds a narrow place in the intercolumnium, where it just manages to skirt the Masorah magna running straight down vertically (fig. 3.1). Folio 273v offers another good example (fig. 3.3). The masorator has designed his lower Masorah in the shape of a crescent moon and star, in illustration of the fact that the haftarah on this page is read on Shabbat Rosh Hodesh. The haftarah marker is anthropomorphic, and keeps to itself, aligned with but unconnected to the Masorah. Other examples where the rubricator's work skirts the already existing Masorah figurata abound. These uncoordinated designs are consistently observable from the beginning of the Bible in quire 2 to its end in quire 43: never does a unitary overarching composition incorporate both Masorah figurata and paratextual markers. Different people designed the two systems of Masorah and of paratextual markers.

The majority of the parashah and haftarah markers, Psalm numbers, and verse counts were decorated by a highly accomplished draftsman, who produced designs both inventive and elegant, be they abstract, floral, zoo- or anthropomorphic. His snarling, open-jawed beasts (e.g. fols. 94r, 179r, 212r, 212v, 269v) and pretty or fierce birds (e.g. fols. 36r, 72r, 78r, 208r) are highly stylized and cannot be assigned to any particular species. The floral motifs tend to be variations on a slightly Islamicized fleur-de-lis theme known from Castilian Bible decoration, such as Madrid, Biblioteca de la Universidad Complutense de Madrid, BH MS 1.¹⁹ But here they are often extended by long, almost Gothic filigree tendrils reaching across the page. One can see a development over the course of the codex's folios, from relatively conservative motifs inspired by the visual vocabulary of earlier Castilian Bibles (fols. 17r, 20r, 22v, 26r, 30r, 33r) to progressively more and more daring uses of fleuroné tendrils and asymmetrical free-style designs (e.g. fols. 78v, 88r). The first zoomorphic heads are found on folio 36r, the first human figures (apart from cherubim on the Sanctuary page, fol. 12v), on folio 115r (a pair of cherubim-like, youthful longhaired half-figures, facing

¹⁹ Kogman-Appel, *Jewish Book Art*, fig. 22; Esperanza Alfonso, et al., eds., *Biblias de Sefarad – Bibles of Sepharad* (Madrid: Biblioteca Nacional de España, 2012), no. 2, 186-89, with further literature.

each other—the parashah is Masa‘e, Num. 33–36).²⁰ The human figures (e.g. fols. 115r, 170v, 211r, 222v, 231v, 268v, 269r, 272r, 273v, 293v, 310r, 337v) are marked by the drooping eyes also characteristic of the cherubim on folio 12v; some wear bonnets and hats (fol. 222v), some sport pointy beards. The abstract ornaments exhibit the boundless ingenuity of a seasoned filigree artist. In a few cases, as Gabrielle Sed-Rajna and Sonia Fellous have pointed out, the parashah/haftarah markers allude to content or context.²¹ For example, the beginning of parashah Shelah (Num. 13:1–15:41) is decorated with the fruit of the land of Israel (Num. 13:23): grape, fig and pomegranate can be easily made out and are labeled (fol. 100v, fig. 3.4);²² the marker indicating the haftarah for the parashah of Pinhas (Num. 25:10–31:1) is decorated with a hand holding up a spear, thus alluding to the violent content of the parashah. The haftarot for both days of Rosh hashanah are ornamented with a man blowing a shofar, though they vary somewhat in style (fig. 3.5).²³ “Such variation may have been expected, though it is also possible that more than one artist was engaged in the project.” At any rate, no two designs are identical, though some motifs recur in similar forms.

Three of the four parashah markers in quire four, and all five in quire five, as well as the single haftarah marker for the Ninth of Av (fol. 279v, fig. 3.6) were probably drawn by a different hand or different hands. Here, relatively simple geometric patterns are drawn without much aspiration to elegance. These are throughout of a relatively stiff design, as Kogman-Appel has stated, and consist of uncomplicated geometric and interlace design. They tend to be rather small and avoid the invasive tendrils favored by the main rubricator. Far from being due to a lowly assistant, this work may have been that of the principal vocalizer-masorator, who was working in a less familiar genre, that of filigree drawing.

