This volume brings together papers relating to the pronunciation of Semitic languages and the representation of their pronunciation in written form. The papers focus on sources representative of a period that stretches from late antiquity until the Middle Ages. A large proportion of them concern reading traditions of Biblical Hebrew, especially the vocalization notation systems used to represent them. Also discussed are orthography and the written representation of prosody.

Beyond Biblical Hebrew, there are studies concerning Punic, Biblical Aramaic, Syriac, and Arabic, as well as post-biblical traditions of Hebrew such as piyyuṭ and medieval Hebrew poetry. There were many parallels and interactions between these various language traditions and the volume demonstrates that important insights can be gained from such a wide range of perspectives across different historical periods.

As with all Open Book publications, this entire book is available to read for free on the publisher’s website. Printed and digital editions, together with supplementary digital material, can also be found here: www.openbookpublishers.com.

Cover image: Detail from a bilingual Latin-Punic inscription at the theatre at Lepcis Magna, IT_321 (accessed from https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Inscription_Theatre_Lepcis_Magna_Libya.JPG). Leaf of a Syriac prayer book with Western vocalization signs (source: Wikimedia Commons). Leaf of an Abbasid-era Qurʾān (vv. 64.11–12) with red, yellow, and green vocalization dots (source: Wikimedia Commons). Genizah fragment of the Hebrew Bible (Gen. 11–12, Cambridge University Library T-S A1.56; courtesy of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library). Genizah fragment of a Karaite transcription of the Hebrew Bible in Arabic script (Num. 14.22–24, 40–42, Cambridge University Library T-S Ar. 52.242; courtesy of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library). Greek transcription of the Hebrew for Ps. 22.2a in Marc. 27.46 as found in Codex Bezae (fol. 99v; courtesy of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library).

Cover design: Anna Gał.
THE TIBERIAN TRADITION IN COMMON BIBLES FROM THE CAIRO GENIZAH

Benjamin Outhwaite

1.0. INTRODUCTION

This study takes a close look at five fragments of ‘Common Bibles’ from the Cairo Genizah, a category of biblical text that encompasses probably the majority of Hebrew Bible fragments found there. The texts are analysed on a textual and linguistic basis to see what they reveal about the phonetics of the Tiberian reading tradition in the Classical Genizah Period (the end of the tenth to the mid-thirteenth centuries CE) and the fidelity with which they follow that tradition. Common Bibles, I argue, provide a further glimpse into the phonetics of Tiberian Hebrew in this period, as their producers did not always adhere to the strict letter of the written Tiberian tradition, either through choice or ignorance, and the results reveal more about how the users of the text were pronouncing their Hebrew than the correct application of Tiberian graphemes would ordinarily allow. For instance, the substitution of vocalic shewa by a different vowel sign will reveal how the shewa was being pronounced, something normally hidden behind the inscrutable two dots of the sign itself.
2.0. THE CORPUS

‘Common Bible’ is the term proposed by Colette Sirat in her *Hebrew Manuscripts of the Middle Ages* (2002) as one category of a fourfold division of the extant Hebrew Bible manuscript codices from the Muslim lands of the Middle Ages (Sirat 2002, 42–50). The full list is as follows: (a) Great Bibles, fully vocalised and cantillated, with Masoretic notes; (b) Common Bibles, ‘more modest’, usually without *masora magna*, but “they always have the vowel and cantillation signs”; (c) Bibles with translations; (d) the Bible with Arabic translation and translator’s commentary (e.g., Saʿadya’s *Tafsīr* or, for Karaites, the commentary by Yefet ben ʿEli). The recent book by David Stern, *The Jewish Bible: A Material History* (2017), talks about three “distinct generic types of Hebrew Bible” in the Middle Ages, “the Masoretic Bible, the liturgical Pentateuch, and the study Bible,” which categories overlap, but not in contradictory fashion, with Sirat’s (Stern 2017, 88–90). Of relevance too is an earlier study by Goshen-Gottstein (1962) of the range of extant Hebrew Bibles found in the United States, one of the first to attempt to classify the types of biblical manuscript in the Genizah. He distinguishes ‘study codices’ from ‘listener’s codices’ (Goshen-Gottstein 1962, 36–44). His former category is differentiated from Great (Masoretic) Codices by an absence of Masoretic notes, indicating they are “not meant for ‘professional’ usage or to serve as an exact model,” while his latter, the ‘listener’s codices’ (which he estimates form about a half of the Elkan Nathan Adler Collection at the Jewish Theological Seminary, on which he bases his analysis) were meant for “everyday use” and were “not written in order to
Please future hunters of variant readings and do not represent in any way... any hidden stream of tradition” (Goshen-Gottstein 1962, 38–40). He chose the term ‘listener’s codex’, because these texts in his view supported the congregation in its listening, not its reading, and were “little more than ‘hearing aids’” (Goshen-Gottstein 1962, 40–41). Despite having been written more than half a century ago, Goshen-Gottstein’s assertive impressions are still some of the more insightful on the subject, and the whole article, despite its parochial-sounding title (‘Biblical Manuscripts in the United States’), is a useful one.

