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Qimḥi's *Sefer ha-Shorashim*: A Didactic Tool

Judith Kogel*
IRHT-CNRS

El *Séfer ha-Šorašim* de David Quimḥí: una herramienta didáctica.– Menos de cuarenta años después de que Judá ibn Tibbón tradujera al hebreo el *Kitāb al-Uṣūl* de Ibn Ŷanāḥ, David Quimhí se aprestó a elaborar un nuevo diccionario de raíces hebreas conocido como *Séfer ha-Šorašim*. La obra alcanzó gran éxito y, en consecuencia, eclipsó el trabajo de su predecesor quien, en cualquier caso, había servido de modelo a Quimḥí. Una investigación preliminar basada en aquellas raíces encabezadas por las letras *tet* y *sámej* constituye una muestra representativa para el conocimiento de la historia del texto: primero, porque permite entender mejor los motivos de Quimḥí para llevar a cabo un nuevo diccionario; y después, porque el análisis de este corpus, relativamente pequeño, nos da pistas para entender el acercamiento lexicológico de Quimḥí a la raíz del hebreo y su estrategia a la hora de organizar cada entrada del diccionario.

Palabras clave: Lexicografía hebrea medieval; David Quimḥí; Ibn Ŷanāḥ; herramientas didácticas; lexicografía latina; minimalismo del significado; reglas nemotécnicas.

Less than forty years after Judah ibn Tibbon translated Ibn Janāḥ's *Kitāb al-Uṣūl* into Hebrew, David Qimḥi availed himself to write a new dictionary of Hebrew roots, known as *Sefer ha-Shorashim*. This book achieved great success and consequently overshadowed the work of his predecessor which nevertheless served as a model to Qimḥi. A preliminary research based on the roots starting by the letter *ṭet* and *sameḵ* seems to constitute a representative sample for the history of the text. First of all, it allows to better grasp Qimḥi's motivation for writing a new dictionary. Further, the analysis of this relatively small corpus gives us clues to understand Qimḥi's lexicological approach to the Hebrew root and his strategy in the organization of each entry.

Keywords: Medieval Hebrew lexicography; David Qimḥi; Ibn Janāḥ; Didactic tools, Latin Lexicography, Meaning-minimalism; Mnemonic devices.

* judith.kogel@irht.cnrs.fr

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1. Introduction

The Hebrew lexicographical works composed in the Middle Ages were the outcome of a lengthy process, which probably had its inception in the Masoretic lists of words prepared for scribes to ensure the accuracy of the biblical text. Although we can discern evolution over the centuries from elementary lists, which reveal great interest in words derived from the same root and in homonyms,[1] to more elaborate ones organized alphabetically, it is impossible to deny the influence of Arabic linguistic books on the development of Hebrew grammar in general, and on Hebrew lexicography in particular. The most famous medieval dictionary is David Qimḥi's *Sefer ha-Shorashim*, which was completed in Narbonne (Provence) in the early thirteenth century (1210).[2] This dictionary attained impressive popularity among Jews and

[1] They were ordered according to their appearance in the biblical text. On the evolution from Masoretic lists to dictionaries, see A. Dotan, *The Awakening of Word Lore: From the Masora to the Beginnings of Hebrew Lexicography* (Jerusalem 2005 [in Hebrew]). Notwithstanding Saadya Gaon's introduction to the *'Egron* which is cited there (p. 12), Dotan claims that Hebrew lexicography was solely the outcome of internal evolution. In this introduction, Saadya explicitly mentions a booklet he saw aimed at helping people speak Arabic correctly, which prompted him to compose the *'Egron* to help Jews better understand the *masoret* [probably the Bible, here]. Dotan claims that the booklet was not and could not have been a dictionary and that Saadya Gaon only borrowed the didactic idea. Although the idea that lists were the prelude to the development of dictionaries is an assumption shared by Latin researchers (see e.g. O. Weijers, "Lexicography in the Middle Ages," *Viator* 20 [1989] pp. 139-153), we are missing some steps in the evolution from lists to dictionaries of roots arranged alphabetically, as is Menaḥem ben Saruq's. See also J. Martínez Delgado, "Caracterización general de la lexicografía hebrea andalusí," *Revista de la Sociedad Española de Linguistica* 38:2 (2008) pp. 103-128, and "Lexicographical Arrangement of Masoretic Material," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 54:2 (2009) pp. 333-363.

[2] *Sefer ha-Shorashim* was printed three times before 1500: first in Rome (between 1469 and 1472) by Obadiah (b. Moses?), Manasseh, and Benjamin of Rome, and then twice in Naples by Azriel ben Joseph Ashkenazi Gunzenhauser (1490), and by Joshua Solomon Soncino (1491). During the sixteenth century, one edition was produced by Samuel Rikomin and Astruc de Toulon in Constantinople (1513), and another by Gershom Soncino in Salonika (<1530), but the most famous are the Venetian ones: the Bomberg edition of 1529, a second Bomberg edition dated 1546, and the Guistiniani edition dated 1547. The most recent edition of *Sefer ha-Shorashim* was published in 1847: D. Qimḥi, *Sefer ha-Shorashim*, eds. J. H. Biesenthal and F. S. Lebrecht (Berlin 1847).

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almost completely supplanted the works of earlier grammarians. For this preliminary study of *Sefer ha-Shorashim*, the roots starting with the letters *ṭet* and *sameḵ*, and the first entries of the dictionary, were chosen as a representative sample for the history of the text. First of all, this allows us to better grasp Qimḥi's motivation for writing a new dictionary less than forty years after Judah ibn Tibbon translated Ibn Janāḥ's *Kitāb al-Tanqīḥ*. Further, the analysis of this relatively small corpus facilitates our understanding of Qimḥi's lexicological approach to the Hebrew root and the underlying organizational strategy of each entry. Through comparison of Qimḥi's dictionary with that of Ibn Janāḥ, this paper considers two points: Qimḥi's educational objectives and the lexicographic thought underpinning *Sefer ha-Shorashim*.

2. Scientific-theoretical description *vs.* pedagogical tool[3]

Modeled on Jonah ibn Janāḥ's *Kitāb al-Tanqīḥ* (first half of the eleventh century), Qimḥi's *Mikhlol* is composed of two parts, a grammar (*Ḥeleq ha-Diqduq*), which is commonly called *Mikhlol,* and a dictionary now entitled *Sefer ha-Shorashim* (*Ḥeleq ha-'Inyan*).[4] This second part, dedicated to the lexicon, orders the roots alphabetically, thus allowing the convenient grouping of all biblical Hebrew words. Although it is possible to identify significant excerpts from Ibn Janāḥ's work in *Sefer ha-Shorashim*,[5] and although it

[3] The expression is borrowed from J. Olszowy-Schlanger, "The Science of Language among Medieval Jews," in *Science in Medieval Jewish Cultures,* ed. G. Freudenthal (New York 2011) pp. 359-424: 369-370.

