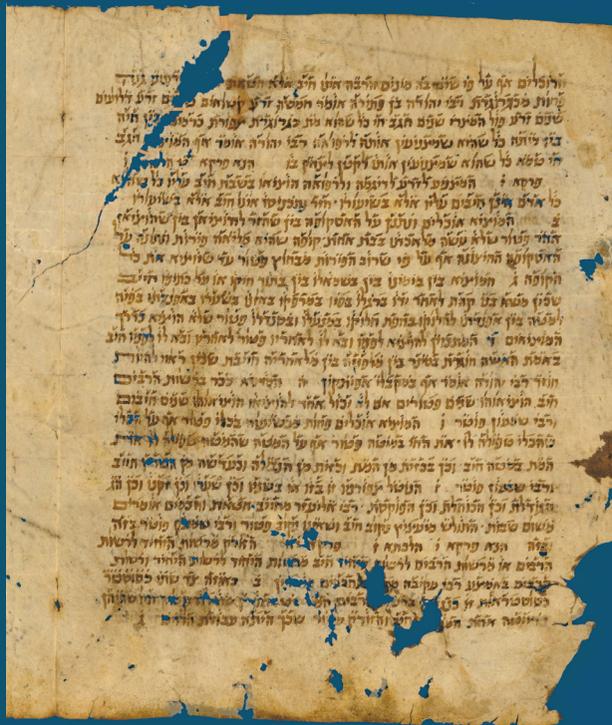


# Studies in Rabbinic Hebrew

EDITED BY SHAI HEIJMANS





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

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## 7. TWO TEXTUAL VERSIONS OF *PSIQATA OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS*

*Shlomi Efrati*

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The *Psiquata of the Ten Commandments* (henceforth: *PsTC*) is a relatively unknown rabbinic composition.<sup>1</sup> It has an unusual transmission history and relations between its textual witnesses are intriguing. In what follows I will briefly describe *PsTC* and

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1 I am aware of only one publication that deals specifically with *PsTC*: Norman J. Cohen, “*Pesiqta Rabbati’s Midrash ‘Aseret ha-Dibberot: A Redactional Construction*”, in: Herman J. Blumberg et al. (eds.), “*Open Thou Mine Eyes...: Essays on Aggadah and Judaica Presented to Rabbi William G. Braude on His Eightieth Birthday and Dedicated to His Memory*” (Hoboken: Ktav, 1992), pp. 41–59. Nevertheless, short references to *PsTC* are to be found in publications on *Psiqata Rabbati* (see below).

This name *Psiquata of the Ten Commandments* was coined by Yaakov Sussman, who studied this composition with his students for years and argued for its independence and relatively early date. Unfortunately, the results of his research have not (yet) been published.

*PsTC* must be sharply distinguished from a compilation of similar name, the *Midrash of Ten Commandments*. This latter work is a late collection of homilies and tales, which has very little in common, both in structure and content, with *PsTC*. See Joseph Dan, “*Midrash Aseret Ha-Dibberot*”, in: Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik (eds.), *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (2nd ed.; Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007), vol. 14 pp. 185–186; Anat Shapira, *Midrash Aseret Ha-Dibrot (A Midrash on the Ten Commandments): Text, Sources and Interpretation* (in Hebrew; Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2005).

the main branches of its textual transmission, demonstrate their importance for the study of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic, and consider the implications of these findings for our understanding of the early stages of the transmission of rabbinic literature.

*PsTC* does not exist today as an independent composition. It is extant as part of a much later composition, *Psiqata Rabbati* (henceforth: *PsR*).<sup>2</sup> This larger composition is made up of groups of chapters, dedicated to the various festivals and special Sabbaths of the Jewish calendar. The contents and forms of the different chapters of *PsR* are uneven, and it is probable that the composition as a whole was achieved by combining chapters, or groups of chapters, from several sources. Chapters 20–24 of *PsR* contain various materials concerning the revelation at Sinai, the giving of the Torah, and interpretations of the Ten Commandments. These chapters were probably meant to serve as a homily (or homilies) for the festival of *Shavuot* (the Feast of Weeks), traditionally identified as the date of the giving of the Torah. Of this group, chapters 21–24 form a distinct, self-standing composition,<sup>3</sup> which

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2 Additional literature on *PsR*: Hermann L. Strack and Günter Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash* (trans. by Markus Bockmuehl; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), pp. 323–329; William G. Braude, *Pesikta Rabbati: Discourses for Feasts, Fasts, and Special Sabbaths* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 1968), pp. 1–33; Karl-Erich Grözinger and Hartmut Hahn, “Die Textzeugen der *Pesikta Rabbati*”, *Frankfurter judaistische Beiträge* 1 (1973), pp. 68–104; Rivka Ulmer, *Pesiqta Rabbati: A Synoptic Edition*, vol. 1 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997); Binyamin Elizur, “*Pesiqta Rabbati*: Introductory Chapters” (in Hebrew; PhD dissertation, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1999); Cohen, “*Pesiqta Rabbati*’s *Midrash ‘Aseret ha-Dibberot*”. Braude, *Pesikta Rabbati*, provides a complete translation of *PsR* (including, of course, *PsTC*).