It is thus very clear that (at least) two people were involved in drawing decorative elements throughout the codex: the vocalizer-masorator, who sometimes included geometric or floral drawing among his Masorah figurata, and a rubricator

²⁰ Reproduced in Eva Frojmovic, “Jewish Mudejarismo and the Invention of Tradition,” in *Late Medieval Jewish Identities: Iberia and Beyond*, eds. Carmen Caballero-Navas and Esperanza Alfonso (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 250, fig. 14.8.

²¹ Sed-Rajna and Fellous, *Les manuscrits hébreux*, 28.

²² The minute script of the labels clearly differs from the adjacent Masorah.

²³ Sed-Rajna and Fellous, *Les manuscrits hébreux*, 28 (fol. 293v, shofar blower illustrating the Haftarah for the second day).

(possibly working with further colleagues, to account for some stylistic variations). It is this very accomplished rubricator, the master of filigree decoration, who was probably the assistant of or subcontracted to the principal vocalizer-masorator. Their difference is not one of talent, I wager, but of expertise, and there may have been an age difference as well, with the rubricator presumed to be younger. There is one case where this rubricator also exhibits his writing: on folio 100v, the parashah marker includes the names of the fruit, and it is evident that the minute but careless, semi-cursive script does not belong to the masorator (fig. 3.4).

We can now revisit the final folio of the manuscript, the page containing the colophon, and also look again at the relationship between scribe and vocalizer. On this last page, Solomon ben Raphael completed the second book of Chronicles in the right column, taking up most of the column. He then centered his colophon, which he wrote in the same square script of the same size as the biblical text, in the left column, thus leaving space above and below. The vocalizer-masorator had therefore some extra space left above and below the text. The text in this column was not to be vocalized, and there was moreover no need for any Masorah. Nevertheless, the vocalizer-masorator extended his masoretic work into two decorative shapes. Above the colophon, an interlaced six-pointed star in a medallion; below the colophon, a symmetrical floral ornament. Both can be found elsewhere in the codex and aesthetically connect the end back to the beginning. On folio 14r a large six-pointed star ornament filled the entire page, preceding the beginning of Genesis.²⁴ And on folio 14v, a very similar floral ornament is reiterated with variations in the outer margin and the intercolumnium. While this ornamental device is akin to the so-called candelabra ornaments in the margins of other Sephardi Bibles, here this shape is reminiscent of nothing so much as Aaron's flowering rod in the famous temple implements frontispiece on folio 12v. We can thus begin to see how the vocalizer-masorator and the rubricator, while apparently unable to sign their handiwork, have quite literally framed, in a rather competitive way, the work of the main scribe.

3. Conclusion

²⁴ Reproduced in Kogman-Appel, *Jewish Book Art*, fig. 88.

Having observed how the vocalizer-masorator and the rubricator(s) provided a careful aesthetic framing for the scribe, we can proceed to a further assessment of the vocalizer-masorator and rubricator(s) as shapers of the book as a material object, by means of a drawing as well as writing. The merit of turning a copy of the Bible into an aesthetically pleasing object is undoubtedly theirs. Malachi Beit-Arié distinguished between two different types of scribe:

[T]here must have been a fundamental difference between the reproduction of texts by a hired scribe and by a talmid hakham, a learned man or a scholar, who was copying texts for his own use. I suggest calling the former a scribe, and the latter a copyist. ... [T]he average hired scribe would have been consciously more loyal to his model, probably would have avoided critical and deliberate intervention in the transmission, yet would have been more fallible and vulnerable to the involuntary changes and mistakes conditioned by the mechanics of copying, while the scholar-copyist might intentionally interfere in the transmission...²⁵

In BNF, Hébreu 7, Solomon ben Raphael acted as neither. He wrote for his own use and thereby made pretensions to the status of a learned copyist. But he was not completely successful: although the text before him was sacrosanct and he would not have dreamed of interfering with it, he certainly committed the errors typical of a hired scribe: “the involuntary changes and mistakes conditioned by the mechanics of copying.” A hybrid between a “scribe” and a “copyist” in Beit-Arié’s terms, Solomon ben Raphael was also a patron, a man of leisure who probably could have afforded to hire a team of scribes for the whole project, but chose to perform his learning and piety by writing the consonantal text himself, as best as he was able to.

Appendix

Table 1: List of Corrections Occurring in the Pentateuch

²⁵ Malachi Beit-Arié, “Publication and Reproduction of Literary Texts in Medieval Jewish Civilization: Jewish Scribality and Its Impact on the Texts Transmitted,” in *Transmitting Jewish Traditions: Orality, Textuality, and Cultural Diffusion*, ed. Yaakov Elman and Israel Gershoni (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2000), 230–31.