[4] The title of *Kitāb al-Tanqīḥ*'s second part, *Kitāb al-Uṣūl*, was translated by Judah Ibn Tibbon as *Sefer ha-Shorashim*. This translation may have influenced the appellation assigned to Qimḥi's work. See Abulwalîd Merwân Ibn Gānâḥ, *Sepher Haschoraschim* [hereafter Janāḥ, *Shorashim*], trans. Judah Ibn Tibbon, ed. W. Bacher (Berlin 1896).

[5] Since the ordering of the entries is different in those two dictionaries, as we shall demonstrate, we can only rely on short phrases which were borrowed from Ibn Janāḥ's Hebrew translation and rearranged by David Qimḥi. First, the meaning of the root is often expressed in the same words (e.g. root טבע – הכל צלילה ושקיעה, root טבח – כלו זבח or ענין זבח). Now and then, Ibn Janāḥ's explanation is clearly summarized in a few words: e.g. in the root טבע, Ibn Janāḥ's dictionary has ויסר

exhibits similarities to his predecessor's dictionary, the works differ significantly not only in content but also in form.

Ibn Janāḥ's *Kitāb al-uṣūl* was intended for scholars, as stated in the introduction where the author describes the potential reader as *al-nāẓir fī 'ilm al-luġa*, "one who examines carefully the science of langage,"[6] while Qimḥi employed the term תלמיד / *talmid*, a student.[7] Ibn Janāḥ's readers were already well versed in the Hebrew language and could check the details for a correct interpretation of the Bible in other grammatical works in their possession. This is illustrated by the following quotation in which he refers to Ḥayyuj's work, *Kitāb al-Af 'āl Dhawāt al-Mithlayn* ("The Book of Geminate Verbs").[8]

> הדלת והבית הכפולה. דובב שפתי ישנים את דבתם רעה כבר נזכר בספר בעלי הכפל.
>
> Dalet and geminate bet. Causing the lips of sleepers to speak (Song of Sol. 7:10); their bad reports (Gen. 37:2), already mentioned in *the Book of Geminate Verbs*.

If the early grammars of the "formative" period (until the late eleventh century) were not pedagogical tools and did not aim to facilitate the study of the Hebrew language,[9] the structured architecture of the later Hebrew grammars served didactic purposes. David Qimḥi himself provides a glimpse of why he undertook the writing of *Mikhlol*.[10]

(והם טבעות עגולות שאין עליהם חותם) בערבי חלק, טבעות זהב, חותמו. טבעות פרעה את טבעתו – the brackets indicate that these words were not in the Arabic text and were added by Ibn Tibbon (see ed. Bacher, p. xliii); Qimhi writes ויסר פרעה את טבעתו, ויצקת לו ארבע טבעות זהב, כלם ענינם ידוע. יש מהם בחותם ויש בלא חותם.

[6] Judah Ibn Tibbon translated literally המעיין בחכמת הלשון. Janāḥ [Hebrew], *Shorashim*, p. 1.

[7] David Qimḥi, *Sefer Mikhlol*, ed. I. Rittenberg (Lyck 622 [1862], repr. Jerusalem 1966) f. 1r.

[8] Janāḥ, *Shorashim*, p. 103.

[9] Qimḥi is thus referring to Ḥayyuj's and Janāḥ's works: ואע״פ שיש בהם דברים הרבה שלא לצורך שילמד הלמד בלתם מה שיצטרך לו וגם במקומות חסרים מהצריך לו, "although there is much unnecessary information, the learner should study what he needs without it; in some places, what he needs is lacking." Rittenberg's edition has מן הצריך לו but Paris, BNF Hébreu 1226 and Hébreu 1228, etc. have מהצריך לו.

[10] Qimḥi, *Mikhlol*, f. 1r.

[...] קראתי שמו ספר מכלול כי רצוני לכלול בו דקדוק הלשון וענינו על דרך קצרה כדי שיהא נקל לתלמידים ללמוד אותו ולהבין נתיבתו ויהיה מזומן להם בו כל מה שיצטרכו לדקדוק ולענין [...]

[…] I called it *The Book of Entirety* for I intend to include therein succinctly the grammar and the lexicography of the [Hebrew] language and to make it easy for the student to learn and to understand its paths, making readily accessible what they need for grammar and lexicography […][11]

Clearly, David Qimḥi had an educational objective in mind: he wanted to take a didactic approach to the science of the Hebrew language. Accordingly, in writing *Sefer ha-Shorashim,* his goal was not to innovate but to organize the linguistic knowledge of Hebrew lexicography in a fresh manner; as he himself stated in the introduction to *Mikhlol*, he had no other ambition than to be a "gleaner who follows the harvesters."[12] One of the questions treated in this article relates to how this reorganization reflects Qimḥi's didactic purpose.

3. *Sefer ha-Shorashim*: A pedagogical tool

In planning a dictionary, lexicographers must define the categories of users for whom their dictionary is designed, which will determine the types of questions to which they provide answers. They must choose lemmas and, in the case of this particular type of dictionary, their choices are determined by linguistic knowledge. They must decide on the different classes of information they will include and use a metalanguage that is accessible to their readers. The result is a text formed of paragraphs that possess a repeated structure and, indeed, this is one of the most striking features of Qimḥi's work.

[11] This passage was cited in English translation by F. E. Talmage, *David Kimhi: The Man and the Commentaries* (Cambridge 1975) p. 57.

[12] Qimḥi, *Mikhlol*, f. 1r: ובאתי כמלקט שבלים אחרי הקוצר, וכמעולל אחרי הבוצר ויצאתי בעקבותיהם לקצר דבריהם, "I come thus like the gleaner after the reaper, following the footsteps of my predecessors, but abridging their material" (Talmage, *David Kimhi*, pp. 56-57).

1. The first step of the process is the selection of lemmas or entries. Here I exemplify a difference between Ibn Janāḥ and Qimḥi, which reflects the debate concerning identification of the root of certain words, by citing their entries for the first word mentioned in both dictionaries, בְּאֲבִי. Ibn Janāḥ created two entries, one with the headword אב and a second one with אבב,[13] whereas Qimḥi's entry included all the words mentioned by his predecessor in these two entries under the same root: אבב.

Ibn Janāḥ:

האלף והבית. לראות בְּאֲבִי הנחל פירושו דשא הנחל, ומקום צמח הדשא נקרא גם כן אב כמו שנאמר עודנו באבו לא יקטף רצוני לומר במקום צמחו והערב אומרים למקום מרעה אַבִּי כאשר אמרו לדשא אַבִּי.