3 Note the heading of chapter 21 עשר דברייא ‘the ten words/sayings’ (i.e., the Ten Commandments). As this chapter deals with only one ‘word’ (i.e., the first Commandment), this heading is probably a title for the whole composition (i.e., chapters 21–24). In addition, the verses Exod. 20.14 and Deut. 5.18, which conclude the biblical Ten Commandments, were appended at the end of chapter 24, marking the original ending of *PsTC*.

comments upon Exodus 20.1–13, more or less verse-by-verse.<sup>4</sup> This composition, *PsTC*, differs considerably from the main bulk of *PsR* (including chapter 20). To give a few examples:

1. Each chapter of the main bulk of *PsR* is a separate unit, built around one biblical verse, and usually treating only its opening words. The four chapters of *PsTC*, as stated above, treat all of the verses of the Ten Commandments in a continuous and more-or-less complete manner.
2. Most chapters of *PsR* open with a halakhic question and answer, something not found in *PsTC*.
3. *PsTC* retains the use of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic (henceforth: JPA), both in its terminology and in the running text, while *PsR* tends to translate Aramaic words, passages, and terms into Hebrew.
4. Another trait of *PsR* is a tendency to add special epithets to several Rabbis, e.g., Rabbi Tanḥuma *bar Abba*, R. Pinḥas *Ha-Kohen b. Ḥama*, or R. Berekhia *Ha-Kohen*. *PsTC* gives these names in their ‘normal’, non-embellished form, familiar from rabbinic literature more generally (R. Tanḥuma, R. Pinḥas, or R. Berekhia).

As a whole, whereas *PsR* shows clear affinities with the relatively late *Tanḥuma* literature,<sup>5</sup> *PsTC* is closely related to ‘classic’ rabbinic Palestinian compositions.<sup>6</sup> The terminological, structural, and

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4 I use the phrase ‘comments upon’ in the most general way. *PsTC* is not a continuous, running commentary, though it does attempt to supply relevant materials to most of the verses of the Ten Commandments.

5 For a general description of the *Tanḥuma* literature see Strack and Stemberger, *Introduction*, pp. 329–339; Marc Bregman, *The Tanḥuma-Yelammedenu Literature: Studies in the Evolution of the Versions* (in Hebrew; Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2003).

6 Especially the Palestinian Talmud and midrashic compilations such as *Bereshith Rabbah*, *Vayikra Rabbah*, and *Psiquata DeRav Kahanah*.

stylistic differences make it clear that *PsTC* is an independent work, which at a certain point was incorporated into *PsR*.

Like most of rabbinic literature, *PsTC* is not a continuous, uniform composition, but rather a compilation of fragments. It incorporates various sayings, homilies, and stories, and shows little effort, if any, to integrate or harmonise these into a coherent and continuous text. In general, it seems that *PsTC* faithfully preserves sayings of Palestinian *Amoraim*, the rabbis of the third to fifth centuries CE.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, any attempt to study *PsTC* should take into account at least two levels of development: the traditions cited in *PsTC* (which themselves may have undergone a long process of development before they were integrated into *PsTC*), and the redaction and composition of *PsTC* itself. Of course, it is not always easy to distinguish the different components of *PsTC*. For instance, differences in wording between *PsTC* and parallel composition(s) may, on the one hand, stem from alterations of the text made by the editor/redactor of *PsTC* (or its parallel(s)); or, on the other hand, represent earlier variations in the form of textual traditions that were faithfully preserved in each of the parallels.

The study of *PsTC*, or in fact any ancient composition, becomes even more complicated when we consider the textual transmission of such a composition and its implications for evaluating its text. It goes without saying that the text of *PsTC* as

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7 The date of *PsTC* itself is difficult to establish, due to the eclectic nature of the composition and the lack of internal or external datable evidence (as is so often the case with rabbinic literature in general; see the discussion and references in Strack and Stemberger, *Introduction*, pp. 50–61). Nonetheless, the proximity of *PsTC* to ‘classic’ rabbinic literature in language, terminology, prosopography, and structure, as well as the many close parallels between them; and the absence of any clear signs of lateness (for instance, influence of the Babylonian Talmud), suggest that the redactional activity that created *PsTC* as a complete entity was carried out at a relatively early date, probably no later than the seventh century CE.

we have it, preserved mainly in late, medieval manuscripts and anthologies (see below), is somewhat removed from its original form, due to copyist errors or secondary interventions in the text. True, by collating textual witnesses and carefully examining the text it is possible to discern secondary readings and reconstruct a more reliable text. However, not every textual variant can be accounted for, and, more important, not every variation reflects a corruption of an original text. Sometimes such variants represent a degree of fluidity in the ‘original’ text itself.

I would like to demonstrate such ‘original’ variants through the intriguing textual situation of *PsTC*. This composition is known through two main channels of transmission: medieval European manuscripts, on the one hand, and citations in eastern anthologies, on the other. Let us briefly examine these channels.

As mentioned above, the complete text of *PsTC* is preserved only as part of *Psqata Rabbati*, and came down to us in the textual witnesses of this latter composition. These include only four independent (direct) witnesses:<sup>8</sup> Three medieval manuscripts, the earliest of which dating to 1270,<sup>9</sup> and the first printed

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8 Citations from *PsR* (and *PsTC*) are also found in the monumental twelfth-century anthology *Yalqut Shim'oni*, mainly in the second part of the anthology; on the division of this work see Amos Geula, “The Riddle of the Index of Verses in MS Moscow-Ginzburg 1420/7: Preparation for the Creation of the *Yalqut Shim'oni*” (in Hebrew), *Tarbiz* 70 (2001), p. 457, note 146.

