Menahem ben Saruq's *Mahberet*:
The first Hebrew-Hebrew dictionary

Aharon Maman

Menahem ben Jacob ben Saruq was born at the beginning of the tenth century in Tortosa, Spain, and moved in his youth to Córdoba, the capital of Andalusia and the center of the Umayyad rule and of Jewish learning in Spain in those days. He served for a time as the secretary of Isaac ibn Shaprut, and then of his son, Hisday ibn Shaprut (915-970), the leader of the Jews of Andalusia, who served in the court of the Caliph 'Abd al-Rahmân III (912-961).[1] With Hisday's encouragement, Menahem[2] compiled the *Mahberet*[3], the first Hebrew-Hebrew dictionary, and perhaps the first systematic Hebrew dictionary of any kind. Close to the time when the *Mahberet* was being compiled, a comprehensive Hebrew-Arabic dictionary of biblical terms was written in Jerusalem by the Karaite scholar David ben Abraham Alfâsi[4], but it is not clear whether the two were acquainted with each other's work. Despite a certain resemblance between these dictionaries[5], their compilers may not have copied from each other but instead drew from common sources – for example, both have similar definitions for the entries טוטפות ([*totafot*] *phylacteries*), גדי ([*gdi*] *kid*, in the context of גדי בחלב אמו) and others[6].

Prior to the compilation of these dictionaries, works of a lexicographic nature had been compiled, usually bilingual glossaries for the Bible or parts of it or for particular tractates of the Mishnah[7] and the Talmud[8]. Also compiled were *Aruch* by Zemah ben Paltoy Gaon in Pumbedita (Babylon), around 732 CE,[9] but it was lost, and Rav Sa'adiah Gaon's *Agron*, but it was limited in its scope, providing only a list of about 1,000 nouns recommended to poets.

Mahberet Menahem is, as noted above, the first systematic dictionary of Hebrew. It contains all of the vocabulary of the entire Bible, providing some 2,500 roots, arranged in approximately 8,000 lexemes, in alphabetical order by root, according to Menahem's perception of the root. It is systematic in that the entries are arranged in alphabetical order with the root as a main entry and its derivatives as sub-entries. The alphabetization is usually preserved in relation to the first two letters of the root, but not always in relation to the third. For example, the root חר״ף [*h-r-f*] comes after the root חר״ץ [*h-r-ts*].

Roots comprising four letters or more appear among the regular roots (and are not assigned a separate section, as was done by Menahem's successors, Rabbi Jonah ibn Janah and Rabbi David Qimhi, in their dictionaries). For example, חרצב [*hartsab*] and חרצן [*hartsan*] appear immediately after the root חר״ץ [*h-r-ts*] (and not at the end of all of the entries for the letter *het*). The root is presented with all of its derivatives below it, verbs and nouns alike, and this example was followed by lexicographers throughout the Middle Ages, until modern times, when nouns began to be listed according to their initial letter even if it is not radical. Eliezer Ben Yehuda[10] seems to have been the first Hebrew lexicographer in modern times to separate nouns from verbs. For example, he listed the root כל״ל [*k-l-l*] including its verbal conjugations in the *kaph* section, but placed the noun מכללה ([*mikhlala*] *college*), from the same root, in the *mem* section. In more recent years, other editing systems, such as that used in *Milon ha-Hoveh*,[11] have been developed.