Folio/column number	Book/verse	<u>Omissions</u> are underlined.	Notes
16v col 1	Gen. 4:23	hear <u>my</u> voice	qoli spelled without vav, corrected with vav
18r col 2	Gen. 8:2	and the fountains of the <u>deep</u>	tehom spelled without vav, corrected in outer margin
19r col 2	Gen. 10:4	the descendants of Yavan: Elisha and Tarshish, the <u>Kittim</u> and the Dodanim	kittim omitted, supplied in margin
20r col 1	Gen. 11:21	and he begot <u>sons</u> and daughters	banim omitted at line end, added on beyond line end ²⁶
20v col 2	Gen. 12:20	and they sent him off with his wife and <u>all</u> that he possessed	Word omitted in mid-line, supplied in intercolumnium
21v col 1	Gen. 15:2	oh Lord God, what can you give me?	God written as Elohim, in margin substituted with tetragrammaton
21v col 2	Gen. 15:8	oh Lord God, by what will I know?	Lord God = tetragrammaton elohim, substituted in margin with Adonai tetragrammaton
24r col 2	Gen. 20:3	but <u>God</u> came to Abimelech in a dream by night	elohim omitted
25r col 1	Gen. 21:12	<u>listen</u> to her voice	shema omitted
27r col 1	Gen. 24:30	and when he heard the words <u>of Rebekah</u> his sister	rivkah omitted
29v col 1	Gen. 27:19	and Jacob said <u>to his father</u>	el aviv omitted
30r col 2	Gen. 28:5	Laban <u>son of</u> Bethuel	ben omitted at end of line, supplied in margin
31v col 1	Gen. 30:16	surely <u>hired</u>	sakhor omitted at end of line, supplied in intercolumnium
34v col 1	Gen. 34:12	ask of me a bride-prize <u>ever so high</u>	me 'od omitted, supplied in outer margin

²⁶ Reproduced in Kogman-Appel, Jewish Book Art, fig. 90.

39v col 1	Gen. 41:48	and in the seven <u>years</u> of plenty the land brought forth	shanim omitted end of line, supplied in intercolumnium
43v col 2	Gen. 47:29	and he called <u>his son</u> Joseph	li-veno dropped from line end, supplied in inner margin (gutter)
44r col 1	Gen. 48:3	God almighty appeared <u>to me</u> at Luz	elai omitted in mid-line, with a correction mark in its place, supplied in intercolumnium
45v col 2	Exod. 1:10	lest they <u>multiply</u>	yirbeh omitted mid-line, supplied in intercolumnium
46r col 1	Exod. 2:5	and she saw <u>the</u> basket among the reeds	et omitted mid-line, supplied in inner margin (gutter)
49r col 2	Exod. 7:16	and you shall say to him: <u>the Lord</u> , the God of the Hebrews, has sent me	Tetragrammaton omitted from end of line, added in outer margin
56r col 1	Exod. 17:3	to kill <u>my children</u> and my cattle	et-banai omitted end of line, added in intercolumnium
56v col 2	Exod. 18:20	show them <u>the</u> way wherein they must walk	et (ha-derekh) omitted mid-line, added in intercolumnium
58v col 1	Exod. 21:24	foot <u>for</u> foot	tahat omitted end of line, added in intercolumnium
59r col 1	Exod. 22:16	if <u>her father</u> utterly refuse to give her unto him	aviha omitted mid-line, added in intercolumnium
60r col 1	Exod. 24:3	and <u>Moses</u> came and told the people	moshe omitted end of line, added in intercolumnium
60r col 2	Exod. 25:3	and this is the offering <u>which you shall take</u> of them	asher tiqehu omitted mid-line, added in outer margin
60v col 1	Exod. 25:19	and make one cherub at the one end, and one cherub at the other <u>end</u>	mi-katsah omitted end of line, added in intercolumnium
61r col 2	Exod. 26:10	and thou shalt make fifty loops on the edge of <u>the one curtain</u> that is outmost in the	ha-yeryiah omitted mid-line, added in outer margin