9 MS Parma, Palatina 3122 (de Rossi 1240). Other MSS are Rome, Casanatense 3324 (written in Narbonne at 1386/7; see Elizur, *Pesiqta Rabbati*, p. 27; cf. Norman J. Cohen, “The London Manuscript of Midrash *Pesiqta Rabbati*: A Key Text-witness Comes to Light”, *Jewish Quarterly Review* 73 (1983), pp. 213–214) and Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek cod. 5390 [C 50] (fragment). MS Philadelphia, Dropsie College 22 (*olim* London-Cohen), was probably copied from MS Casanatense (Cohen, “The London Manuscript”; Chaim Milikowsky, “Further on Editing Rabbinic Texts [a Review of R. Ulmer, *A Synoptic Edition of Pesiqta Rabbati*]”, *Jewish Quarterly Review* 90 (1999), pp. 148–149).

edition of *PsR*.<sup>10</sup> These direct witnesses represent one branch of transmission, which is made evident by many secondary readings shared by all of them. To give only two examples:

1. *PsTC 2 (= PsR 22, 111b)*<sup>11</sup>

כיון דאתא שרי חביש עלה. אמרה ליה. מה לך את חביש לי.

When he came, he began imprisoning her. She said to him:  
Why do you imprison me?<sup>12</sup>

This Aramaic passage segment describes a domestic quarrel. The notion of imprisonment does not make much sense in this context. The verb חביש ‘to imprison’, is a corruption of the similar-looking verb חביט ‘to beat’.

2. *PsTC 3 (= PsR 23, 117b)*

[1] אבון בר חסדאי אמ' צריך לשלשל.

[2] {ר' אלעז' בר' יוסי'} ר' ירמיה ור' זעירא הוון מהלכין תרויהון... הדא  
אמרה צריך לשלשל.

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My own research on the text of *PsTC* led me to conclude that MS Casanatense (and its descendant MS Philadelphia) represents a separate textual family, and preserves a relatively better text. In addition, it seems that MS Wien, the printed edition, and the citations in *Yalqut Shim'oni* (note 8 above) all stem from a version of *PsR* that was reworked and emended to some extent (see note 34 below).

10 Prague, 1616 (?). The other printed editions all depend, directly or indirectly, on the Prague edition.

11 Text based mainly on MS Casanatense (see note 9 above). References to *PsR* are according to Meir Friedmann, *Pesikta Rabbati: Midrasch für den Fest-cyclus und die ausgezeichneten Sabbathe* (Vienna: Selbstverlag des Herausgebers, 1880)

12 Braude, *Pesikta Rabbati*, pp. 459–460.

[3] ר' אלעזר בר' יוסי...

[1] Abin b. Ḥisdai said: One must let [his cloak] hang free.<sup>13</sup>

[2] {R. Eleazar b. Yose} R. Jeremiah and R. Ze'era were both walking... it follows that one must let [his cloak] hang free.

[3] R. Eleazar b. Yose said...<sup>14</sup>

The mention of R. Eleazar b. Yose at the beginning of section 2 is awkward: the following sentence states clearly that two people were walking (הוון מהלכין תרויהונן) and goes on to tell only of R. Jeremiah and R. Ze'era. It seems that the name of R. Eleazar b. Yose was mistakenly copied from the beginning of section 3, due to the repetition of the phrase צריך לשלשל at the end of sections 1–2.

These examples exhibit simple and common copying mistakes. In both of them, however, the corrupted text appears consistently throughout all of the direct textual witnesses. As it is rather unlikely that several scribes made exactly the same mistakes independently, it is quite probable that all of the direct witnesses stem from a certain older copy of *PsR* that contained these — and many others — corrupt readings.

Besides the textual branch of the direct witnesses there is another line of transmission of *PsTC*, preserved mainly as citations in two medieval anthologies, or *Yalqutim: Midrash HaGadol* (= *MG*), a fourteenth-century Yemenite anthology,<sup>15</sup> and *Sefer*

13 If one does not have a different cloak to put on for Sabbath, he should at least make a distinction in the way he wears his daily (and only) cloak in order to distinguish between Sabbath and weekdays.

14 Braude, *Pesikta Rabbati*, p. 481.

15 See Strack and Stemberger, *Introduction*, pp. 386–388; Joseph Tobi, “Midrash Ha-Gadol: The Sources and the Structure” (in Hebrew; PhD dissertation, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1993).

*HaMa'asiot* (= *SM*), an anthology of tales whose date and provenance are not quite clear.<sup>16</sup> In general, these two *Yalqutim* tend to agree almost verbatim (when they overlap). Obviously, there is some close relationship between them, though the exact nature of that relationship is not entirely clear.<sup>17</sup> Each of these *Yalqutim* cites passages from *PsTC* that are absent in the other, and I will regard them as (independent) witnesses of a certain version of *PsTC*, a version clearly distinct from the one preserved in the direct witnesses.

One important feature of these *Yalqutim* is that they seem to be completely unfamiliar with other parts of *PsR*, apart from chapters 21–24 (= *PsTC*). This is a strong indication that *PsTC* was circulating independently of *PsR*.<sup>18</sup> Even more important than the evidence of independent circulation are the numerous variations between the version of *PsTC* preserved in the *Yalqutim*

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16 Moses Gaster, *The Exempla of the Rabbis* (London and Leipzig: Asia Publishing Co., 1924). Gaster's early dating of the anthology (introduction, pp. 1–7, 43–49) is unacceptable; Joseph Dan, "Exempla of the Rabbis", in: Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik (eds.), *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (2nd ed.; Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007), vol. 6, pp. 598–599. See also the following note.