The original name of *Mahberet Menahem* was, apparently, *Sefer Pitronim* (*Book of Interpretations*) and Menahem's pupils referred to it by that name. But in the body of the book, Menahem calls the list of entries that begin with the letter *aleph* – *Mahberet Aleph*, the *bet* section – *Mahberet Bet*, and so on, for a total of 22 *mahbarot*. Thus the name of the entire dictionary became *Mahberet* very close to the time of its completion, and Rashi (Rabbi Shlomo Yitzhaki, 1040-1105) already refers to it by that name[12]. The name *Mahberet* (from חב״ר [*h-b-r*] *to unite*, *associate*, *link up*) reflects contemporary trends in names of dictionaries; it is similar to *Agron* (from אג״ר [*'-g-r*] *to compile*, *collect*), the name of the dictionaries compiled by Rav Sa'adiah Gaon and Alfâsi; the name used for Arabic dictionaries, *Jâmi'*, literally, a collection of words; and the modern Hebrew expression *otzar millim*, the counterpart of the Latin term *thesaurus*. In modern times, due to the tendency to prefer one word to a phrase, the word *millon* was devised, apparently by Eliezer Ben Yehuda (in 1880), on the basis of the word *millah* (*word*), as the equivalent for *dictionary*.

Menahem devoted his dictionary solely to words in the Bible, whose language he considered exemplary, and though he did not compile a grammar book at the same

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Mahberet Menahem page (above) and extract (below) from the Cairo Genizah ms # JTSLA, ENA 3758 1a
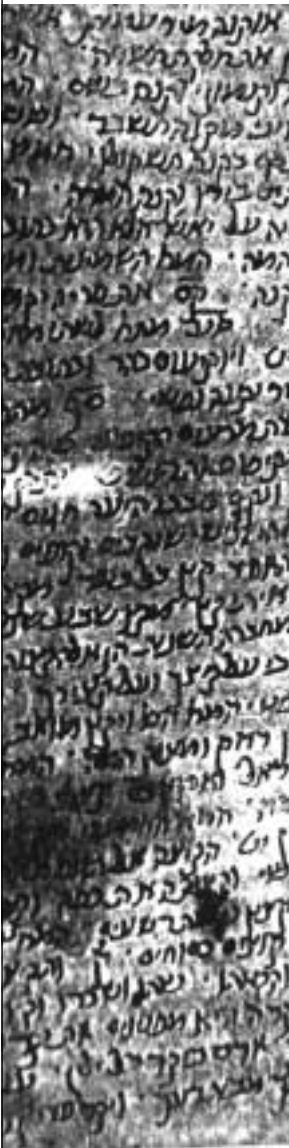
time, the dictionary also includes numerous discussions on grammar, in excursuses or in brief remarks in a few entries. Apart from these explicit remarks, the method used in editing the dictionary is instructive with regard to his grammatical approach, at least in the area of root theory. The theory underlying *Mahberet Menahem* advocates an abstract root that can be composed of one consonant, or of two consonants or more, a theory that also governed the works of Alfâsi, his contemporary, and Judah ben Quraysh, who belonged to the previous generation.[13]

For example, the main entry ש״ב [*sh-b*] includes roots that have been considered as roots in their own right ever since the time of Judah Hayyuj (Fez, Morocco - Córdoba, ca. 1000): נש״ב [*n-sh-b*], יש״ב [*y-sh-b*], שו״ב [*sh-w-b*], שב״י [*sh-b-y*], שב״ב [*sh-b-b*].[14] According to the method used by Menahem and his contemporaries, and the method used by some of their predecessors, every letter that is not used in every inflection of a word, such as *yod*, *waw* and *nun* in these roots, is not radical. After all, for the meaning ישיבה ([*yeshiva*] *sitting*) we say ישבתי ([*yashavti*] *I sat*) in the past tense, but אֵשֵׁב ([*'eshev*] *I'll sit*) in the future tense and שֶׁבֶת ([*shevet*] *sit*) in the infinitive, omitting the initial *yod*. For שִׁיבה ([*shiva*] *returning*), we say אשוב ([*'ashuv*] *I'll return*) in the future tense but שַׁבתי ([*shavti*] *I returned*) in the past tense, omitting the *waw*. And as for שְׁבִיה ([*shivya*] *captivity*), the Bible contains the statement וַיִּשְׁבְּ ממנו שבי ([*vayishb...*], Num. 21:1), omitting the final *yod*. Menahem classified as radical only a letter that exists in every inflection. This approach may have been influenced by the concept of *essence* and *accident* in Aristotelian philosophy, according to which only an attribute that is a constant is an essence and attributes that are variable are merely accidents, which are not fundamental to the definition of the "nature" of the object in question.