Alef and *bet: To look at bĕ-'ibê of the valley* (Song of Sol. 6:11). That is the grass of the valley, and the place where the grass grows is also called *'eḇ*, as Scripture states: *While still bĕ-'ibo -– in his greenness, and not cut down* (Job 8:12), I mean the place where it grows. And in Arabic, a pasture is called *'abi*, as is lawn.

David Qimḥi:

אבב. לראות בְּאֲבִי הנחל (שה״ש ו יא). הדגש לחסרון הבי״ת הכפולה, ופירושו בעצי הנחל. וכן עודנו בְּאֲבוֹ לא יקטף (איוב ח יב). פירוש שהגמא בעצו שעדיין אינו נקטף ייבש [...]

אבב. *To look at bĕ-'ibê of the valley* (Song of Sol. 6:11). There is a *dageš* because the geminated *bet* is omitted. And this means "the trees of the valley." It is the same as *While still bĕ-'ibo -– in his stem,*[14] *and not cut down* (Job 8:12). This means that the papyrus in stem [*'eṣ*], not yet cut down, will become dry […]

[13] For Ibn Janāḥ, the word אב, 'father,' has a triliteral root, probably אבה, just as אח comes from the root אחה: ויתכן שיהיה מהשרש הזה אב ואם והוא שם חסר הלמד כחסרון אח (and belonging to this root is probably father and mother and it is a noun whose third radical is missing just as it is missing in [the word] אח, 'brother'). This point is mentioned by D. Becker, "Grammatical Thought: Influence of the Medieval Arabic Grammatical Tradition," in *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*, ed. G. Khan (Leiden 2013) vol. 2, pp. 113-128: 119.

[14] The translation is here purposefully different and matches Qimhi's explanation.

Ibn Janāḥ did not take the *dageš* in the *bet* into consideration and had difficulty identifying the root of the word אִבֵּי / *'ibê*. His final choice was probably influenced by Arabic usage. In the same entry, Ibn Janāḥ quotes another meaning for the word אִבֵּי / *'ibê*, "fruits," but immediately rejects it for exegetical reasons.[15] Qimḥi also mentions this option at the very end of the entry, using wording very similar to that of Ibn Ezra,[16] who suggests another triliteral root, אנב, in his commentary:

> ויש מפרשים באבי הנחל הפרי, והדגש לחסרון נו״ן, ושרשו אנב מלשון ארמי וְאִנְבֵּהּ שׂגיא (דניאל ד ט), וכן בתרגום בחסרון נו״ן, תרגום פרי איבא.

> And some interpret *bĕ-'ibê ha-naḥal*, as a fruit, and the *dageš* comes to replace the missing *nun*, and its root is אנב, from the Aramaic *wĕ-'inbeh sagi'*, *the fruits were in abundance* (Dan. 4:9); and similarly, it appears in the Targum without *nun*, where "fruit" is rendered איבא / *'iba'*.[17]

Clearly Qimḥi favours the incorporation of אִבֵּי / *'ibê* into the root אבב, but he does not reject this possibility, introducing it with the words ויש מפרשים, "and some interpret."

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[15] JANĀḤ, *Shorashim*, p. 9: ויש מי שפירש באבי הנחל בפרי הנחל ודמהו ללשון הארמית שמתרגם ולא יתם פריו ולא יפסוק אביה. ומה שאמרנו בו יותר נראה בעבור אמרו הפרחה הגפן הנצו הרמנים, ואלו היה כמו שאמרו שהוא פרי לא היה דורש הפרחה הגפן הנצו הרמונים, "and someone explained *at* אִבֵּי – *be-'ibê of the valley* (Song of Sol. 6:11), 'at the fruits of the valley' and drew an analogy with the Aramaic which renders [the expression] *nor will their fruit fail* (Ezek. 47:12) as *nor will their* אביה – *'ibeh cease*. And what we said suits the text better because it says afterwards (Song of Sol., ad loc.) *if the vines had budded or the pomegranates were in bloom*; and if it means, as they said, "fruit," it would not have detailed *if the vines had budded or the pomegranates were in bloom*."

[16] IBN EZRA, Song of Sol. 6:11: באבי - כמו בפרי הנחל כמו ואנביה שגיא וכן עודנו באבו לא יקטף ויש אומרים שהיא המבוכר ומן אביב ומן אב יוציאנו, "*bĕ-'ibê* as *at the fruits of the valley*, as *the fruits were in abundance* (Dan. 4:9). And similarly *While still in his greenness, and not cut down* (Job 8:12) and some say that it is the early fruits and they derive it from 'aBiB and 'aB.

[17] L. KOEHLER and W. BAUMGARTNER, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden 1994) 1: 2: "אֵב"—"support for אבב (Leslau 9) and not אנב (Zimmern 55, KBL)". See also Elijah LEVITA, *Meturgeman*, ed. P. FAGIUS (Isnae [Isny] 1541) f. 1r: אבל לשון פרי דמתרגם אבא תמצא בשרש אנב כי שם ביתו, "but the term "fruit" which is rendered *'iba'* by the Targum, you will find it under the root 'NB since it belongs there."

Although the difference between the two lexicographers concerning the choice of the root has more to do with the state of science than with pedagogy, Qimḥi favors the memorization of the meaning of אִבִּי /*’ibbî* by making connections with previous knowledge. Indeed, he introduces the entry with a grammatical remark which has two goals: to explain the presence of a *dageš* in the letter *bet* and to establish a semantic link with the next word to be listed, אביב / *’aḇîḇ*, “stalks of wheat” (Lv 2:14), which his pupils probably know, since it frequently occurs in the prayers. For Qimḥi, the word אב is a generic word, meaning “tree” which designates trees, as well as papyrus (Job 8:12) and wheat. He tells it explicitly in this entry: “every plant which grows on a stem is designated by the term *‘eṣ* [=*’aḇîḇ*]” / כל דבר שיעלה בקנה יקרא בלשון עץ.