17 There is a tendency to see *SM* as dependent on *MG* (see, e.g., Mordechai Margalioth (Margulies), *Midrash HaGGadol on the Pentateuch: Exodus* (in Hebrew; Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1956), introduction, pp. 11–12). However, closer examination shows that *SM* usually preserves a more reliable text, while *MG* slightly reshapes and edits its sources. See Reuven Kiperwasser, "Midrash haGadol, The Exempla of the Rabbis (Sefer Ma'asiyot), and Midrashic Works on Ecclesiastes: A Comparative Approach" (in Hebrew), *Tarbiz* 75 (2006), pp. 409–436 (whose conclusions are somewhat exaggerated, in my view); as well as the critical review of scholarship by Philip S. Alexander, "Gaster's *Exempla of the Rabbis*: a Reappraisal", in: Gabrielle Sed-Rajna (ed.), *Rashi (1040–1990): Hommage à Ephraïm E. Urbach* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1993), pp. 793–805.

18 As was already noted by Margalioth, *Midrash HaGGadol on the Pentateuch: Exodus*, introduction, p. 8.

and the version preserved in the direct textual witnesses (of *PsR*). Not infrequently the *Yalqutim* preserve better readings than the direct witnesses. Thus, whereas all the direct witnesses have the corrupt reading *מה לך את חביש עליה* ... (see example 1 above), the *Yalqutim* preserve the correct reading *מה לך את חבט עליה* 'he began beating her'. There are also instances where the *Yalqutim* preserve original (or at least better) readings that would have been completely lost, had we only had the direct witnesses' version:

### 3. *PsTC* 3 (= *PsR* 23, 116a)

מלך בשר ודם כשהוא פוליסופוס<sup>19</sup> אומ' לעבדיו עשו עמכם יום אחד ועמ' ששה ימים.

A human king, when he is a *philosophos*, says to his servants:  
Work one day for yourselves and six days for me.<sup>20</sup>

The notion of a philosopher king may not be the most appropriate in this parable, which stresses the king's benevolence rather than his wisdom. Even if one assumes the reading *פילוסופוס* 'philosophos, wise' to be secondary or corrupt, it would have been almost impossible to reconstruct the original reading by conjecture alone.<sup>21</sup> However, in *MG* to Exodus 20.10,<sup>22</sup> in a long excerpt from *PsTC*, we read: *מלך בשר ודם שהיה לו אפילנטרפוס* 'a human king who was<sup>23</sup> a philanthropos'. Here the parable is accurate:

19 פוליסופוס — thus in MS Casanatense. The other witnesses further corrupted this word: MS Parma has פולופוס, the printed edition בילסופוס.

20 Braude, *Pesikta Rabbati*, p. 476.

21 See Braude's somewhat free translation and cf. Freidmann's emendations (cited by Braude, note 12).

22 Margalioth, *Midrash HaGGadol on the Pentateuch: Exodus*, p. 616.

23 Reading *שהיה* 'who was' instead of *שהיה לו* 'who had', which does not make sense here.

a human king, if he is a *philanthropos*, benevolent and kind,<sup>24</sup> would allow his servants one day (out of seven) to handle their private affairs; but God allows his people six days for their own work and demands only one day — the Sabbath — for himself. The loanword פילנתרפוס\* is not attested, as far as I am aware, anywhere else in rabbinic literature. It is probably due to its rarity that it was replaced with the similar looking and better-known word פילוסופוס. In this case the version preserved in *MG* not only enabled us to reconstruct the original form and meaning of the parable, but also enriched our knowledge of Rabbinic Hebrew.<sup>25</sup>

However, variant readings in the two versions do not always reflect an error or secondary reading in one (and sometimes both) of the versions. Not infrequently the two versions exhibit what seem to be good, genuine, reliable, yet different texts. This is especially evident when examining the relatively long Aramaic tales that are included in *PsTC*. Many of these are presented in rather different forms in each of the versions of *PsTC*, yet both forms are in good Jewish Palestinian Aramaic. Now, the use of JPA declined and eventually ceased during the first centuries after the Arab conquest. Medieval scribes and authors had little (if any) familiarity with this dialect, being much more familiar with Jewish Babylonian Aramaic, due to the immense influence of the Babylonian Talmud.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, the use of JPA in both

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24 Henry Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (9th ed.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), s.v. φιλόανθρωπος.

25 After reaching this interpretation of אפילנתרפוס independently I found that the same interpretation is suggested by D. Sperber, *Greek in Talmudic Palestine* (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University, 2012). p. 60 n. 64.

26 See, e.g., Mordechai Akiva Friedman, *Jewish Marriage in Palestine: a Cairo Geniza Study. Vol. 1: The Ketubba Traditions of Eretz Israel* (Tel-Aviv: Tel-Aviv University, 1980), pp. 48–51. For a description of JPA and the main problems of its research see especially Eduard Y. Kutscher, *Studies in Galilean Aramaic* (transl. by Michael Sokoloff; Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University, 1976); idem, “Aramaic”, in: Michael Berenbaum and

versions, in a seemingly free and lively manner, testifies to their antiquity and, presumably, authenticity.

In order to demonstrate the character and significance of such variant tales I would like to present and discuss one lengthy example.<sup>27</sup> The following story exemplifies a problematic aspect of a common Jewish ritual item *tefillin* (phylacteries). *Tefillin* are considered a marker of piety and righteousness. However, not everyone who wears them is indeed pious and trustworthy, as can be seen from the following incident. A certain man reached his destination, presumably far away from home, just before Shabbat. When he saw someone wearing *tefillin*, standing in prayer, he decided to leave his money with him (carrying money during Shabbat is forbidden according to Jewish law). After Shabbat the man came back to ask for his money, at which point the other person denied having received any money from him. The first man, angry yet helpless, cried out: 'It is not you that I believed, but that holy name that was on your head' — that is, the *tefillin*. But the story does not end here. Elijah the prophet appeared to the man and told him how to retrieve his money: he should go to the hypocrite's wife and tell her that her husband asks her to give him back the deposit. In order for the wife to believe him, he should tell her that she and her husband ate leaven on Passover and pork on the Day of Atonement (a day of fasting) — an incriminating secret that served as an agreed sign between them. The man did so, and the wife innocently gave him back his money. When her husband returned and found out, he began beating her. But when his wife told him all that had happened, and that their transgressions were

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Fred Skolnik (eds.), *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (2nd ed.; Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007), vol. 1, pp. 342–359.