But this is not to suggest that Menahem attributed the same meaning to שביה, ישיבה, שיבה and נשיבה ([*neshiva*] *blowing*). In the entry ש״ב [*sh-b*], he arranged them in "departments" (מחלקות [*mahlaqot*]), that is, sub-entries, with each sub-entry containing a different definition. He may have considered them homonymic roots, but it is possible that he was thinking mainly of the root as an organizing entity. And yet, there are some words in the dictionary that are treated as polysemic and deriving from one root, whereas according to his method they should be treated as homonymic.[15]

In any event, all of the roots that modern methodology considers 'defective' or geminate are, according to Menahem's

system, biliteral. For example, on the basis of וַיֵּט משה את ידו ([*vayet...*], Exod. 9:22), he determined that the root of the verb was *tet* alone, and not נט״ה [*n-t-h*] or נט״י [*n-t-y*] as Hayyuj had determined, a generation after Menahem.

The monoliteral roots were not placed in their expected position in Menahem's dictionary, at the beginning of the entries for each letter that serves as the initial letter of a monoliteral root according to his system, but in a concentrated discussion, apparently because they are very few. This discussion is located in the first opportune place – at the beginning of the entries for the letter *bet*, the first letter in the alphabet that serves as the initial letter of a monoliteral root.[16] And since he is already explaining this particular type of root, he launches into a discussion of root theory in general.

Mahberet Menahem is a compact dictionary, and most of its entries are very short. Usually the entry is structured as follows: it comprises a main entry, and if this main entry has a few definitions, they are presented as "departments". Each department includes the relevant words, a few examples from the Bible and brief definitions, usually by means of a synonym in a general mode. When summing up the meaning of several entries that he views as belonging to the same semantic family, Menahem uses the following formula: עניין המה X (*they are from the meaning of X*). For example, all of the citations presented in the entry ב״ך [*b-kh*], department 1, were defined עניין הנעה המה – i.e., "they are from the meaning of movement".

The *Mahberet* contains some embryonic entries that offer only an example from the Bible and no definition, on the assumption that the educated reader will draw the meaning from the example. There are also entries with an alternative definition in the form of כמשמעו, i.e., "in its literal meaning" or "as is known",[17] but without a concrete definition. Hence, the dictionary was not written for laymen but rather for the learned who already had a good basic knowledge of the Bible.

The overwhelming majority of entries contain no grammatical, etymological or semantic discussions (for example, no antonyms are listed); no clues to the declension of the word, neither of the verbs deriving from it nor of the nouns; and, no comments on syntax. The *Mahberet* is mainly a dictionary for the *peshat* (*literal meaning*) philological significance of the word.[18]

The entries are in most cases spelled as they appear in the Bible; the plene is plene and the deficient is deficient,

and the entries and the citations are presented without vocalization. As was the custom of language scholars of the time, no references are provided for the biblical citations, on the assumption that the context of the citation is a sufficient indication of its location in the Bible (and in a few cases also in the Mishnah). However, modern editors (see below) added references as needed.

The *Mahberet* is a dictionary devoted to the entire Bible, including the Aramaic words in the biblical text. Menahem does not assign a special section to the Aramaic words, as was done by Rabbi David Qimhi (Provence, thirteenth century) in his *Sefer ha-Shorashim* (*Book of the Roots*) and as is customary in modern biblical dictionaries. Instead, he integrated them among the Hebrew entries, as if it were all one language. For example, the Hebrew citation וַיִּמָּלֵךְ לִבִּי עָלַי ([*vayimalekh…*] Neh. 5:7) and the Aramaic citation מִלְכִּי יִשְׁפַּר עֲלָךְ ([*milki…*] Dan. 4:24) appear in one entry in the second department of the root מל״ך [*m-l-kh*].