In his survey, Stern (2017, 88) asserts that “the surviving codices are only a fraction of the Hebrew Bibles that once existed, and we do not know how representative they truly are.” While this is arguably true when looking at the Jewish world at large and over time, such is the scale of the biblical manuscript inventory in the Genizah Collection (more than twenty-five thousand pieces in the Taylor-Schechter and Lewis-Gibson Collections in Cambridge alone) that we can be quite confident we have a sense of the biblical landscape at least as it relates to the Eastern Mediterranean in the High Middle Ages (equivalent to the Classical Genizah Period).

Given all this, particularly that we can see the extent of the inventory and how the different types of biblical manuscript sit in it, I see no harm in adapting these categories to suit the differing kinds of analysis that should be done on them. For my current purposes, I am most interested in fragments with Tiberian vowels that are prone to deviation from the standard orthography and vocalisation of the text. These are going to be found mostly
among Goshen-Gottstein’s ‘listener’s codices’, but can also sit among his ‘study codices’. I think it most effective therefore to take Sirat’s broad definition of Common Bibles, i.e., excluding those with translations, commentaries, etc., but further exclude all with Masoretic notes, since these are, by definition, going to be less fruitful in significant deviations from the written tradition (which is what the masora is there to guard against!). This gives us a clear and handily unambiguous distinction between what we can call Masoretic Bibles and a broad category of Common Bibles: those that have Masoretic notes and those that do not.¹ For current purposes, therefore, a Common Bible preserves some or all of the biblical text in an extended form (i.e., not including collections of biblical verses for liturgical or homiletical purposes, but including collections of haftarot readings); it should not have the masora, in the form of Masoretic notes (masora parva and magna), but may have varying amounts of the rest of the panoply of the Tiberian Masoretic apparatus: vocalisation, cantillation signs, parasha and seder markers, demarcated parashiyot, and qere/ketiv notations. It happens that Bibles of this type are often

¹ It is a useful division because it is unambiguous, but it also helps to focus our examination on Bibles of a shared type. Small-format, single-column Bible codices would, for instance, fall into Sirat’s ‘Common Bible’ category even if they have full Masoretic notes, whereas I feel that they would be better served by being treated as ‘scholarly editions’ and analysed alongside the Great Masoretic Bibles, from which they may have been copied and with which they undoubtedly have a closer relationship. The majority of Common Bibles probably do not have the same pedigrees.
of a smaller format, and may be written on parchment or on paper, but the current study is not concerned with the codicological categorisation of Common Bibles, only with their value in the analysis of the Tiberian tradition that they transmit.²

The Common Bible, under any form of categorisation, has not been the focus of much research. Palestinian and Babylonian-

² Format is not a reliable guide to the quality of a biblical text, if we define quality, as far as Tiberian text-types go, in terms of proximity to the Masoretic Text. Some large format Great Bibles are quite second-rate, with significant numbers of errors and a frequent disparity between their text and their own masora, whereas T-S Misc. 24.137.3, a small (15 cm × 22 cm) parchment bifolium containing the end of the book of Numbers has a colophon that reads לְעֵילָה מֵאַבְדַּת אַלֹּא חָמְבָנֶה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם בֶּבֶרֶבֶרֶבֶרֶבֶרֶבֶרֶבֶרֶבֶרֶבֶרֶבֶרֶבֶרֶבֶרֶב "M. C. Davis (1978, 306) understands this as meaning “that this Pentateuch belonged to the ‘Jerusalemite’ congregation in Fosťat,” but in fact it probably refers to how it was copied. Therefore the missing word is perhaps נְקִל ‘it was copied’ (Arabic nuqila; thanks to Geoffrey Khan for this suggestion), and it means that this small format Bible was copied from the greatest of the Ben Asher texts, the Tāj: ‘...copied from the codex of the Tāj, which is in the Synagogue of the Jerusalemites in Fosťat, and with the help of God’. The Tāj, the Aleppo Codex, was kept in the Synagogue of the Palestinians in Fosťat in the twelfth century, after its redemption from the Crusaders following the fall of Jerusalem. If the reading of the colophon is correct, then it is a witness to a part of the text that is now lost. With thanks to Estara Ar- rant, over whose shoulder I spotted this fragment while she was collecting data for her PhD. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my colleague in Cambridge, Kim Phillips, for his assiduous comments on an earlier draft of this paper.
vocalised manuscripts from the Cairo Genizah have been investigated at length, and those with Extended Tiberian too, though to a lesser extent. Those, on the other hand, with ‘ordinary’ Tiberian vocalisation have probably been viewed as insufficiently interesting to be worthy of close analysis: the Tiberian is either seen as poorly executed, and therefore too debased a form to be relevant to the study of the tradition itself (hence the appellation ‘vulgar’ sometimes applied to them), or the manuscripts are viewed as too far removed in time from the Masoretic era, from the core Ben Asher tradition. Israel Yeivin, in his Introduction to the Tiberian Masorah (translated by E. J. Revell, 1980) discusses the Bibles of the Cairo Genizah and touches on these points: “Most are fragments of ‘vulgar’ texts, some without Masorah, without accents, with many extra vowel letters, and so on…. MSS written after 1100 contain, as a rule, little of interest to the study of the standard tradition and its development…. They do, however, contain much of value to the study of the development of the tradition up to the time of printing, and also for the study of the pronunciation of Hebrew in different periods and localities” (Yeivin 1980, 30–31). I agree wholeheartedly with his last point, that these manuscripts—though without limiting it to those writ-