27 *PsTC* 2 (= *PsR* 22, 111b), Braude, *Pesikta Rabbati*, pp. 459–460; *MG Exod.* 20.7, Margalioth, *Midrash HaGGadol on the Pentateuch: Exodus*, p. 410; *SM* 123, p. 83 [Heb. section]. Full text and translation of both versions of the story are given in the appendix to this paper.

exposed, they decided 'to return to how they used to be', implying that the couple, presumably proselytes, would now return to live as gentiles.<sup>28</sup>

This tale appears nowhere else in rabbinic literature, except in *PsTC*. However, the two versions of *PsTC* exhibit two rather different forms of the same story. Let us examine a few of the more interesting differences between the two.

#### 4. *Direct witnesses*

עובדא הוה בחד גברא דהוה טעין  
ממוניה בערובתא באנפי רומשא.  
על בי כנישתא אשכח חד גברא  
מצלי ותפלי על רישיה.

It happened that a certain man was carrying money on a Friday toward sunset.

He entered a synagogue and found a certain man praying with tefillin on his head.

#### *Yalqutim*

עובדא הוה בחד דעל לחדא  
זוי בערבותא באפתי רמשא והוה  
גביה פריטין למפקדא. על לבי  
כנשתא אשכח חד גבר קאים  
מצלי ותפלויי עלויי. ואית דאמרין  
גזיר הוה.

It happened that a certain man came to a certain place on a Friday toward sunset and had with him money to deposit.

He entered a synagogue and found a certain man standing and praying with his tefillin on him. Some say he was a proselyte.

This section serves as an exposition, presenting the two main characters of the story. The direct witnesses describe them only in terms of their actions: the one carrying money, the other

28 The exact meaning of the term נשוב לסורנו is not altogether clear; however, it is usually used to describe a former proselyte (גר) who now behaves (again) as a gentile.

wearing *tefillin* and praying. But the *Yalqutim* add, concerning the second man, that ‘some say he was a proselyte’ (ואית דאמרין), thus anticipating what is revealed at the conclusion of the story. In view of literary considerations, this would seem a secondary addition. Note, however, that this added sentence is in good Palestinian Aramaic.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, the *Yalqutim* version uses the phrases ‘a certain place’<sup>30</sup> and ‘standing (and) praying’, which are unique to JPA. To be sure, the direct witnesses also preserve fairly good Aramaic. Especially noteworthy is the usage of the verb טעין. The usual meaning of this Aramaic verb is ‘to carry a load’. However, the man in our story was not carrying a heavy load of coins, but simply had some money at his disposal. In this context the verb טעין means ‘to have, to possess, to carry around’. This meaning is well attested in JPA,<sup>31</sup> but not in other dialects of Jewish Aramaic.

### 5. *Direct witnesses*

### *Yalqutim*

מה עבד ההוא גברא. אול וקם	נתעטף טליתו ועמד ונתפלל
ליה קומי ארונא מצלי. אמ'.	באותו מקום. אמ' לפניו. רבוננו של
רבונה דעלמא. לא ליה הימינית	עולם. לא ליה הימינית אלא לשמך
אלא לשמך קדישא דחקיק על	קדישא דהוה על רישיה.
רישיה הימינית.	

29 Note the forms גיורא, אמרי, as opposed to the forms גיור, אמרין which are characteristic of JBA and are much more common in medieval Jewish writings.

30 The noun ז(א)וי, זויטא, is common in Aramaic in the meaning ‘corner’. Only in JPA does it have the meaning ‘place, area’; see Michael Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic*, (2nd ed. Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2002), s.v. זויי.

31 See e.g. *Bereshith Rabbah* 38.13 (ed. Theodor-Albeck, p. 362): אתת חדא: ‘a certain woman came, carrying one dish of fine flour’; *ibid.* 40.5 (p. 384): מרגלון את...? טעין...? מרגלון את: ‘do you carry clothes... do you carry silk... do you carry pearls?’.

<p>He wrapped himself in his cloak and stood and prayed in that place, and said in front of Him: “Master of the world, It was not him that I believed, but Your holy name that was on his head.”</p>	<p>What did that man do? He went and stood praying in front of the ark, and said: “Master of the world, It was not him that I believed, but Your holy name that was on his head I believed.”</p>
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After the hypocrite denied he was given any money, the poor man who gave him the money, furious and helpless, rebuked him and then cried out to God. The *Yalqutim* report that the man ‘went and stood praying in front of the ark (קומי ארוגא),’ that is the chest dedicated to holding the scroll(s) of the holy scripture(s), a physical and conceptual focal point of Jewish synagogues. This specific use of the common Aramaic word ארוגא is unique to JPA.<sup>32</sup> The direct witnesses, on the other hand, present this episode in Hebrew rather than Aramaic, and in a more elaborate way: ‘he wrapped himself in his cloak and stood and prayed in that place’, etc. The Hebrew appears somewhat unexpectedly in the middle of an Aramaic passage, but it must be noted that such shifts of language are not uncommon in ‘classic’ rabbinic compositions.<sup>33</sup> In fact, the conclusion of this very tale is in Hebrew, according to both versions. The change in language and content reflects different literary choices made in each of the versions.