		first set	
71v col 1	Exod. 40:9	and you shall take the anointing oil and anoint the tabernacle and everything that is in it, and you shall make it and <u>all</u> its equipment holy, and it will be holiness	kol omitted
73r col 1	Lev. 3:1	and if his offering be a sacrifice of <u>peace-offering</u>	shelamim omitted mid-line, added in intercolumnium
74r col 1	Lev. 4:33	it shall be slaughtered <u>as a sin offering</u> in the place where	le-hatta 't omitted end of line, added in intercolumnium
76v col 2	Lev. 8:30	and <u>Moses</u> took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood	moshe omitted mid-line, added in intercolumnium
78r top of col 2	Lev. 11:15	<u>and every raven after its kind</u>	missing entirely mid-line, whole sentence added in outer margin
90v col 1	Lev. 27:21	<u>when</u> the field is then <u>released</u> <u>by the jubilee</u> , it becomes consecrated to God	be-tseto ba-yovel omitted mid-line, added in outer margin
92v col 1	Num. 3:4	Nadav and Avihu died <u>before</u> <u>God</u> when they offered unauthorized fire to God in the Sinai Desert	lifne tetragrammaton omitted mid line, added in outer margin
94v col 2	Num. 5:13	<u>a man</u> may have lain with her carnally, keeping it hidden from her husband	ish omitted mid-line, added in intercolumnium
101r col 2	Num. 14:2	<u>the entire community</u> was saying, 'We wish we had died in Egypt!'	kol ha- 'edah omitted end of line, added in outer margin
105v col 2	Num. 20:3	the people disputed with Moses, <u>and they said</u> , saying: 'We wish that we had died together with our brothers before God!'	va-yomru omitted mid-line, added in intercolumnium

107r col 2	Num. 22:13	and Balaam rose up <u>in the morning</u>	ba-boqer omitted end of line, added in outer margin
107v col 1	Num. 22:22	and <u>God's</u> anger flared	The scribe has written the tetragrammaton, the corrector has framed it in a box and written the correct elohim in the outer margin
112r col 2 line 1	Num. 29:14	for thirteen bulls, two tenths for each ram, for two <u>rams</u>	ha-elim omitted end of line, added in outer margin
119r col 1	Deut. 2:33	and <u>all</u> his people	kol omitted, supplied in margin
126r col 2	Deut. 12:22	as <u>the</u> gazelle and the hart is eaten	et omitted, supplied in margin (possibly by scribe)
132r col 2	Deut. 23:22	the lord will surely require it <u>from you; and it will be a sin in you.</u>	Three words omitted, added in the margin (possibly by the scribe himself)
135v col 1	Deut. 28:55	your enemy will straighten you <u>in all</u> your gates	be-khol omitted, supplied in margin
139r col 1	Deut. 32:49	which is in the land of Moab, <u>that is</u> over against Jericho	asher omitted, supplied in margin

Table 2: Quires and Filigree Decorations

Quire number and folios ²⁷	Parashah (P)/Haftarah (H)/book division/verse count: folio number	Attribution and notes	Masorah magna (Masorah figurata) (where occurring in conjunction with other paratextual features)	Attribution and notes
Q1 fols. 2–13			2v–11r masoretic tables in Gothic arches	principal masorator (with some participation from rubricator on fols. 2v–

²⁷ As listed in Del Barco, Hébreu 1 à 32, 46.

				3r?)
			11v–12r masoretic carpet pages	principal masorator
	12v–13r sanctuary pages	Designed by rubricator		
Q2 fols. 14–25			14r full-page Star of David Masorah figurata	princ. mas.
			14v decorated at Gen. 1	fleur-de-lis pattern designed by rubricator?
	17r P 20r P 22v P	rubricator rubricator rubricator		
Q3 fols. 26–37	26r P	rubricator		
	28r P	rubricator		
	30r P	rubricator		
	33r P	rubricator		
	36r P	rubricator		
Q4 fols. 38–49	38v P	princ. mas./second rubricator? ²⁸		
	41v P	rubricator		
	43v P	princ. mas./second rubricator?		
	45v verse count Gen.	rubricator	45v Mm	princ. mas.
	48r P	princ. mas./second		

²⁸ The parashah marker filigrees attributed to the principal masorator in this quire may also be the work of an assistant rubricator, but they differ markedly in their geometric style from the adjacent quires and from the main rubricator.