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3 Goshen-Gottstein (1962, 35) is forthright in his explanation of the history: “When the Cairo Genizah started to become the pet subject of scholars, they were naturally interested in material up to then unknown…. It was only the fragments with non-TBT [= non-Tiberian Bible Text] vocalization that aroused the curiosity of scholars. Working on biblical Geniza fragments meant: looking for non-TBT vocalization.”
ten after 1100—can be of great interest for the study of the pronunciation of Hebrew, and, in particular, of the pronunciation of the Tiberian tradition as practised by the disparate congregations who made up the Jewish community of Fusṭāṭ, or from further afield, whose discarded manuscripts ended up in the Genizah Collection. In support, I enlist a further assertion from Moshe Goshen-Gottstein (1962, 41) about his ‘listener’s codices’: “This freedom in copying out these texts is of vital importance for our understanding of Hebrew reading traditions and linguistic habits.”

3.0. Scope of the Analysis

Classification of Tiberian Hebrew Bibles generally relies on a text’s degree of adherence to the standard Masoretic Text, as exemplified in Codex Leningrad (Russian National Library Евр. I B19a) or the Aleppo Codex (Ben Zvi Institute). This is not a new idea, and indeed can be traced at least as far back as Maimonides, who belittled the copies of the Bible in circulation in his day, comparing them unfavourably to the Tāj, which he described as corrected by Ben Asher himself (Mishne Torah, Hilkhot Tefillin, Mezuzah ve-Sefer Torah 8.4). We now identify this manuscript with the Aleppo Codex, the production of which was “the great event in the history of the Tiberian Bible text” (Goshen-Gottstein 1963, 86). Such textual perfection is not, however, a useful yardstick to employ when examining the Common Bible on its own terms. While some may have been copied by practised hands from reliable precursor texts, many, as will be shown below, have no such aspirations of rigid adherence to Tiberian norms, let alone Ben-
Asherian perfection. Some were used to practise or learn the copying of the text, others to practise or learn Hebrew itself; some were used for recitation, or for learning the text of a *haftara* or festival reading; others perhaps served as ‘lap’ Bibles, books to be held to follow the readings in the service, either for utility alone or as signs of status.

There is more to be written about the production, ownership and use of Common Bibles, but this is not the focus of the current study. For the moment, I suggest just that as a category it encompasses both user-produced codices (i.e., owned and used by those who originally wrote them), which are probably the majority of the fragments, as well as those created by third parties—relatives, friends, professional or semi-professional scribes. As will be seen, some of these Common Bible fragments are of the highest quality in terms of their production, whereas others are definitely at the ‘barely good enough’ end of things.\(^4\)

Given that Common Bibles are so numerous, their value should be self-evident: they form a large body of evidence for ordinary Jewish engagement with the text of the Hebrew Bible in the Middle Ages. But beyond their interest as a cultural artefact of popular religion, their textual value, too, is considerable. That is not to say that they have great importance for textual criticism

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\(^4\) The great legal authority of the Genizah world, Maimonides, explains in his *Mishne Tora* (*Hilkhot Tefillin, Mezuza ve-Sefer Tora* 7.1), basing himself on Deut. 31.19, that it is a requirement for every Jewish man (כל איש ואיש מישראל) to write a Torah, or, if he is not capable of it, to get someone else to write it for him. The huge number of Common Bibles in the Genizah perhaps reflects this halakhic opinion in practice.
of the biblical text in its traditional sense. Their frequent departures from the consonantal Masoretic Text can usually be explained by error or analogy, and it is less likely that they somehow preserve ancient or alternate streams of textual transmission.\(^5\) They do, though, have a real and unique value for the history of the Hebrew language. Our sources for the pronunciation of Tiberian Biblical Hebrew in this period are few: Masoretic treatises (and the successor works of the medieval grammarians and the more linguistically conscious commentators) and the Karaite transcriptions of the Hebrew Bible into Arabic script. There are not many more sources than those that point to the linguistic reality of Tiberian Hebrew at the end of the first millennium. Among the huge variety of Common Bibles, however, particularly those at the more home-made, budget end of the scale, are those which do not follow the accepted norms of spelling and vocalisation. They provide rare glimpses of how Hebrew was pronounced in the home and synagogue of the High Middle Ages.