2. Like any lexicographer, Qimḥi had to establish a taxonomy of the classes of information he would introduce in response to his readers’ questions. These responses, which always appear in the same order, follow the parts of speech – verbs, nouns and particles – and use the same formulation. In general, first to be mentioned are occurrences of verbs which usually follow the order of the *binyanim*, as we know it, the only difference being the existence of the *po‘el* which is a *pi‘el* of the geminates (verbs with a duplicated second radical). Then Qimḥi lists the *to’ar*, a subclass of the ‘verbal noun’,[18] and the different morphological patterns of the noun which appear in the Bible. As he states in *Mikhlol*, and this also applies somewhat to *Sefer ha-Shorashim* too, Qimḥi does not differentiate between the different classes of nouns; for he believes that the reader will understand them by himself, but he does detail morphological patterns, plurals, and inflections.[19] Qimḥi always proceeds step by step

[18] David Qimḥi divides the noun in two parts, *šem davar* and *šem ha-po‘al*, of which *šem ha-to’ar* is a subclass. *Šem davar* is an “object noun,” in fact a primitive noun or a noun for which no verbal stem is extant (אבן, אשה, איש, גמל). *Šem ha-po‘al* is either a “deverbal noun” (שִׁמְעוֹן deriving from שמע) or a “verbal noun” which serves as a basis for verbal formations (חָכָם, רָשָׁע, צַדִּיק). *Šem ha-to’ar* is an “adjective noun,” either an agent noun (עָבֶד, מֶלֶךְ) or a term used substantively (*šem ‘eṣem*) to indicate intensity or quality (אָדָם, זְכוּכִית, לְבָנָה, חֲמָה). See Qimḥi, *Mikhlol*, ff. 140v-142v; W. Chomsky, *David Ḳimḥi’s Hebrew Grammar (mikhlol)* (New York 1952) p. 218.

[19] Qimḥi, *Mikhlol*, f. 142v: ואין רצוני להפריש ביניהם בהביאי אותם על משקלם כי אסמוך על המבין כי נקל הוא להפריש ביניהם. לפיכך לא אחוש לחלק ביניהם ברוב כי עקר חפצי להורות לך

when describing the additional elements whose adjunction allows noun formation. What characterizes Qimḥi's works is the attention he pays to morphology in his dictionary; he is interested not in theory, in logical categories, but in practice. Each entry not only regroups the words of the same root, but also underscores the elaboration of morphological structures by noting the various elements added to a derivational base.

> **סבב** [...] והשם עוד ובתוספת מ״ם, מֵסַב קָלַע. וחיבורו עַד־שֶׁהַמֶּלֶךְ בִּמְסִבּוֹ, רֹאשׁ מְסִבַּי (תהלים קמ י). והקיבוץ בלשון נקבות והוא מסבות [...]
>
> **סבב** […] And another noun with the adjunction of a *mem*, *he carved in [*mesav*] the perimeter* (1 Kings 6:29); and [the same] with pronominal suffixes, *while the king was in [*bi-měsibo*] his surroundings* (Song of Sol. 1:12), *the head of [*mě-si-bay*] those who surround me* (Ps. 140:10). And the plural in feminine form *And lightning, in [*měsibot*] circles* (Job 37:12) […]

3. The third point I would like to briefly develop in this part concerns the terminology used by Qimḥi in his dictionary. Although I have not yet arrived at a complete list of the metalinguistic terms that appear in *Sefer ha-Shorashim*, it seems to be very limited. Moreover, when he had the choice between various synonyms, Qimḥi always favoured the most explicit, simple and straightforward technical term, the one that uses imagery to describe the morphological structure of the word. This is, in my view, the case for the names of the different *binyanim*. Indeed, Qimḥi preferred the periphrastic expressions already present in Ibn Janāḥ's dictionary and rejected the designations *pi'el* and *pu'al*, *hif'il* and *hof'al*.[20]

משקלי השמות המשתנים, וקבוצם וחבורם וכאשר יהיו במשקל אחד בין שהוא שם פועל בין שהוא שם דבר בין שהוא שם תאר אביאם יחד, "I do not intend to distinguish between them when I examine the different patterns, since I rely on the reader to understand it by himself (it is indeed not difficult to differentiate between them); therefore, in most cases, I will not differentiate between them since my desire is to teach you the different patterns, their plural and flexions and when they will have the same form, I will examine them together, whether it is a *šem po'al,* a *šem davar* or a *šem to'ar*."

[20] In his introduction to *Ša'ar ha-pe'alim* in *Sefer Mikhlol*, Qimḥi lists the different *binyanim* as follows: the first column is *binyan qal* which the foundation of the verbs and is so called because there is no letter added to the fundamental letters except for those needed for the conjugation of the second, the third and the first persons as well as for the masculine and feminine plural … the second column is called *binyan nif'al* … the third column is called *binyan pi'el ha-daguš* but also *nosaf* since there is an additional *mem* in

He tends to use *ha-po'al ha-kaved* (root ידה) for *pi'el*, *she-lo' nizkar po'alo me-ha-daguš* for *pu'al* (root טבע), *ha-po'al ha-kaved ha-nosaf* for *hif'il*, *she-lo' nizkar po'alo me-ha-nosaf* for *hof'al* (root טבע).

Nevertheless, when quoting his father or another author, Qimḥi does not modify their metalanguage and we therefore frequently find two synonyms in the same entry: the one he has used throughout his book; the other found in the quoted excerpt. For the root ידה, for example, two technical terms or expressions designate the same *binyan*: *ha-po'al ha-kaved ha-nosaf* which is David Qimḥi's terminology in *Sefer ha-Shorashim,* and *hif'il* which appears in a comment emanating from his father's work:

> ולדעת אדוני אבי ז״ל הוא מבנין הפעיל ומשפטו וַיְיַדּוּ. והפעל הכבד הנוסף הוא בענין אחר [...]
>
> And according to my father, blessed be his memory, it belongs to *binyan hif'il* and according to the morphological norm, it should be *wa-yĕyaddu*. And *ha-po'al ha-kaved ha-nosaf* is employed for another mea-ning […]

Although the appellation of the different *binyanim* was not his invention,[21] one clearly sees Qimḥi's didactic intentions in using them; he is the first to organize the entries of his dictionary according to the various modifications and additions of affixes to the root, a phenomenon that clearly corresponds to the different names of the *binyanim*: *ha-po'al ha-kaved* (because of the presence of the *dageš*), *ha-po'al ha-kaved ha-nosaf* (because of the presence of a supplementary – *nosaf* – letter). The introduction of the *binyanim* in the lexicographic works was not systematic. In Ibn Janāḥ's *Kitāb al-ʾUṣūl*, for example, which is organized according to the different meanings of the root, the *binyanim* are rarely indicated. They were however introduced in the *Qitsur Sho-*

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the present participle … and the fourth column built on it is called *binyan pu'al* whose agent is not mentioned … and the fifth column is called *binyan hif'il ha-nosaf* because there is an additional element in the whole *binyan* … and the sixth column built on it is called *binyan hof'al* … and it also has a supplementary element … and the seventh column is called *binyan po'el ha-nosaf* or *ha-kaved* since it is heavy because of the additional element … and the eighth column is built on it and it is called *binyan hitpa'el* … (Qimḥi, *Mikhlol*, f. 2r).