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32 See, e.g., *y.Megillah* 73d (3.1): כלי בית הכנסת כבית הכנסת... כילה דעל ארוגא כארונה ‘all the vessels of the synagogue are like the synagogue... the curtain covering the ark is like the ark’.

33 The Hebrew sentence in the version of the direct witnesses has an exact parallel in *Psiqata DeRav Kahanah, Ha’Omer* 4 (ed. Mandelbaum, p. 144), describing Mordechai praying to God as he sees Haman approaching. There, just like in *PsTC*, it is a Hebrew sentence in the middle of an Aramaic tale.

6. *Direct witnesses**Yalqutim*

נגלה לו אליהו ז"ל. אמ' ליה.  
 מבי מצלי<sup>34</sup> גם ודמדך ליה. איתגלי  
 אליהו זכר' לטו' על ההוא גברא.  
 אמ' ליה...

After praying he dozed off Elijah, of blessed memory,  
and fell asleep. Elijah, of  
 blessed memory, appeared  
 to that man and said to  
 him... appeared to him...

The *Yalqutim* version simply relates how Elijah appeared to the man, as if there were nothing noteworthy about this miraculous appearance. The direct witnesses, however, add a minor detail: the man, having prayed, fell asleep, and then Elijah appeared to him, presumably in a dream. This addition may represent a degree of discomfort with the notion of Elijah's corporeal appearance, replacing it with a dream revelation. Nevertheless, even though the direct witnesses probably exhibit a secondary addition, it is in good Palestinian Aramaic. The phrase גם ודמדך ליה 'he dozed off and fell asleep' is unique to this dialect.<sup>35</sup>

34 'after praying' — odd construction, probably corrupt. We may plausibly suppose that the original was ממצלי, a normal JPA construction, and that the preposition בַּ was inserted under the influence of JBA. MS Wien and the printed edition (see notes 9–10 above) read מק(ו)ם צלי. Though the phrase קם צלי is characteristic of JPA, the use of perfect forms with the preposition מ- is unusual. The reading מקם צלי, therefore, is probably a learned emendation.

35 Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic* (2nd ed. Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2002), s.v. דמדך c1.

7. *Direct witnesses**Yalqutum*

איזיל ואימור הדין סימונא לאנתתיה זיל אמור לאתתיה דההוא גברא  
 מן שמיה והיא יהיבא לך. אַזִּיל אמ' ההוא סימן  
 לה. אמר ליד בעליך סימן ביני  
 לביניך דאליך עמא אכלין חמירא דהוה ליה עמה. אכלין בלילי פסחא  
 בליליא דפסחא ומן ההוא מינא ביום חמיר ובלילי צומא רבא מן ההוא  
 צומא רבא. מינא.

והיא יהבא לך. יְבִי לִי מִקְמַת פֶּלֶן.

“Go and tell the wife of that (other) man the sign  
 “Go and tell this sign to his wife in his name and she shall give you (the deposit).  
 Go tell her: 'Your husband says to you: A sign between me and you:

that he had with her: (We) These people (= we) eat leaven on the night of leaven on the night of  
 Passover and of that thing<sup>36</sup> Passover and of that thing  
 on the night of the Great on the day of the Great Fast.’  
 Fast.<sup>37</sup> Give me this object And (then) she shall give (it)  
 (= the deposit).” to you.”

This passage relates the contents of Elijah’s revelation, and reveals the hypocrite’s and his wife’s hidden sins. The *Yalqutum* version uses the relatively rare self-referential clause דאליך עמא ‘these people’, which is unique to JPA.<sup>38</sup> Note that these words,

36 That is, pork.

37 The Day of Atonement (Yom HaKippurim).

38 See y. *Shebiith* 39a (9.5): בגין דלית לאילין עמא רחם: ‘the Cappadocians [i.e., Jews or proselytes from Cappadocia] who reside in Sepphoris asked R. Ami: Since these people [i.e., we] have neither a friend nor someone who seeks their welfare’; *Bereshith Rabbah* 38.8 (p. 357): ‘(the builders of the tower of Babylon say concerning themselves:) these people will be burnt away’;

דאיליך עמא, are graphically and phonetically similar to the clause דהוה ליה עמה 'that he had with her', which is found in the direct witnesses exactly at the same place.<sup>39</sup> It seems that the *Yalqutim* preserve a genuine Aramaic phrase that was omitted or replaced in the version of the direct witnesses. But this is not to say that the version of the direct witnesses is secondary or less reliable. Just at the end of Elijah's words, the direct witnesses use the phrase מַקְמַת פֶּלֶן 'this object', a fine specimen of JPA.<sup>40</sup>

By now it should be clear that the differences between the two versions of *PsTC*, at least as far as this tale is concerned, are much more than mere scribal errors. Each version presents, in general, a good text, from both a literary and a linguistic perspective. The fact that both versions use good, authentic Palestinian Aramaic is extremely important, as it shows that these versions are not

כל מה דאמ' על הלין עמא: *Psiquata DeRav Kahanah, VaYehi* 7 (pp. 128–129): 'all that he (i.e., Moses) has said concerning these people (i.e., us, the Egyptians) has happened to them (i.e., us). Come, let us expel these Hebrews from among you, or else these people (i.e., we, the firstborn) will die'. Note that in each of these instances the term אילין עמא refers to 'others', i.e., proselytes or gentiles.