To demonstrate this value, and to present some of the range of Common Bibles preserved in the Genizah, I have selected five different manuscripts from the Additional Series of the Taylor-Schechter Collection. No small selection from the huge Additional Series, which contains around fifteen thousand pieces of

\(^5\) It is instructive, and entertaining, to quote Goshen-Gottstein (1962, 40) again: “They were not written in order to please future hunters of variant readings and do not represent in any way—as far as our analysis indicates—any hidden stream of tradition which remained, so to speak, outside the domain of TBT [= Tiberian Bible Text]” (Goshen-Gottstein.
biblical manuscript, can be completely representative of the inventory at large, but the aim is to give a sense of the different types of Common Bible, as well as show their potential interest for the transmission of the Tiberian tradition. To that end, all the manuscripts selected have Tiberian vocalisation and some have cantillation too. Below, I analyse each from a textual and linguistic standpoint, focusing the analysis on the phonetics behind the orthography and vocalisation. There is no detailed palaeographic or codicological description. In general, the majority of manuscripts in the Taylor-Schechter Collection come from the High Middle Ages, and most were probably produced in Egypt for and by the congregation who used the Synagogue of the Palestinians in Fustat. A substantial number of Genizah manuscripts fall outside those temporal and geographical limits, but I have not chosen any that are clearly late (fourteenth century onwards) or obviously ‘foreign’ (such as in Spanish or Yemeni hands, frequent interlopers in the Genizah). The manuscripts featured here are more likely to be from the period between the end of the tenth and the middle of the thirteenth centuries, and are likely to have been produced in Egypt, Syria-Palestine, or eastern North Africa.

The fragments under analysis are all from Cambridge University Library’s Taylor-Schechter Collection of Genizah fragments. All were catalogued (in very terse fashion) in Davis and Outhwaite’s (2003) catalogue of the Additional Series, but have otherwise not been published.

T-S AS 44.35, a bifolium of Lamentations

T-S AS 68.100, a leaf of Psalms

T-S AS 53.90, a leaf of Kings and Ezekiel
T-S AS 5.144, a leaf of Leviticus
T-S AS 59.215, a bifolium of Proverbs

4.0. CODEX OF LAMENTATIONS, T-S AS 44.35

4.1. Description
The Cairo Genizah manuscript Cambridge University Library T-S AS 44.35 is a small-format paper bifolium containing continuous text from Lam. 2.13–18; 3.51–4.2. As the gap between the content of the two folios suggests, it was probably from a copy of the whole book, rather than just an excerpt. Lamentations is read in the evening service of *Tish’a be’Av* ‘the ninth of Av’ (Elbogen 1993, 108), and individual copies of the book or of all the *Megillot* together can be found in the Genizah. T-S AS 44.35 is fully furnished with Tiberian vowels, but there are no cantillation signs, and no *masora*. The divine name, in the form of the Tetragrammaton, is written in full. Consonants and vowels are in the same ink and, most likely, the same hand. The text does not seem to

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6 A space of approximately ten letters’ width has been left after the end of Lam. 3.66 and before 4.1. This could be construed as a *parasha setuma* ‘a closed paragraph’, but in fact Codex Leningrad has a *petuḥa* ‘an open paragraph’ here. None of the many closed paragraphs that occur in this section of text in Codex Leningrad (e.g., Lam. 3.63 or 4.1) are reflected in the manuscript.

7 It is clear that vowels and consonants were written at the same time, because there is more space between some lines than others, depending on the number and type of vowel signs written. Further evidence is in
have been ruled, and the left-hand margin is quite ragged, though there are some line fillers and elongated letters. Perhaps these are more for effect than actual utility. The writing fills most of the page, with minimal space left for margins. The execution of certain letter shapes and vowel signs is unusual: most notably qibbuṣ is often reversed, with the three dots sloping up from left-to-right.

The system of Tiberian vocalisation used in T-S AS 44.35 is idiosyncratic, but appears to behave consistently within its own rules, as far as these can be discerned. The most obvious feature of the vocalisation is that silent shewa is usually not marked unless it falls under one of the bgdkpt consonants, where it probably serves to mark that the consonant has spirant, i.e., fricative, pronunciation. Vocalic shewa is frequently replaced by patah. Full vowels occur in place of ḥatefs. Dagesh (lene or forte) is absent, as is rafe. No dot distinguishes the consonants śin and shin. Sof pasuq (:), as part of the consonantal text, occurs at the end of verses; maqqef, as part of the accentuation system, is not used. The vowel u, regardless of length, is usually marked with a digraph ֻו, ֻו, or ֻ.

Lam. 4.2, where the scribe corrected his spelling of קֵרֵר by writing a yod above the line, but in so doing forgot to vocalise the word itself.