[21] See e.g. L. Prijs, *Die Grammatikalische Terminologie Des Abraham Ibn Esra* (Basel 1950) pp. 35-36.

rashim[22], an abridged version of Ibn Janāḥ's dictionary, which mentions for each meaning the corresponding *binyanim*. It is not surprising since this work too was, in my opinion, intended as a didactic tool.

To conclude this first part, I would like to reiterate that Qimḥi's *Sefer ha-Shorashim* is clearly a didactic text. It seems to reflect a constant dialogue with a virtual student (and perhaps not so virtual, but one based on actual teaching),[23] resulting in a text which is nothing other than a compilation of all the answers to the questions asked by these virtual interlocutors. Every detail is thought out: lemma, structure, and terminology; this was an educational tool that allowed the dissemination, all over Europe, of Hebrew grammatical thought in non-Arabic speaking, and probably less scholarly, Jewish communities.

This development corresponds to a wider phenomenon: the production of linguistics books for a broader circle than just scholars. In the case of Latin lexicography, for example, during the eleventh century Papias wrote a dictionary *Elementarium doctrinae rudimentum* (completed c. 1053), whose conception and organization overshadowed the oldest glossaries (*Liber glossarum*, etc.). Such a book, which reflects true lexicological thought, propounded by the author in the preface, met the needs of his time: a growing number of people from all social milieus wanted to learn how to write Latin for practical reasons,[24] and they needed an easily consultable dictionary that facilitated mastery of a large number of words. To achieve his goal, Papias introduced the *derivatio* method that was employed for

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[22] This abridged dictionary was composed according to Judah Ibn Tibbon's translation of Ibn Janāḥ's *Kitāb al-ʾUṣūl* and was probably written before Qimḥi's work. See J. Kogel, "La diffusion inattendue du *Dictionnaire hébreu de Provence* édité par Ángel Sáenz Badillos," *Revue des études juives* 175:1-2 (2016) pp. 47-66; Á. Sáenz-Badillos (ed.), *Un Diccionario hebreo de Provenza (Siglo XIII)* (Granada 1987).

[23] According to Qimḥi's own testimony, he was a teacher of Talmud (Qimḥi, *Shorashim*, p. 420). Let us examine for example the root טוב. Qimḥi quotes two occurrences for the *qal*, then one for the *po'al ha-kaved* (*ha-nosaf*). He pursues with the "adjective noun" and the noun, with and without the *heh*. He finishes by explaining that "one must say that *tov* with a *ḥolem* is an "adjective noun," while *tov* with a *šureq* is an "object noun" and they are identical whether they are in absolute or construct case." The text itself does not mention any students who could have been asking a question. However, the last phrase seems to be an answer for the following possible question: how can I distinguish between "adjective noun" and "object noun"?

[24] A. Marinoni, "Du glossaire au dictionnaire," *Quadrivium* 9 (1968) pp. 127-141: 132.

grammar.[25] The objective, as Olga Weijers has explained,[26] was to explicate words according to their origin and their mutual relationship out of the conviction that all of them, except for the primitive ones, are derived from one or more other words. The introduction of the *derivatio* method profoundly changed the practice of lexicography: Hugucio (Italy, second half of the 12th century) made the derivation method his leading principle and organized the Medieval Latin vocabulary in families around one basic term or root. The result was not very practical because locating a word in such a book was not easy.[27] Despite the later addition of indexes listing all the words alphabetically with references to the part of the work where they can be found,[28] this type of organization was soon abandoned for a more classical list of words in alphabetical order. An important change nevertheless occurred and the entries henceforth included grammatical elements, mainly borrowed from the *derivatio* method.

Although Qimḥi's *Shorashim* ensues from an internal evolution in Hebrew lexicography, we cannot discount the possible influence of Latin didactic works on this scholar. It has already been suggested that David's elder brother, Moses Qimḥi, was aware of Latin grammars from which

[25] In Late Antiquity and in the early Middle Ages, the partial reliance on the question of the origin of words for their explanation was best illustrated by the *etymologia* method; it attempted "to yield up the words' 'true sense' … and indeed something of the intrinsic character of the thing named by the word" (S. A. Barney et al. [trans.], *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville* [Cambridge 2006] p. 11 [http://site.ebrary.com/id/10130374]), or as Isidore of Seville puts it, "when you have seen whence a word has originated, you understand its force more quickly" (Isidore, *Etymologia*, 1:29:1-2; Isidore and Barney, p. 55). The idea that the name may be indicative of the character and destiny of its bearer was current among the ancient Greeks and Hebrews, and is already found in the Bible. In the mid-twelfth century, the *derivatio,* which was a method close to *etymologia* that consisted in compiling words of the same root, progressively replaced *etymologia* in the study of the origins of words. See O. Weijers, *Dictionnaires et répertoires au moyen âge. Une étude du vocabulaire* (Turnhout 1991) p. 76.

[26] O. Weijers, "Les dictionnaires et autres répertoires," in *Méthodes et instruments du travail intellectuel au moyen âge*, ed. O. Weijers (Turnhout 1990) pp. 197-208: 198; Weijers, *Dictionnaires et répertoires au moyen âge,* p. 75; Weijers, "Lexicography in the Middle Ages," p. 143.

[27] One must add that some principles used by Hugucio relied on pure fantasy (Weijers, "Lexicography in the Middle Ages," p. 149).

[28] Weijers, "Les dictionnaires et autres répertoires," p. 143.

he probably borrowed tables of paradigms for his *Mahalakh*[29] in order to answer the practical need for educational tools.[30] Although a similar trend can be observed in the Karaite grammars, already in the classical period, where "comprehensive scholarly grammars … were followed by pedagogical grammars (second half of the eleventh century) intended to teach Biblical Hebrew to beginning students," it seems hard to consider that they influenced the Provençal school of grammar.[31]

4. *Sefer ha-Shorashim*: a step towards meaning-minimalism

Beyond a didactic approach, one can also discern Qimḥi's ideological attitude toward the semantic aspect of words in *Sefer ha-Shorashim*. Strikingly, whenever possible, Qimḥi seeks to reduce the plurality of meanings to a single semantic root which can be described as the common denominator; at the same time, he also tries to avoid comparative philology and turns to classical traditional texts.[32]

In his article, "Saadia vs. Rashi: On the Shift from Meaning-maxig malism to Meaning-minimalism in Medieval Biblical Lexicology," published in 1998,[33] Richard Steiner demonstrated how different Saadia and Rashi's lexicological approaches were. Saadia, under the influence of Arab lexicographers, thought that words have many meanings, whereas

[29] I. Eldar, "The Technique of Exemplary Paradigms used in Moses Kimhi's Grammar" [in Hebrew], in *Gideon Goldenberg Festschrift*, ed. M. Bar-Asher (= *Massorot* 9-11 [1997]) pp. 203-205, and "Mahalakh Shevile ha-Da'at by R. Moses Kimhi: the First Pedagogical Grammar of Hebrew," in *Proceedings of the 11th World Hebrew Union* (1994) pp. 27-33.