Concerning the form איליך see Caspar Levias, *A Grammar of Galilean Aramaic* (in Hebrew; New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1986), p. 36; Abraham Tal, "Investigations in Palestinian Aramaic: the Demonstrative Pronouns" (in Hebrew), *Leshonenu* 44 (1979), pp. 61–63; Shai Heijmans, "Morphology of the Aramaic Dialect in the Palestinian Talmud according to Geniza Manuscripts" (in Hebrew; MA thesis, Tel Aviv University, 2005), p. 26 (§5.2) and the references there.

- 39 However, while the phrase דאיליך עמא is the subject of the following verb, אכלין, the clause דהוה ליה עמה describes the preceding noun, סימנא, thus leaving the verb אכלין without an explicit subject. This is a somewhat rough (yet acceptable) syntax, and may be another indication that the reading of the direct witnesses is secondary.
- 40 See *y.Maaser Sheni* 56b (5.6): 'פלן ברי יסב מקמת פלן, ושאר נבסיי יירשו בניי: 'this son of mine will inherit this object, and the rest of my sons will inherit the rest of my possessions'.

the product of medieval scribes or redactors, who were no longer able to use JPA to such an extent.<sup>41</sup> Rather, both versions were given their final form in a historical and geographical context in which this dialect was, if not actually spoken, at least in common literary use. It would seem, therefore, that the differences between these versions, rather than representing corruptions or reworking of an original fixed text, reflect some fluidity in the text itself.

The nature and meaning of this fluidity can be explained in several ways. It is possible that they represent a kind of ‘creative transmission’, that is, the active and intentional interventions of later transmitters in an original text.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, it is sometimes possible to discern a secondary reading in one version or the other.<sup>43</sup> But in most instances both versions preserve equally reliable readings. Moreover, the scope and frequency of the textual variants examined here, which are by no means exceptional,<sup>44</sup> may suggest that there was something in the text itself that made

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41 An example of late, artificial use of Aramaic by a medieval emendator is described in note 34 above.

42 Similar to the model suggested by Shamma Yehuda Friedman, “On the Origin of Textual Variants in the Babylonian Talmud” (in Hebrew), *Sidra* 7 (1991), pp. 67–102; idem, “Uncovering Literary Dependencies in the Talmudic Corpus”, in Shaye J. D. Cohen (ed.), *The Synoptic Problem in Rabbinic Literature* (Providence: Brown Judaic Studies, 2000), pp. 35–57.

43 See examples 4, 6, and perhaps also 7.

44 A few examples will suffice here: Midrash *Ekha Rabbati* exists in two distinct versions, brilliantly analysed by Paul Mandel, “Between Byzantium and Islam: The Transmission of a Jewish Book in the Byzantine and Early Islamic Periods”, in Yaakov Elman and Israel Gershoni (eds.), *Transmitting Jewish Traditions: Orality, Textuality, and Cultural Diffusion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), pp. 74–106; some of the genizah fragments of *Vayikra Rabbah* preserve significantly different text of the midrash and are briefly discussed by Mordechai Margalioth (Margulies), *Midrash Wayyikra Rabbah* (Jerusalem: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1960), vol. 5, pp. 5–7; the relationship between *Qohelet Rabbah* and its citations in *MG* and *SM*, discussed by Kiperwasser, *Midrash haGadol*, is strikingly similar to the phenomena discussed here.

it especially susceptible to such alterations. In other words, it is the text itself that was — to a certain degree — changeable and fluid. According to this model, the differences between the two versions reflect a relatively early stage of transmission, when the redaction — that is, the process of choosing, arranging and ordering the segments of *PsTC* — was completed, and also the text of these segments was more or less fixed — but not entirely. A certain degree of freedom was allowed, or perhaps inevitable, during this early, possibly oral,<sup>45</sup> stage of transmission.<sup>46</sup>

Whether the curious textual situation of *PsTC* represents the inherent fluidity and openness of the text itself or the creative reshaping of a (hypothetical) original text by its transmitters is not easy to decide. Perhaps more important, however, is the recognition that both versions are equally important for the study and understanding of this composition. This is especially true in regard to the subject of this volume, that is, the study of Rabbinic Hebrew and Aramaic. As has been demonstrated above, both versions of *PsTC* represent authentic and common use of Palestinian Aramaic, and offer rich, invaluable materials for the study of this dialect. I hope that future researchers will make use of these treasures, thus enriching our knowledge of this most important, yet somewhat neglected branch of Aramaic.

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45 On the question of oral vs. written transmission of rabbinic literature see the articles and references in Elman and Gershoni, *Transmitting Jewish Traditions*.

46 A similar model was suggested, concerning textual variants in the Babylonian Talmud, by Eliezer Shimshon Rosenthal, “The History of the Text and Problems of Redaction in the Study of the Babylonian Talmud” (in Hebrew), *Tarbiz* 57 (1988), pp. 1–36 (especially pp. 30–31); Robert Brody, “Geonic Literature and the Talmudic Text” (in Hebrew), in: Yaacov Sussman and David Rosenthal (eds.), *Mehqerei Talmud: Talmudic Studies*, vol. 1 (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1990), pp. 237–303; idem, “The Talmud in the Geonic Period”, in: Sharon Liberman Mintz and Gabriel M. Goldstein (eds.), *Printing the Talmud: From Bomberg to Schottenstein* (New York: Yeshiva University Museum, 2005), p. 32.