8 Rafe may appear once in T-S AS 44.35, on dalet in קֵדֵם ‘ancient times’ (Lam. 2.17).

9 Sof pasuq is lacking at the end of Lam. 3.55.
4.2. Consonantal Text of T-S AS 44.35

T-S AS 44.35 does not slavishly follow the Masoretic Text, although there are sufficient defective forms to show some awareness of and fidelity to the basic consonantal form of the text. For instance, יוביה ‘my enemy’ (Lam. 3.52) is defective in the fragment and the MT. Where the form is plene in the MT, at Lam. 2.17, the fragment is too: יוביה ‘enemy’. However, there are numerous differences, with the following plene spellings all defective in the MT:

- עיקרו (MT) עיקרו ‘passers-by’ (Lam. 2.15);
- אתה (MT) אתה ‘you said’ (Lam. 3.57);
- אלקח (MT) אלקח ‘you have redeemed’ (Lam. 3.58);
- וייץ (MT) וייץ ‘and shake’ (Lam. 2.15);
- יופי (MT) יופי ‘beauty’ (Lam. 2.15), etc.

The reverse occurs rarely in T-S AS 44.35; only the following defective forms are plene in the MT:

-ricane (MT) canic ‘your enemies’ (Lam. 2.16);
- How?’ (Lam. 4.1)

There is obviously a greater tendency towards the use of matres lectionis, but not a complete departure from the consonantal tradition behind the MT.

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10 Where comparison is made to the Masoretic Text (hereafter MT), unless otherwise specified, this refers to the Leningrad Codex (Russian National Library Евр. I B19a).

11 However, in the Leningrad Codex וינע (Lam. 2.15) shows an erasure indicating that it was originally written with plene yod.
The precedence of the oral tradition over the consonantal can be seen in the frequent ellipsis or replacement of quiescent 
‘alef, where the text presents a more phonetic, rather than historical, spelling, e.g.,

(רָאָשָׁ֔ים) ‘he will heal’ (Lam. 2.13);
‘their head’ (Lam. 2.15);
(וֶלֹּ֣א) ‘and not’ (Lam. 2.17);
(רָאָשָׁ֔ים) ‘my head’ (Lam. 3.54);
‘I called’ (Lam. 3.55) with ‘alef added above the line;
‘אָלֹּה (אָלֹּהַתִּי) ‘do not fear’ (Lam. 3.57);
(ברָּ֑אש) ‘at the head of’ (Lam. 4.1)

The spelling of the MT’s שָׁ֖ש (Lam. 2.14) as שֶׁש, corrected above the line with ש and written correctly as שִׁש on its second occurrence in the verse, also reflects the more phonetic impulses of the scribe, confusing the two homophonous consonants. Similarly with מַחְּשֵׂ (בַּחְשֵׂ) ‘their thoughts’ (Lam. 3.60), where the ב was inserted only as an afterthought, is probably symptomatic of the same confusion.

The substitution of the Tetragrammaton twice, in Lam. 2.18 and 3.58 (written the second time יְהוָּה), where the MT on both occasions has אָדָני, similarly underlines the oral nature of this

12 The confusion of ש and ג, pronounced identically as labio-dental [v] under most circumstances in Tiberian Hebrew, is pervasive in the texts of the Genizah. It can be found in a draft of a letter by the head of the Jerusalemite community in eleventh-century Fusṭāṭ, Efrayim ben Shemarya, נפלאותב ‘his wonders’ (for נפלאויותו), T-S 12.273, as well as in a very young child’s (or very backward student’s) biblical writing exercise, י אלהי ‘the LORD his God’ (for אלהים), T-S NS 159.209.
transcription, suggesting that it was not copied from a written exemplar, but taken down from memory or from dictation.

Beyond the interchange of vowel letters, T-S AS 44.35 shows two minor consonantal differences from the MT:

- כ ל ה א רֵץ (MT לְכ ל־ה א ָֽֽאֶרֶץ) ‘the whole earth’ (Lam. 2.15);
- וּבִל עְנ (MT לְשַוְע תִָֽֽאִי) ‘from my cry’ (Lam. 3.56)

The text follows the MT qere with שַבְתוּת (MT שַבְתוּת) ‘your captivity’ (Lam. 2.14). There is an obvious dittography in הוֹטַע התוב ‘the best’ (Lam. 4.1), where the scribe recognised their error and did not vocalise the repeated word.

The evidence of the consonantal text of T-S AS 44.35 is that the scribe who produced it, though possessing familiarity with the general spelling conventions of the MT, certainly did not meticulously following a Masoretic Vorlage. The more phonetic elements, in particular the ellipsis of quiescent alef, show the pervasive influence of the reading tradition, that is, of the oral recitation, which tends often in the fragment to override the spelling conventions of standard Biblical Hebrew.