[30] J.-P. Rothschild, "Les étapes d'une appropriation : Donat ancien, Donats vernaculaires médiévaux et deux versions successives du Donat hébreu *Re'shit ha-leqaḥ*," *Helmantica* 158-159 (2001) pp. 229-274.

[31] N. Vidro, "The Karaite Tool-kit for Teaching Hebrew Grammar," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 64:1 (2013) pp. 98-118: 99.

[32] Among recent articles on the subject, see M. Kahan, "Homonymy vs. Polysemy in Medieval Hebrew Lexicography: Between David Qimḥi's *Sefer ha-Shorashim* and Yonah ibn Janāḥ's *Kitāb al-ʾUṣūl*," *Lešonenu* 77:2-3-4 (2015 [in Hebrew]) pp. 223-240.

[33] R. Steiner, "Saadia vs. Rashi: On the Shift from Meaning-maximalism to Meaning-minimalism in Medieval Biblical Lexicology," *Jewish Quarterly Review*, n.s., 88 (1998) pp. 213-258.

Rashi held that they often have one basic meaning. Rashi's approach is chiefly rooted in rabbinic literature, since the tannaitic definitions found in the Talmud and Midrash (אין ... בכל מקום לשון ... אלא, 'X means none other than Y at every place' [*Sifre Bemidbar* 99]) clearly indicate that a word retains the same meaning in different contexts. This shift from meaning-maximalism to meaning-minimalism is not specific to Ashkenazi linguistic thought; indeed, it also occurred, but more gradually, in Spain and Provence, "proceeding in small steps from Menaḥem ben Saruq to Ibn Janāḥ to Abraham ibn Ezra and David Qimḥi to Joseph ibn Kaspi."[34] In the particular case of Ibn Janāḥ to Qimḥi, this phenomenon goes hand in hand with a significant reduction in vernacular glosses in Arabic and increased quotations of rabbinic texts. Let us examine some entries, טבח and סחר, first in Ibn Janāḥ's work and then in Qimḥi's.

Ibn Janāḥ:

> **הטת והבית והחת**. טבחת לא חמלת. וטבחו או מכרו. שורך טבוח לעי ניך. יובל לטבוח. שר הטבחים. כצאן לטבחה. הכינו לבניו מטבח כלו זבח. טבחה טבחה. ואת טבחתי אשר טבחתי לגזזי. וטבח טבח והכן. וירם הטבח את השוק ואת העליה. לרקחות ולטבחות כלו בשול.

> **Ṭet. Bet. Ḥet**. *You slaughtered [ṭabaḥěta]without pity* (Lam. 2:21); and *slaughters it [u-ṭěvaḥo] or sells it* (Exod. 21:37); *your ox shall be slaughtered [ṭavuaḥ] before your eyes* (Deut. 28:31); *led to the slaughter [la-ṭevaḥ]* (Jer. 11:19); *the chief butcher [ha-ṭabaḥim]* (Gen. 37:36); *like a lamb that is led to the slaughter [la-ṭevaḥ]* (Isa. 53:7); *prepare slaughter [maṭbeaḥ] for his sons* (Isa. 14:21), all of them [in the meaning of] slaughtering; *she has cooked the meat of her beast [tivěḥah]* (Prov. 9:2); *and the meat of my beast [ṭivěḥati] that I have cooked for my shearers* (1 Sam. 25:11); *cook the meat of the beast [u-ṭěvoaḥ] and make ready* (Gen. 43:16); *the cook [ha-ṭabaḥ] took up the leg and what was on it* (1 Sam. 9:24); *to be perfumers and cooks [u-lě-ṭabaḥot]* (1 Sam. 8:13), all of them [meaning] cooking.

The division of the entry corresponds to the different meanings of the root, slaughtering (כלו זבח) and cooking (כלו בשול), whether the occurrences are verbs, adjective noun,[35] or nouns. Some of these occurrences

[34] Steiner, "Saadia vs. Rashi," p. 215.

[35] See note 18.

could in fact be classified differently, namely שר הטבחים, an expression that can be rendered either as "chief butcher," "captain of the guard," or "head chef." In the first three quotations for the second meaning, the root ṬBḤ (טבח) appears twice, as a verb and as a noun. Because there is no ambiguity concerning the meaning of טבחה, "butchery" or "meat of the beast," which implies that the animal has already been slaughtered, Ibn Janāḥ choose to translate the verb as "cooking."

The organization of Qimḥi's dictionary is totally different: what prevails is the classification according to parts of speech and morphological patterns. The author lists the different *binyanim* in which the verbs are conjugated, followed by some examples, and arranges the nouns according to the presence of various elements, preformatives, suffixes, or specific vowels. The polysemous meanings of a root tend to disappear before the common denominator as identified by Qimḥi.

David Qimḥi:

> **טבח**. טבחת ולא חמלת, וטבחו או מכרו. שורך טבוח לעיניך. וטבוח טבח, יובל לטבוח. והתאר וירם הטבח [את השוק והעליה]. שר הטבחים. לרקֵחות ולטבחות. והשם כ(שה) [צאן] לטבח יובל, בסגול הטי״ת. טָבָחָה טִבְחָה, ובה״א הנקבה, טִבְחָה. ואת טבחתי אשר טבחתי לגוזזי. ומש׳ אחר. הכינו לבניו מטבח כולם ענין זביחה. ור׳ יונה חלק מהם לענין בשול. וכן עשו רוב המפרשים ודמו אותם ללשון הערב, שאומרים למבשל הבשר טב״ד, והחי״ת בעברי כ״ף בערבי. ולפי דעתי אין צורך, כי כלם יתפרשו ענין זבח.