It was not that Menahem did not distinguish between the two languages, but his approach to the dictionary was more philological than linguistic, and since the dictionary concerns a particular book – the Bible, in its entirety – he did not separate the two languages used in it. In this sense, separation would be merely a technical matter.

Even though the *Mahberet* includes all of the words in the Bible, it does not include names, neither of people nor of places. (Such names were usually dealt with in concordances, encyclopaedias and lexicons for the Bible, but not in dictionaries.)

Menahem was a methodical scholar who was consistent to an extreme in his opinions, and had a critical, scientific way of looking at things. Since root theory was a focus of great interest in this period when the philological interpretation of the Bible was coming into its own, Menahem and the other members of his generation considered the status of each letter in a word – that is, whether it was radical or servile. In one of the early excursuses in the *Mahberet*, in the entry אב״ח [*'-b-h*], Menahem leveled instructive criticism at Judah ben Quraysh. Ibn Quraysh[19] explained the unique occurrence of this root in the phrase אִבְחַת חֶרֶב ([*'ivhat herev*] Ezek. 21:20; *slaughter, massacre of the sword*) as if it were deriving from the cognate אבעת חרב [*iv'at herev*], that is, from בְּעָתָה ([*be'ata] trouble, fear*; the word אִבְעַת [*'iv'at*] is, of course, an invention of Ibn Quraysh). Menahem contended

that Ibn Quraysh had thereby committed several grammatical transgressions. First, he had replaced the letter *het* with *'ayin*. Menahem vehemently objected to letter changes and considered such an act to be arbitrary, irregular, unpredictable and ungrammatical, because if we replace one letter with another, the order of the language will be destroyed. The second transgression was that Ibn Quraysh omitted the letter *aleph* in אבעת, because if the root is בע״ת/בח״ת [*b-'-t/b-h-t*], the *aleph* of אבחת is unnecessary, while Menahem considers it radical. The third was that he had radicalized the *taw* in אבחת, whereas, according to Menahem's system, it is only the feminine morpheme.

Menahem, too, interprets the word אבחת as אימה ([*'eima] great fear*) but although there is no difference between the two philologists concerning the semantics of the word, they differ in how this conclusion was reached and in their grammatical approaches. Menahem's criticism implies that if there is no convincing proof for determining the root, it must be put in its proper perspective: since most *taw*s at the end of words were meant to indicate the feminine gender, this can also be assumed with regard to אבחת, especially since it is part of a construct phrase. Therefore, he determined that its root was אב״ח [*'-b-h*]. And since this word is unique in the Bible (*hapax legomenon*) and there is nothing with which to compare it, we have no choice but to determine its meaning on the basis of the context alone.

As soon as the *Mahberet* was published, it met with strong reactions, first in Spain and subsequently in France and the East as well. The poet and philologist Dunash ben Labrat, Menahem's contemporary and fellow Córdoban, wrote a book in which he presented 180 remarks (or, as Dunash put it, *responses, objections* תשובות [*tshuvot*]) challenging many of Menahem's decisions, both in general and with regard to individual points. For example, he claimed that there was no need to seek a root for a particle such as מה ([*ma] what*) and ruled that only a word that had a grammatical declension could have a root. Dunash also rejected Menahem's determination that יְכַרְסְמֶנָּה ([*yekharsmenna*] Ps. 80:14) is an acronym of יְכָרֵס מֶנָּה ([*yekhares mena*] itself derived from יְמַלֵּא כְּרֵסוֹ מִמֶּנָּה ([*yemalle kreso mimmenna*]; *He* [= *the swine, which symbolizes the enemies of the Jewish people*] *would fill its belly from it* [= *from the vine, which symbolizes the Jewish people*]);[20] he claimed that it was only a quadrilateral verb equal to שדה...[ש]קרסמוה נמלים ([*sade…[she]qirsemuha nemalim*] *a field nibbled by ants*; Mishnah, Pea 2:

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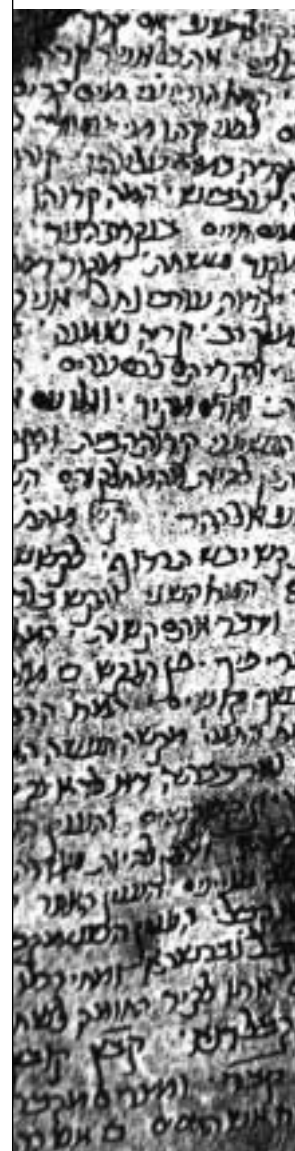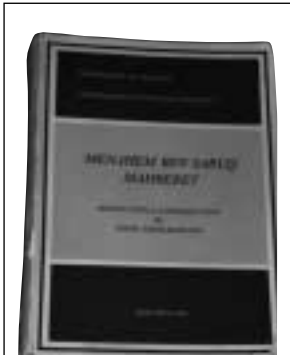
Menahem ben Saruq
Mahberet
edición critica
e introducción de Angel
Sáenz-Badillos
Universidad de Granada e
Universidad de Salamanca
Granada 1986

Tešubot de Dunaš ben
Labrat
edición critica e traducción
española de Angel Sáenz-
Badillos
Universidad de Granada e
Universidad de Salamanca
Granada 1980

7), with a replacement of the *qof* with the *kaph*. But Menahem could not agree with the idea of letter changes, even though Rav Sa'adiah Gaon and other language scholars who preceded Menahem ruled that letters could be assumed to have been changed in certain cases. In general, it can be said that we are touching upon a major question here: Can we assume that phonetics sometimes gnawed away at etymology and morphology? Menahem utterly opposed the system of letters' substitution, because he maintained that it was necessary to leave each letter as it was and interpret it as it was, and not destroy the foundations of the language by means of replacements. He did not even agree to changes that were apparently already common before his time (apart from changing the vowel letters אהו״י [*'-h-w-y*]). For example, he believed that although the roots על״ץ [*'-l-ts*], על״ז [*'-l-z*] and על״ס [*'-l-s*] all mean *joy*, they are three separate roots and not three appearances of one root in which one consonant was varied by means of a change in the position of the articulation or the way in which it was articulated.

The question of כרסם/קרסם [*kirsem/qirsem*] is not confined to the matter of letter substitution. It raises another fundamental question: Should the language of the Bible be compared with the language of the sages? Is the language of the sages equal in status to the language of the Bible? This is not a question of having faith in the sages or accepting their rulings. The question that troubled Menahem ben Saruq as a poet was the purity of language. What is the nature of the language of God, which certainly is more exalted than the language created by humans? What is the language that should serve as a model for poetry?

For example, is the creation of denominative verbs from nouns permissible and considered pure language? Menahem ben Saruq objected to this practice, not only in the poetic language of his contemporaries and the language of liturgy in the centuries just prior to his time, but even in the language of the Mishnah. One thing is clear: more than dealing with the question of what was possible from the standpoint of language, he was dealing with the question of the limits of extrapolating from linguistic forms and phenomena that are documented in the Bible, and with the question of the boundaries of good taste in Hebrew morphology.

Menahem therefore related to a very sensitive point – the boundary of good linguistic taste. He did not consent to making small compromises – he viewed the phenomenon as completely inadmissible. If a practice was not appropriate in ten cases, then it was not appropriate in a single case, and not only in poetry – we have seen that he took his campaign into the field of prose as well, and even dealt retrospectively with ancient literature, the Mishnah! His interest was the language usage in his time and afterward, and defining the concept of purity of the language.