4.3. Shewa in T-S AS 44.35

Further evidence of the influence of the oral component in the text’s composition can be seen in its approach to marking the shewa sign, sparsely used in the text. Where shewa occurs on non-bgdkpt consonants and is silent in the MT, no sign is written, e.g.,

- נִגְזַּרְתִּי (MT נִגְזָֽרְתִּי) ‘I am cut off’ (Lam. 3.54)
While no standard Masoretic codex of the Bible follows this practice, the occasional elision of silent shewa can be found even in the best manuscripts. The Aleppo Codex, for example, exhibits at least three words where the naqdan, possibly Aharon ben Moshe ben Asher himself, has forgotten to write silent shewa, for instance on ‘inside him’ (Job 20.14; Yeivin 1968, 16). However inadvertent it was in that meticulously vocalised manuscript, the elision of silent shewa in T-S AS 44.35 can nevertheless be seen as the natural culmination of an understandable tendency to ignore or forget a ø vowel.

In contrast, silent shewa is often marked in the fragment on vowelless bgdkpt consonants, where possibly its primary purpose was not to indicate the ø vowel, but to mark the fricative pronunciation of the consonant, e.g.,

ליבש ליבש ‘to my soul’ (Lam. 3.51) with patah for vocalic shewa;
רבות ‘you have pleaded’ (Lam. 3.58);
שפתו ‘judge!’ (Lam. 3.59);
לנפיי ‘to my soul’ (Lam. 20.14);
שפתו ‘the lips of’ (Lam. 3.61)

This extended use of shewa is perhaps most evident when it occurs on the final consonant of a word:

הזהת (MT המזהה) ‘this’ (Lam. 2.15);
כלילת (MT המכילה) ‘the perfection of’ (Lam. 2.15);
משאות (MT הממשאות) ‘burdens’ (Lam. 2.14);
הטוב (MT המטוב) ‘the best’ (Lam. 4.1)
Though contrary to standard Tiberian practice in the marking of the sign, this still accords with Tiberian pronunciation, where word-final shewa is usually silent (Khan 2013a, 100).\(^{13}\)

There are a number of exceptions in the application of these apparent rules by the scribe of T-S AS 44.35. Silent shewa is not always marked on vowelless fricatives:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{וּס פּק} \quad \text{(MT וּס פּֽק) ‘they clap’ (Lam. 2.15);}
\text{ק רַבְת} \quad \text{(MT ק רַבְּת) ‘you came near’ (Lam. 3.57);}
\text{תִּשתַפֵכנ ה} \quad \text{(MT תִּשתְּפִכְנָה) ‘they are poured out’ (Lam. 4.1);}
\text{ח וצות} \quad \text{(MT חוּצָֽוֹת) ‘streets’ (Lam. 4.1);}
\text{לנִובלֵי} \quad \text{(MT לְנִבְלֵי) ‘as jars’ (Lam. 4.2)}
\end{align*}
\]

But given that this is an informal reworking of their system, we should not expect the same rigour as that exhibited by the Masoretes.

Shewa also occurs occasionally on vowelless non-\textit{bgdkpt} consonants, for instance ש וְא \textit{שְׁוֵא} ‘vain’ (Lam. 2.14), a rare case of complete fidelity to the historical MT spelling, but more unexpectedly on \textit{משוֹשָׁה} ‘the joy’ (Lam. 2.15),\(^{14}\) ‘the day’ (Lam. 2.16)

\(^{13}\) While ostensibly it resembles the use of shewa in the Extended Tiberian system, where final waw or the gutturals may take simple shewa (Heijmans 2013a, §2d, g), I do not think there is an organic link, as the purpose is quite different and no further characteristic features of Extended Tiberian vocalisation or phonology are present in this fragment.

\(^{14}\) There is damage under the \textit{mem} of \textit{משוֹשָׁה} (MT \textit{משוֹשָׁה} ‘the joy’ (Lam. 2.15), so this could possibly be read as a \textit{patah} rather than a \textit{qames}. If the former, then it is \textit{patah} in place of vocalic shewa, indicating that the writer has taken \textit{משוֹשָׁה כל הארץ} as a construct phrase (which would make sense, given the loss of the MT’s \textit{ל}, i.e., \textit{משוֹשָׁה לכל הארץ}), perhaps under the influence of Ps. 48.3.
and ‘from a pit’ (Lam. 3.55). These are all, as above, on a final vowelless consonant. Medially, the text shows variance in regard to mem, however, with ‘they said’ (Lam. 2.16), showing shewa, but ‘they have made an end’ (Lam. 3.53) and ‘your name’ (Lam. 3.55) both eschewing it.

Shewa on (MT) ‘do not hide’ (Lam. 3.56) similarly marks what is a silent shewa in the MT. Given the text’s general approach to shewa, the use here probably serves to underline that the ‘ayin is vowelless [ʔal taˈleːm]. No shewa occurs on vowelless ‘ayin in (MT) ‘you have heard’ (Lam. 3.61), however.