		rubricator?		
			49v–50r Mm	princ. mas.
Q5 fols. 50– 61	51r P	rubricator? ²⁹	50v–51r Mm.	princ. mas.
	53v P	rubricator?		
	56v P	rubricator?		
	58r P 60r P	rubricator? rubricator?		
Q6 fols. 62– 73	62r P	rubricator? ³⁰		
	64v P	rubricator		
	65v P ³¹	rubricator (1 st animal)		
	67v P	rubricator		
	70r P	rubricator		
	72r verse count Exod.	rubricator (2 birds)	72r Mm	princ. mas.
Q7 fols. 74– 85	74v P	rubricator		
	76v P	rubricator		
	78v P	rubricator		
	80r P	rubricator		
	82r P	rubricator	82r Mm	princ. mas.
	84r P	rubricator	84r Mm	princ. mas.
	85r P	rubricator		
Q8 fols. 86– 97	88r P	rubricator		
	89r P	rubricator?		
	90v verse count Lev.	rubricator	90v Mm	princ. mas.
	94r P	rubricator		

²⁹ The parashah marker filigrees in quire 5 differ in style from both the geometric style of fols. 38v, 43v, and 48r, and from the accomplished fleuroné style of the principal rubricator. This may be either an early stage of development or the work of a competent but not outstanding assistant.

³⁰ In this quire, the decorations develop a greater range and more boldness. Still close to the sanctuary pages design, fleuroné occupies more space on the page. An animal head appears for the first time as part of the decoration.

³¹ Here, a parashah marker was inserted erroneously, decorated, and the letters later erased.

	97v P	rubricator		
Q9 fols. 98–109	100v P 103r P 105r P 107r P 109r P	rubricator rubricator rubricator rubricator rubricator		
Q10 fols. 110–21	112v P 115r P	rubricator rubricator		
	117r verse count Num.	rubricator	117r Mm	princ. mas.? Design unrelated to verse count
	119v P	rubricator		
			121v Mm	princ. mas.
Q11 fols. 122–33			122r Mm	princ. mas.
	122v P 125v P 128v P 130v P	rubricator rubricator rubricator rubricator		
	133v P	rubricator	133v Mm	princ. mas.
Q12 fols. 134–45	136r P 137r P 138r P	rubricator rubricator rubricator		
	139r P	rubricator	139r Mm	princ. mas.
	140r verse count Deut.	Simple zigzag design, princ. mas.	140r Mm	rubricator: fleur-de-lis design with bird heads
	140v H	rubricator	140v Mm	princ. mas.
	141r H	rubricator	141v Mm	princ. mas.
	142v H	rubricator		
Q13 fols. 146–57	155v verse count Josh.	rubricator	155v Mm	princ. mas.
	157v H	rubricator		
Q14 fols. 158–69	163v H 164v H	rubricator		

			169v Mm at quire end	princ. mas.
Q15 fols. 170–81			170r Mm at beginning of quire	princ. mas.
			170v Mm	princ. mas.
	170v verse count Judg., H	H at incipit of Sam.: shofar blower (first day Rosh ha-shanah): princ. mas./rubricator	170v–171 Mm	princ. mas.
	176v H	rubricator		
	179r H	rubricator		
			181v–182r Mm	princ. mas.
Q16 fols. 182–93			182r Mm	princ. mas.
	183v H	rubricator		
	193v H	rubricator		
Q17 fols. 194–205	204v H	rubricator		
			205v–206r Mm	princ. mas.
Q18 fols. 206–17	206v H	rubricator	206v Mm Explicit 1 Sam.	princ. mas.
	207r verse count 1 Sam., H	rubricator and princ. mas.?	207v–208r Mm	princ. mas.
	208r H	rubricator		
	209v H	rubricator		
	211r H	rubricator		
	212r H	rubricator		
	212r H	rubricator		
	212v H	rubricator		
	213r H	rubricator		
	214v H	rubricator		
Q19 fols. 218–29	222v H	rubricator		
	223v H	rubricator		
	229r H	rubricator		

			229v Mm	princ. mas.
Q20 fols. 230–41	230v H	rubricator	230r Mm	princ. mas.
	231v H	rubricator		
	235v H	rubricator		
Q21 fols. 242–53	244r H	rubricator		
	246v verse count Kings, H	rubricator	246v Mm	princ. mas.
			247r Mm	princ. mas.
	249r H	rubricator		
	251r H	rubricator		
			253v Mm	princ. mas.
Q22 fols. 254–65			254r Mm	princ. mas.
	256v H	rubricator		
	262v H	rubricator		
	263r H	rubricator		
	264r H	rubricator?		
	264v H	rubricator		
Q23 fols. 266–77	267v H	rubricator		
	268v H	rubricator		
	269r H	rubricator		
	269v H x 2	rubricator		
	270v H	rubricator		
	271v H	rubricator		
	272r H	rubricator		
	273v H	rubricator	273v Mm	princ. mas.
	274v verse count Isa., H	rubricator. H for Pinhas hand holding spear		
275r H	rubricator			
Q24 fols. 278–89	279r H	rubricator		
	279v H for 9	princ. mas.		