One of Dunash's strongest complaints against Menahem's work was his fundamental ideological objection to the practice of comparing biblical words with Arabic. Menahem compared Hebrew with Aramaic, which he also viewed as being a holy tongue, but even here he did so only when absolutely necessary, and in any event, he did not compare Hebrew with Arabic, which he viewed as a secular language. In order to prove his point, Dunash presented some 160 examples of comparisons with Arabic.

What increased the resonance of the *Mahberet* was the continuation of the polemic over etymological, semantic and grammatical issues that arose in it and Dunash's responses to the dictionary. Three of Menahem's pupils, Isaac ben Gikatilla, Isaac ben Kaprun, and Judah ben David, joined forces to formulate answers to Dunash's responses, and in turn, a pupil of Dunash, Yehudi ben Sheshet, composed answers to their answers. The amazing fact is that even after Judah ben David Hayyuj began to become prominent when he published his theory on the universality of the triliterality of the root with regard to the Hebrew verb[21], the dispute and the mention of *Mahberet Menahem* did not abate. The sages of France, who could not read the writings of Hayyuj, which were written originally in Arabic, continued to use *Mahberet Menahem* for many generations. The person who did the most to spread *Mahberet Menahem*'s fame was the great French commentator Rashi, who quoted it overtly and covertly hundreds of times in his commentary on the Bible and the Talmud. And since Rashi's commentaries became popular throughout the Jewish world, and continue to be so today, Menahem's outdated theory of grammar and the philological interpretation arising from it that took root in Rashi's commentaries are still widely known. At the end of the twelfth century, Rashi's grandson, Rabbenu Tam, who was one of the foremost sages of the *Tosafot*[22], wrote a book meant to settle the disagreements between Menahem and Dunash.[23] Several decades later, Rabbi Joseph Qimhi, the first of the philologists of the Qimhi family, wrote *Sefer ha-Galuy*

(*Book of the Overt*) in his own effort to settle the disputes, this time in light of Hayyuj's theory.

The *Mahberet* came down to us in many copies in manuscript form and in 1854 it was published for the first time by Zvi Filipowski[24], but his edition got very unfavorable reviews. A new critical edition was published by Prof. Angel Sáenz-Badillos[25], one of the greatest modern scholars in the field of Hebrew philology of medieval Spain, based on the best manuscripts and the fragments from the Cairo Genizah.[26]

Many other aspects of the perception and interpretation of the Bible, the status of the rulings of the sages of the Masorah[26] in the new philological commentary, and Menahem's method of interpretation in general are reflected in the *Mahberet*, but space does not permit a discussion of these aspects in this article.[27]

The fact that Menahem's root theory became outdated within the span of a generation does not negate his originality and achievements. He can also be credited with achievements in the formulation of Hebrew grammatical terminology, notwithstanding the fact that some of it evidenced signs of groping in the dark. For example, the root is called both יסוד ([*yesod*] *element*, *foundation*, *base*) and עיקר ([*'iqqar*] *essence*, *principle*) as well as שורש ([*shoresh*] *root*). The act of attributing a particular letter to a root is called להשריש ([*lehashrish*] *to strike/take root*).

One thousand years later, there is no doubt that Menahem was right with regard to many aspects, but was wrong with others. For the latter he was subjected to incisive criticism from his adversary, Dunash ben Labrat. Although these disputes were difficult and unpleasant on the personal level, on the scientific level they were extremely fruitful and there is no doubt that they greatly advanced and benefited Hebrew language research. Moreover, thanks to Menahem it is possible to understand the enormous changes that took place in the generations that followed.