4.4. Pataḥ for Shewa in T-S AS 44.35

T-S AS 44.35 usually puts pataḥ where we find a simple vocalic shewa in the MT. This is in accordance with the Tiberian pronunciation tradition’s rendering of vocalic shewa as a short [a], equivalent in quality to a pataḥ (Khan 2013a, 98). The scribe does not use hātef pataḥ for this purpose as no hātefs occur in the fragment at all:

Jerusalem’ (Lam. 2.13) not pausal in the MT, the fragment has qames for MT’s pataḥ; (MT) ‘that I may comfort you’ (Lam. 2.13); בָּתוֹלַת (MT) ‘virgin of’ (Lam. 2.13); נַבַּיִ (MT) ‘your prophets’ (Lam. 2.14); ול (MT) ‘and not’ (Lam. 2.14); כְּלִילַת (MT) ‘your captivity’ (Lam. 2.14); יְרוּשָׁלְיָם (MT) ‘Jerusalem’ (Lam. 2.15), showing pataḥ for the MT’s pausal qames; כְּלִילַת (MT) ‘the perfection of’ (Lam. 2.15); בּוֹנַת (MT) ‘the
daughters of’ (Lam. 3.51); ‘your ear for my relief’ (Lam. 3.56); ‘their thoughts’ (Lam. 3.60); ‘their rising up’ (Lam. 3.63); ‘their hands’ (Lam. 3.64); ‘in anger’ (Lam. 3.66); ‘the heavens of’ (Lam. 3.66); ‘children of’ (Lam. 4.2); ‘the hands of’ (Lam. 4.2)

In every case in the fragment where the standard Tiberian pronunciation of shewa is equivalent to a short [a], the scribe uses a pataḥ rather than a shewa. In a text that is not emulating the MT to a great degree, it should not be a surprise, given that the chief distinction between shewa and pataḥ is morphophonological and not phonetic (shewa cannot, under most circumstances, form a syllable in Tiberian Hebrew). This distinction was evidently of little significance to the writer of this manuscript.

4.5. Shewa before Yod or Guttural in T-S AS 44.35

Where shewa occurs before yod in the MT, T-S AS 44.35 has a hireq: ביוֹם (MT בִּיוֹם) ‘on the day’ (Lam. 3.57), [biˈjoːm]. This reflects the standard Tiberian pronunciation of shewa before yod as a short [i] (Khan 2013a, 98). It is also a feature that is found, although with great inconsistency, in Palestinian-vocalised manuscripts (Revell 1970a, 90; Heijmans 2013a, §3f).

Before a guttural, shewa is pronounced with the quality of the vowel following the guttural (Khan 2013a, 98). This is reflected in the fragment in לְהַשֵּׁב (MT לְהַשֵּׁב) ‘to turn away’ (Lam. 2.14), which ignores the technicalities of syllable structure and prefers qames to shewa, [ləhoˈʃiːv].
4.6. *Shewa* on the First of Two Identical Consonants in T-S AS 44.35

Unless adjacent to another *shewa* or under a geminated consonant, *shewa* in the middle of a word is usually silent in the standard Tiberian reading tradition (Yeivin 1980, 277; Khan 2013a, 99–100). Masoretic treatises, including Aharon ben Moshe ben Asher’s *Diqduqe ha-Te’amim*, present a number of exceptions to this rule, one of which is when the *shewa* occurs on the first of two identical consonants after a long vowel (Dotan 1967, I:115–16 [§5]; Yeivin 1980, 280–81). In many cases these are marked with *ḥaṭef pataḥ* in the Aleppo Codex and occasionally in Leningrad. In similar fashion T-S AS 44.35 reflects the vocalic nature of this *shewa*, but as we might expect by now, a full *pataḥ* is used in preference to a *ḥaṭef*, עָֽוֹלְלָה (MT עָוֹלַלָה) ‘affects’ (Lam. 3.51), [ʔoːlaˈlɔː].

4.7. *Ḥaṭef* in T-S AS 44.35

There are no *ḥaṭef* signs in T-S AS 44.35. A full vowel is used in place of *ḥaṭef* wherever it occurs in the MT, e.g.,

אָנַחַמֵיך (MTךְ ֹ֔וַאֲנַָֽחֲמֵ) ‘that I may comfort you’ (Lam. 2.13);
כַמַעַשֵה (MT כְמַעֲשֵה) ‘according to the work’ (Lam. 3.64);
ךָתַאַל תְ (MTַךָתַאֲל ָֽתְ) ‘your curse’ (Lam. 3.65)

4.8. Differences in Vowel Quality in T-S AS 44.35

In Lam. 2.14 ויָֽוָֽיַֽו וְוַיָֽהֵז (MT ויָֽוָֽיַֽו וְוַיֹּ֥חֱז) ‘and they have seen’, the fragment replaces both the MT’s *ḥaṭef segol* and *segol* with *šere*, apparently

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15 See Phillips’ contribution in the present volume, pp. 380-81, 384-87.
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giving [vay(y)e:he:'zu:]. This can be seen more widely throughout the text: it frequently replaces Tiberian segol with šere, particularly in the nominal ṭā- ending and especially in segolate forms, e.g.,