ṬBḤ. *You slaughtered [ṭabaḥĕta] without pity* (Lam. 2:21); *and slaughters it [u-ṭĕvaḥo] or sells it* (Exod. 21:37); *your ox shall be slaughtered [ṭavuaḥ] before your eyes* (Deut. 28:31); *slaughter an animal [u-ṭĕvoaḥ] and make it ready* (Gen. 43:16); *led to the slaughter [liṭĕvoaḥ]* (Jer. 11:19). And the **adjective noun**: *the cook [ha-ṭabaḥ] took up* [the leg and what was on it] (1 Sam. 9:24); *the captain of the guard [ha-ṭabaḥim]* (Gen. 37:36); *to be perfumers and cooks [u-lĕ-ṭabaḥot]* (1 Sam. 8:13). And the **noun**: *like a lamb that is led to the slaughter [laṭevaḥ]* (Isa. 53:7) **with a *segol* under the *ṭet***; *she has slaughtered her beasts* [*tivĕḥah*] (Prov. 9:2), and **with the feminine ending *he***, *as sheep for the slaughter [tivĕḥah]*[36] (Ps. 44:23); and *my meat [ṭivĕḥati] that I have killed for my shearers* (1 Sam. 25:11); and **another pattern**: *pre-*

[36] Literally *butchery*, as noted by É. DHORME, *La Bible, II* ([Paris] 1962) n. 10 ad loc.

> *pare slaughter [maṭbeaḥ] for his sons* (Isa. 14:21), all of them have the meaning of slaughtering. And R. Jonah [Ibn Janāḥ] has classified some of them as meaning cooking and so did the majority of the exegetes who compared them to Arabic, since the person who cooks the meat is called טבך [in Arabic] and the Hebrew *ḥet* corresponds to the Arabic *kaf*. And in my opinion, it is not necessary, since they can all be interpreted as related to slaughtering.

This entry's final sentence is particularly interesting and constitutes none other than a methodological statement. Although one can divide the occurrences of the words into two groups, Qimḥi favours one core meaning "slaughtering" since "they can all be interpreted as related to slaughtering." He also acknowledges the motivation of the exegetes who based their interpretation on the Arabic term for cook. Although he does not mention him, Qimḥi probably knew Abraham Ibn Ezra's explanation and criticism of Ibn Janāḥ's classification as reflected in his commentary on Dan. 2:14:

> פוטיפר שר הטבחים של פרעה לפי דעתי אינו כמו רב טבחיא כי מלת טבח בלשון הקדש תתפרש לשני טעמים האחד הריגה כמו רב טבחים והראיה די נפק לקטלא וכמוהו ככבש אלוף יובל לטבוח כצאן ורבים ככה והטעם השני כמו בלשון ישמעאל מבשל כמו וטבוח טבח והכן כי אין אדם באותו זמן שוחט צאן במצרים כמו לרקחות ולטבחות כי הנשים אינן שוחטות וגם וירם הטבח ובעבור כי שר האופים היה אופה הלחם ושר המשקים חבירו ע״כ אמרתי כי שמם המלך בבית חברים שהוא שר המבשלים ולא שמם בבית הסוהר ...

> Potiphar, the chief of Pharaoh's *ṭabaḥim*; in my opinion this cannot be the same as *rav ṭabaḥia'* since the biblical word *ṭabaḥ* can be understood as having two different meanings; the first is murdering as in *rav ṭabaḥim* (2 Kings 25:8 and *alii*) and the proof is that he went to kill, and it is the case for *like a gentle lamb [li-ṭĕvoaḥ] led to the slaughter* (Jer. 11:19); *like a lamb [la-ṭevaḥ]* (Isa. 53:7) and numerous other cases; and the second meaning resembles the Arabic, like *cook the meat of the beast [u-ṭĕvoaḥ] and make ready* (Gen. 43:16), since there was no sheep slaughterer at that time in Egypt, or like *to be perfumers and [u-lĕ-ṭabaḥot] cooks* (1 Sam. 8:13), since women do not slaughter; this is also the case for *[ha-ṭabaḥ] the cook took up* [*the leg and what was on it*] (1 Sam. 9:24) and since the chief baker was baking the bread and the chief cupbearer was his friend, therefore I said that the king placed them in a friendly house, of the chief cook, and did not place them in the prison (Gen. 40:2) …

As a Talmud teacher, Qimḥi could neither ignore the Talmudic usage of this root in *bKetub* 3b – וטבחו טבוח, "his meat for the feast is ready [for cooking]" –, in *bBer* 56a – טבחת ולא אכלת, "you shall prepare and not eat," etc.[37] The question that arises is whether Qimḥi deliberately chose to highlight a single meaning for ideological or for pedagogical reasons.

It will probably not be possible to answer this question but what seems obvious to me is that Qimḥi was an outstanding teacher who understood how to help his students remember a great number of biblical words, including *hapax legomena*, as we shall see in the next example, entry סחר SḤR.

> סחרו אל ארץ ולא ידעו, פי׳ סבבו. לבי סחרחר, כלומר הלך סביב סביב ואינו מיושב מרוב הצרות. ותרגום סביב סביב סחור סחור. ויסב מעליהם ואסתחר מלוותהון. ומזה העניין נקרא התגר סוחר לפי שהוא סובב את הארצות תמיד הולך ושב [...] והשם איים רבים סחרת ידך. ומשקל אחר סחרה ואתננה [...] ומשקל אחר מסחר כסף, ותהי סחר גוים [...] ובתוספת מ״ם ומסחר הרכלים. וכן נקרא מזה העניין המגן שהוא עגול סביב סביב סוחרה, צנה וסחרה אמתו, רודלא, ודר וסחרת , אבן יקרה, ואפשר שתהיה ביד הסוחרים תמיד ולפיכך נקראת סוחרת. כמו שאמרו רבותינו ז״ל על פסוק דר וסוחרת שהיא אבן אחת שקראה דרור לכל בעלי סחורה.
>
> *They saḥaru through the land and had no knowledge* (Jer. 14:18), that is they circulated. *My heart throbs* (Ps. 38:11), in other words it was going round and round and was unsettled because of distress. And the Aramaic translation of *[he led me] around around* (Ezek. 37:2) is *sĕḥor sĕḥor* and of *he turned away from them* (Gen. 42:24) is *we-istĕḥar mi-lewatehon*. And this is the reason why the merchant is called *soḥer,* because he continuously circulates through the lands, back and forth […] And the noun *the trade of many isles were under your dependence* (Ezek. 27:15); and another [noun] pattern *her merchandise and her wages* (Isa. 23:18); and another [noun] pattern *the gain of the silver* (Prov. 3:14), *the merchant of the nations* (Isa. 23:3) […]; and with the adjunction of a *mem*, *the business* [*misḥar*] *of the merchants* (1 Kings 10:15). And this is the reason why (deriving from this meaning) the shield which is completely round is called *soḥerâ*, *his truth is a shield and a round buckler* [*soḥerâ*] (Ps. 91:4), *rodela* [in the vernacular];[38] mother of pearl and *soḥaret* (Esth. 1:6), a precious stone, and it is possible

[37] See M. JASTROW, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (New York 1950) vol. 1, p. 516.