Notes

1. See E. Ashtor, *Korot ha-yehudim bi-sfarad ha-muslemit*, Jerusalem, Qiryat Sefer 1960, Chapter 5, p.103 ff.
2. Menahem is usually referred to by his first name and not by his appellation because his name became attached to the name of his dictionary, *Mahberet*, which is usually called *Mahberet Menahem.*
3. See Y. Blau's introductory article on MENAHEM BEN JACOB IBN SARUQ in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 11, p.1305

(Jerusalem 1971) and the bibliography there.
4. See S.L. Skoss, *The Hebrew-Arabic Dictionary of the Bible Known as Kitab Jâmi' Al-Alfâz (Agron) of David ben Abraham Al-Fâsi the Karaite (Tenth Century)*, vol. I-II, Yale University Press, 1936-1945.
5. See Simcha Pinsker, *Likutei Qadmoniyot le-toledot benei Miqrah veha-literatur shellahem*, Vienna 1860, p.172.
6. See A. Maman, 'Peshat and Derash in Medieval Hebrew lexicons', in *Studies in Memory of Naphtali Kinberg (1948-1997)*, *Israel Oriental Studies* 19, 1999, pp.343-357.
7. The Mishnah is the collection of oral law compiled by Rabbi Judah ha-Nasi at the beginning of the third century CE; also, a single paragraph of this.
8. The Talmud is a compilation of the Mishnah and its Amoraic commentary (*Gemara*); there are the Jerusalem (or Palestinian) Talmud (beginning of the fifth century) and the more authoritative Babylonian Talmud (end of the fifth century).
9. See S. Morag, 'Reshit ha-millona'ut ha-'ivrit ve-ha'aravit', in *Molad* 3, NS 1970-71, pp.575-582.
10. Eliezer Ben Yehuda (1858-1922) is considered to be the renovator of the Hebrew language. His *Complete Dictionary of Ancient and Modern Hebrew*, in 16 volumes, was published from 1908 to 1959.
11. See M. Mishor, 'Milon ha-Hoveh and Milon Sapir', in *Kernerman Dictionary News* 12, 2004, pp.23-26.
**12.** For example, in Rashi's commentary to Leviticus 19:19, entry ובגד כלאים, to Isaiah 19:7, entry ערות, and to Jeremiah 4: 12, entry תקרעי בפוך.
13. Rav Sa'adiah Gaon had a different approach to the root, according to which the root is the actual morphological basis in the noun form (an approach that resembles the concept of the root in Latinate and Anglo-Saxon languages).
14. See *Mahberet*, the entry ש״ב, Badillos edition, pp.359*-360*.
15. For details of the analysis of the examples, see Maman A., 'The Flourishing Era of Jewish Exegesis in Spain: The Linguistic School: Judah Hayyuj, Jonah ibn Janah, Moses ibn Chiquitilla and Judah ibn Bal'am', in *Hebrew Bible – Old Testament: The History of its Interpretation I/2: The Middle Ages* (ed. Magne Saboe), Goettingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2000, chapter 31.1, pp.261-281. With regard to the subject discussed above, see ibid., pp.264-265.
16. Badillos edition, pp.75*-76*.
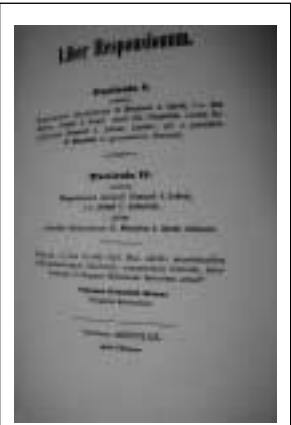
Title page of the *Books of Replies*, Salomo Gottleb Stern edition, Vienna 1860

Title page of the *Books of Replies* (Hebrew), Salomo Gottleb Stern edition, Vienna 1860

Street signs in Tel Aviv, Menahem ben Saruq Street (above) and Hisday ibn Shaprut Street (below)

17. For the meaning of the term כמשמעו, the meaning attributed to it by Dunash ben Labrat, Menahem's contemporanous, and the disagreements about it in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, see Maman A., *Comparative Semitic Philology in the Middle Ages from Saadia Gaon to Ibn Barun (10th-12th cent.)*, Leiden, Brill 2004, pp.276-283.