**APPENDIX: TEXT AND TRANSLATION OF *PstC* 2**  
 (= *PsR* 22, 111B)<sup>47</sup>

עדים ישירים	ילקוטים
<p>עובדא הוה בחד גברא דהוה טעין ממוניה בערובתא באנפי רומשא. על בי כנישתא אשכח חד גברא מצלי ותפלי על רישיה. ואמ'. לית לי נפקיד הדין ממוניה אלא גבי הדין דהוה נטר מצותיה דבריין. נשא אפקדיה גביה.</p>	<p>[1] עובדא הוה בחד גבר דעל לחדא זוי בערבותא באפתי רמשא והוה גביה פריטין למפקדא. על לבי כנשתא אשכח חד גבר קאים מצלי ותפלויי עלויי. ואית דאמריין גיור הוה. אמ'. לית לי למיתן פריטי אלא גבי הדין גברא דהוה נטר כל מצואתא דברייה. יהב ליה פקדוניה.</p>
<p>בא לאפוקי שובתא כפר ביה. אמ' ליה. חייך. לא לך הימנית אלא להווא שמא קדישא דהוה על רישך.</p>	<p>[2] באפוקי שבתא אזל בעא פקדוניה וכפר ביה.</p>
<p>נתעטף טליתו ועמד ונתפלל באותו מקום. אמ' לפניו. רבונו של עולם. לא ליה הימנית אלא לשמך קדישא דהוה על רישיה.</p>	<p>מה עבד ההוא גברא. אזל וקם ליה קומי ארונא מצלי. אמ'. רבוניה דעלמא. לא ליה הימנית אלא לשמך קדישא דחקיק על רישיה הימנית.</p>
<p>מכי מצלי נם ודמך ליה. איתגלי אליהו זכו' לטו' על ההוא גברא. אמ' ליה. זיל אמור לאתתיה דההוא גברא ההוא סימן דהוה ליה עמה. אכלין בלילי פסחא חמיר ובלילי צומא רבא מן ההוא מינא. יבֵי לי מקמת פלן. נשאתה ויהבת ליה.</p>	<p>[3] נגלה לו אליהו ז"ל. אמ' ליה. איזיל ואימור הדין סימונא לאנתתיה מן שמיה והיא יהיבא לך. אִזִּיל אמ' לה. אמר לך בעליך סימן ביני לבינך דאילך עמא אכלין חמירא בליליא דפסחא ומן ההוא מינא ביום צומא רבא. והיא יהבא לך. אמ' לה כן ויהבת ליה.</p>

47 Translation based on Braude, *Pesikta Rabbati*, pp. 459–460, altered and corrected by the author. Hebrew sections are printed in italics.

כיון דאתא שרי חביש עלה. אמרה ליה. מה לך את חביש לי. סימנא דהוה ביני לבינד יב לי ויהביתה ליה.

[4] כד סליק בעלה מן שוקא אמרה ליה. אף חד סימן דהוה ביני לבינד אזלת ופרסמתיה. אמ' לה. ומא עסקא. תניית ליה עובדא. שרי וחבט עלה.

אמ'. הואיל ונתפרסמנו נחזור לסורנו. מכאן אמרו. אל תאמן בגר עד עשרים ושתים דורות.

[5] אמרו. הואיל ונתפרסמנו נחזור לסוריננו. עמדו וחזרו לסורם. מכאן אמרו. אל תאמן בגר עד עשרים וארבעה דורות.

### Direct Witnesses

[1] It happened that a certain man was carrying money on a Friday toward sunset. He entered a synagogue and found a certain man praying with tefillin on his head. He said, I shouldn't deposit this money but with this one, who keeps the commandments of our Creator. He took (the money) and deposited it with him.

### Yalqutum

It happened that a certain man came to a certain place on a Friday toward sunset and had with him money (lit. coins) to deposit. He entered a synagogue and found a certain man standing and praying with his tefillin on him. Some say he was a proselyte. He said, I shouldn't give my money but to this man, who keeps all the commandments of his (or: the) Creator. He gave him his deposit.

[2] *He came* at the end of the Sabbath, and (the other) denied (the transaction). He said to him: “It was not you that I believed, but that holy name that was on your head.”

*He wrapped himself in his cloak and stood and prayed in that place, and said in front of Him: “Master of the world, It was not him that I believed, but Your holy name that was on his head.”*

[3] After praying he dozed off and fell asleep. Elijah, of blessed memory, appeared to that man and said to him: “Go and tell the wife of that (other) man the sign that he had with her: (We) eat leaven on the night of Passover and of that thing (= pork) on the night of the Great Fast (= Day of Atonement). Give me this object (= the deposit).” (So he did, and) she took it and gave it to him.

At the end of the Sabbath He went and asked for his deposit, (but the other) denied (the transaction).

What did that man do? He went and stood praying in front of the ark, and said: “Master of the world, It was not him that I believed, but Your holy name that was on his head I believed.”

Elijah, of blessed memory, appeared to him and said to him: “Go and tell this sign to his wife in his name and she shall give you (the deposit). Go tell her: ‘Your husband says to you: A sign between me and you: These people (= we) eat leaven on the night of Passover and of that thing on the day of the Great Fast.’ And (then) she shall give (it) to you.” He told her so and she gave (it) to him.

[4] When he (her husband) came, he began imprisoning (!) her. She said to him: “Why do you imprison (!) me? He gave me the sign that we had between me and you, and (then) I gave it to him.”

[5] *He said: “Since we have been exposed, let us return to how we used to be.”*

*This is why they said: “Do not trust a proselyte up to twenty-two generations.”*

When her husband returned from outside, she said to him: “Even that one sign that we had between me and you, you went and exposed.” He said to her: “What’s the matter?” She told him what happened. He began beating her.

*They said: “Since we have been exposed, let us return to how we used to be.” They stood up and returned to how they used to be.*

*This is why they said: “Do not trust a proselyte up to twenty-four generations.”*