[38] Provençal word for 'shield' derived from the Latin *rotula*, 'wheel'.

> that it was kept permanently in the hands of the merchants and therefore it is called *soḥaret*. As our rabbis of blessed memory said regarding [the expression] *dar we-soḥaret*, this is a precious stone which granted remission of taxes to all who dealt with merchandise (bMeg 12b).[39]

For this root, Ibn Janāḥ hesitated between three or four meanings. For the last one, סחרת, Ibn Janāḥ quoted an Arabic translation: פרשו בו בערבי פוסַיְפְסָא; Qimḥi did not take into account the Arabic equivalent but offered a popular etymology which finds support in a Talmudic quotation. And this is another feature of Qimḥi's lexicological approach: the tendency, whenever possible, to avoid recourse to an Arabic equivalent, as was true for the first example mentioned at the beginning of this article, בְּאֵבֵי.

Once again it is difficult to decide if Qimḥi's method was intended to offer mnemonic devices to learners who could memorize the meanings of various words by connecting them to a single root and by establishing, in some way, a parallel between the morphological and semantic derivations. This method of minimizing the number of meanings whenever possible and, consequently, giving weight to an underlying meaning, as for *soḥaret*, is situated in the continuity of the Talmudic approach, as Steiner has already indicated. This was also Rashi's attitude. Was Qimḥi influenced by Rashi's approach or do the same causes produce the same effects? As we know, Qimḥi was well versed in Talmud and composed his grammatical books while he was engaged in his principal occupation, the teaching of Talmud.

One can also ask if homonyms have a place in Qimḥi's linguistic thought. The case of three words attributed by Kaspi to the same semantic field may provide some indication, although the present article does not strive to provide a definitive answer. As Aslanov has pointed out,[40] Kaspi notes that the words חלד / *ḥeled*, עלם / *'olam* and תבל / *tevel* have a close

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[39] Curiously, David Qimḥi merges two Talmudic interpretations, that of Shmuel ("there is a precious stone …") and that of R. Ishmael ("he gave a remission of taxes [*dĕror*] to all who dealt in merchandise [*sĕḥorâ*]"), a discussion which also appears in *Yalqut Shimoni,* Esther 247.

[40] Joseph Kaspi (1279–1340?) was a philosopher, a biblical commentator and a grammarian, born in Provence. C. Aslanov, *Le provençal des Juifs et l'hébreu en Provence: le dictionnaire Šaršot ha-kesef de Joseph Caspi* (Paris 2001) p. 169.

meaning,[41] but what about his predecessors? It seems quite clear that for Ibn Janāḥ, עולם has a temporal meaning (כל ימי / *kol yĕmê*)[42] and תבל a spatial one, although he does not provide an equivalent for this last root, for which he only cites two occurrences, Job 34:13 and Ps. 9:9.[43] For the root חלד, he seems to hesitate between a temporal and a spatial meaning: Ibn Janāḥ explains the word חלדי (Ps. 39:6) as זמני / *zemani*, "my lifetime," whereas the expression יושבי חלד (Ps. 49:2) is equated with אנשי הישוב / *anšê ha-yišuv*, "inhabitants of the world" and ממתים מחלד (Ps. 17:14) with מאנשי העולם / *me-anšê ha-'olam*, "from the men of the world."[44]

For Qimḥi, these three terms תבל, עולם and חלד have distinct meanings. חלד has a temporal meaning,[45] and Qimḥi quotes five occurrences which he systematically explains to clarify his position (Ps. 17:14; 19:6; 89:48; 49:2; Job 11:17). Namely, he opposes Ibn Janāḥ's interpretation of the expression יושבי חלד and explains it as signifying אנשי הזמן / *anšê ha-zĕman*, "the men of the time," whose meaning is not evident. Does the locution אנשי הזמן mean "mortal"? The term עולם is equated with זמנים ארוכים or זמן רב / *zĕman rav*, "a long time,"[46] whereas the word תבל is explained as שם כלל לכל ארצות הישוב / *šem kĕlal lĕḵol 'arṣot ha-yišuv*, "a general word for all the inhabited countries of the world."[47] By relying on this example, it is possible to assume that Qimḥi probably believed

[41] Kaspi also considers the root חדל as a belonging to same semantic field, as he explains in this very entry: אבל בכאן נאמר כי העולם הזה וכל ענינו נקרא בשמות רבים כמו עולם ותבל וחדל וחלד וזולת זה וכל אחד להוראת מינו ועיניניו הרעים. אולם המכוון בשם חדל כלו וכל ענינו העדר והפסד ואפיסה, "we will explain here that this world and all its significations are denoted by different names, like *'olam*, *tevel*, *ḥedel* and *ḥeled*, etc. and each of these terms designates its species and its close significations. What the term *ḥedel* designates is the world of absence (העדר), corruption (הפסד), and deprivation (אפיסה)."

[42] Janāḥ, *Shorashim*, p. 372. Ibn Janāḥ stresses through a few examples that עולם signifies "all the days" כל הימים, namely in the verse ועבדו לעולם (Exod. 21:6), "he will be his servant for all his days," either those of the servant or of the master. This is also how he understands the verse עולם חסד יבנה (Ps. 89:3), רוצה כל הימים, "that is all the days."

[43] Janāḥ, *Shorashim*, p. 540.

[44] Janāḥ, *Shorashim*, p. 154.

[45] Qimḥi, *Shorashim*, p. 105.

[46] Qimḥi, *Shorashim*, p. 268.

[47] Qimḥi, *Shorashim*, p. 409.

that if different words originating from the same root share a common denominator, those originating from different roots must have a different meaning, a hypothesis which still needs to be confirmed.

5. Conclusion

Qimḥi was not an innovator in grammatical or lexicographical research but was an ingenious compiler of the knowledge of his day. His main aim was not originality but to achieve accessibility, by producing practical instruments for the study of the Hebrew language. Indeed, his dictionary, a model didactic work, easy to consult, with a clear structure, became a reference work for study of the Hebrew Bible for hundreds of years, first, among Jews, until the mid-sixteenth century, and among Christian humanists, from the early Renaissance. Qimḥi was the first author to introduce the derivation method into a Hebrew lexicographical work, and by so doing, he stressed the existence of a shared semantic root for families of words. As any dictionary, *Sefer ha-Shorashim* is also underpinned by an ideological attitude that it will in turn help to perpetuate. While seeking the underlying meaning, the core-meaning (the common denominator) of the Hebrew roots, this work conveys the image of a traditional man who favors pseudo-linguistic teachings to be found in rabbinical literature and puts aside, as much as possible, the elements exogenous to Jewish tradition (comparative philology).

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