18. With regard to the concept of philological commentary and Menaham's method of interpretation in general, see Sáenz-Badillos A., 'Early Hebraists in Spain: Menahem ben Saruq and Dunash ben Labrat', in *Hebrew Bible – Old Testament: The History of its Interpretation I/2: The Middle Ages* (ed. Magne Saboe), Goettingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2000, chapter 25.5, pp.96-109.

19. Sometimes the man's surname begins in the form of "ben" (i.e. *son*) and sometimes it begins with its Arabic counterpart, "ibn", but in most cases a fixed form is used, either Hebrew or Arabic.

20. David Alfâsi was also of this opinion.

21. Hayyuj, who lived following Menahem's generation and worked in the same field as his, is regarded as the greatest Hebrew grammarian in the Middle Ages. He discovered the nature of triliterality of the Hebrew verb even for "weak" roots and composed two large books to prove his theory. Among other innovations, he also suggested a theoretical notion of *sakin layyin*, a *soft unvocalized* morpho-phonemic entity, in order to solve all kinds of morpho-phonological Hebrew problems. Hayyuj's views are accepted up to date.

22. *Tosafot* (*Addenda*) refers to the comments made on Rashi's commentary to the Babylonian Talmud, by his nephews, Rabbenu Ya'aqov Tam and the Rashbam (twelfth century), followed by other French and Ashkenazi scholars up to the fourteenth century. In the famous Vilna edition of the Talmud, the Tosafot are printed in the external margins of the Talmudic text, opposite Rashi's commentary, which is printed in the internal margins.

23. 'Sefer teshuvot rabbenu tam', in *Sefer teshuvot dunash ben labrat…'al sefer mahberet harav menahem*, Z. Filipowski edition, London and Edinburgh, 1855.

24. Zvi Ben Yehezkel Filipowski, *Mahberet Menahem*, Edinburgh 1854.

25. A. Sáenz-Badillos, *Menahem Ben Saruq, Mahberet*, Granada 1986. On this edition see I. Eldar, 'Askolat ha-diqduq ha-Andalusit: tequfat ha-reshit', in *Pe'amim* 38, 1989, p.24, n.12.

26. Geniza material refers to 250,000 fragments from ragged Hebrew books and documents which were piled for centuries in a special room in the Cairo Ezra synagogue and are now preserved in several libraries around the world.

27. *Masorah* is the philological apparatus and literature meant to keep the text of the Bible untouched. It is assumed that this kind of literature emerged soon after the canonization of each book of the Bible.

28. And see in Sáenz-Badillos's article and the essays noted above.

Review of B. Katz-Biletzky, *Wörterbuch Deutsch-Hebräisch Phlilosophische, wissenschaftliche und technische Termini*

When I first started studying at university, an amusing adage in common usage was: "the most important Semitic language is German". Scholars of Hebrew and Semitic languages, Biblical and Judaic studies, and indeed any of the scientific disciplines recognized that German had been the principal language of research from the nineteenth century onward. It is hardly surprising that when the Haifa Technion, the most prominent technological institute in Israel, was founded in 1914 on the initiative of the Ezra Organization from Germany, it was decided that teaching should be conducted in German. It was only a consequence of public opposition that prompted the institute to adopt Hebrew as its official language of tuition.

Katz-Biletzky's dictionary is composed of an abundance of Hebrew equivalents for some 25,000 German terms, many of which have been in existence and dispersed throughout the extensive canon of Hebrew philosophical and scientific literature since the Middle Ages. The target audiences for this book are scientists and translators.

The dictionary itself has 720 pages. Following an introduction given in both Hebrew and German is a list of publications used in the compilation of the dictionary. This includes 113 Hebrew sources, books and articles, and 61 mainly German books and dictionaries. The final part of the dictionary includes a list of terms that the author himself has used his considerable scholarship to innovate.