	Av (Jer. 8:13)			
	284v H	rubricator		
			289v Mm	princ. mas.
Q25 fols. 290–301	293v H for Rosh ha- shanah day 2	rubricator (shofar blower)		
	294v H 296v H	rubricator rubricator		
Q26 fols. 302–13	304r H	rubricator		
	310r verse count Jer., H	rubricator	309v–310r Mm	princ. mas.
			313v Mm	princ. mas.
Q27 fols. 314–25			314r Mm	princ. mas.
	317r H 322v H	rubricator rubricator		
Q28 fols. 326–37	327r H 331v H 332r H 332v H 333v H 337r H	rubricator rubricator rubricator rubricator rubricator rubricator		
	337v H	rubricator	337v Mm	princ.mas.
Q29 fols. 338–49	339v	rubricator		
	341r verse count Ezek., H	rubricator	341r Mm	princ. mas.
	341v H 344r H 344v H 345v H 347r H	rubricator rubricator rubricator rubricator rubricator		

	350r H	rubricator	349v–350r Mm	princ. mas. (Stars of David and diamonds)
Q30 fols. 350–61	350v H	rubricator		
	353r H	rubricator		
	355v H 359r H	rubricator rubricator		
Q31 fols. 362–73	362v H	rubricator	362v Mm	princ. mas.
	363r H	rubricator	363r Mm	princ. mas.
	364v explicit Prophets		364v Mm	Aaron's rod patterned Mm (lower), designed by rubricator; upper Star of David: princ. mas.
	365r–373v Ps. nos.	rubricator	365r Mm	princ. mas.
Q32 fols. 374–85	374r–385v all Ps. nos.	rubricator		
	383r Ps. no. and rosette between Ps. 72 and 73	rubricator		
			385v Mm	princ. mas.
Q33 fols. 386–97	386r–396r Ps. nos.	rubricator	386r Mm	princ. mas.
	388v Ps. nos., rosette between Ps. 89 and 90	rubricator		
			397v Mm	princ. mas.
Q34 fols. 398–409	398r–403v Ps. nos.	rubricator	398r Mm	princ. mas.
	403v Ps. no.,	rubricator	403v Mm	princ. mas.

	verse count Ps.			
Q35 fols. 410–21	417r verse count Prov. undecorated			
			417v Mm	rubricator (Star of David above incipit to Job) and princ. mas. (upper and lower Mm)
Q36 fols. 422–33	432v verse count Job	rubricator	432v–433r Mm	princ. mas.
Q37 fols. 434–45			433v–434r Mm	princ. mas.
	434v verse count Ruth	rubricator		
	437r verse count Lam.	rubricator	437r Mm	princ. mas.
	441v verse count Eccles.	rubricator	441v–442r Mm	princ. mas.
Q38 fols. 446–57	446v verse count Esther	rubricator		
	448v verse count Cant.	rubricator		
			457v Mm Star of David design	princ. mas.
Q39 fols. 458–69	458r verse count Dan.	rubricator	458r Mm simple geometr. design	princ. mas.
			469v Mm simple geometr. design	princ. mas.
Q40 fols. 470–81			470r Mm simple geometr. design	princ. mas.
	473r verse count Ezra- Neh.	rubricator		
			481v Mm	Simple geometric Masorah figurata at

				end of quire: princ. mas.
Q41 fols. 482–93			482r and 493v Mm	Simple geometric Masorah figurata at beginning and end of quire: princ. mas.
Q42 fols. 494–505			494r and 505v Mm	Simple geometric Masorah figurata at beginning and end of quire: princ.mas.
Q43 fols. 506–17			506r Mm	princ. mas.
	512v col 1 verse count Chron.	undecorated	512v Mm	A variety of Masorah figurata motifs (Star of David, fleur-de-lis): designed by rubricator
	513r–514r: tables in Gothic arches	design too simple to attribute		
	514v–516r tables in rectang. frames	design too simple to attribute		

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