אַדַּמֵה (MT אֲדַמֶה) ‘I shall compare’ (Lam. 2.13);
אָשֶׁה (MT אָשֶׁה) ‘I shall make equal’ (Lam. 2.13);
חֵרֵשׁ (MT חֶרְשׁ) ‘way’ (Lam. 2.15);
וֹרֵץ (MT וֹרֵץ) ‘the land’ (Lam. 2.15);
סַפֵּה (MT סַפֵּה) ‘that we hoped for’ (Lam. 2.16);
אֵבר (MT אֵבר) ‘his word’ (Lam. 3.17);
אֲשֶׁר (MT אֲשֶׁר) ‘which’ (Lam. 2.17);
כָּר (MT כָּר) ‘old’ (Lam. 2.17);
אַבֵּן (MT אַבֵּן) ‘a stone’ (Lam. 3.53);
אָכָר (MT אָכָר) ‘I call you’ (Lam. 3.57);
חֵרֵשׁ (MT חֶרְשׁ) ‘their reproach’ (Lam. 3.61);
חֵרֵשׁ (MT חֶרְשׁ) ‘fine gold’ (Lam. 4.1);
וֹרֵץ (MT וֹרֵץ) ‘they are considered’ (Lam. 4.2);
חֵרֵשׁ (MT חֶרְשׁ) ‘earthen vessel’ (Lam. 4.2)

Segol is replaced by šere in both stressed and unstressed syllables. However, segol is not avoided altogether in T-S AS 44.35: פִיהֶם ‘their mouth’ (Lam. 2.16) and זה ‘this’ (Lam. 2.16) both retain segol. Furthermore, it is found in place of the MT’s šere on two occasions: אַלֹהֵם (MT אַל־הֵם) ‘he has raised’ (Lam. 2.17); and אַלָּתַשְׁוָה (MT אַל־תַּשְׁוָה) ‘do not hide’ (Lam. 3.56). In both cases the vowel exchange is on a guttural (ת, צ) in a verbal form, once each on an unstressed and a stressed syllable. The construct noun meshes ‘the work of’ (Lam. 4.2) preserves the MT’s šere. In general, the frequent interchanges and evident confusion are suggestive of the influence of the Palestinian pronunciation of Hebrew, i.e., the Sefardi-Palestinian reading tradition, where the two vowels e and ĕ
have merged (Henshke 2013b). If this is the case, then we should also expect to see evidence of a merging of the vowels $a$ and $ɔ$.

Confusion between $a$ and $ɔ$ in T-S AS 44.35 is mostly found in pausal forms, where the text substitutes pataḥ for the MT’s pausal qames.\footnote{16}

\begin{itemize}
  \item ‘Jerusalem’ (Lam. 2.15);
  \item ‘he devised’ (Lam. 2.17);
  \item ‘he pitied’ (Lam. 2.17)
\end{itemize}

Rather than a general merging of the vowels, this may instead reflect a loss of distinct pausal forms in the recitation that sits behind this fragment, although we do find pausal qames in accordance with the MT at Lam. 3.54 ‘I am cut off’. This is a major, verse-final, pause, though, whereas the previous examples were all mid-verse (i.e., at atnah) or minor pause (at revia’), and perhaps therefore elided through lax recitation.

The qames in non-pausal ירושלים ‘Jerusalem’ (Lam. 2.13), however, points at a greater degree of confusion in the scribe’s pronunciation. Similarly, the $ə$ vowel in [jaroːʃɔːˈlɔːyim] might suggest some phonetic overlap between $u$ and $o$, such as can also be found in Palestinian Aramaic pronunciation (Yahalom 1997, 18). However, the $ū$ vowel is retained in all other cases, even in the same word when it occurs two verses later (ירושלים, Lam. 2.15),

\footnote{16 ‘and he was happy’ (Lam. 2.17) for the MT’s יָשַׁמֵּח is probably a morphological exchange, the qal for the pi’el, rather than phonological. Though if the lack of the dagesh sign denotes a loss of gemination, a phonological exchange is a possibility: [vaysam’mah] > [vayis’mah].}
and therefore a scribal lapse, due to the casual nature of the work, is more likely.

4.9. T-S AS 44.35 in Conclusion

Consonantally, the Lamentations manuscript deviates from the MT in its *plene* orthography and particularly in its frequent ellipsis of quiescent ‘alef. The substitution of the Tetragrammaton for the MT’s ידני on two occasions suggests that it may not have been copied from a *Vorlage* at all, but produced from dictation. Its vocalisation diverges greatly from that of the MT, but in a consistent, logical manner. Indeed, for a fragment that looks very casual in its execution—the work of an individual for their own purposes—the text is very consistent in its vocalisation. The *shewa* is sparsely used and serves a secondary purpose of marking the fricative pronunciation of *bgdkpt* consonants. Vocalic *shewa* is replaced with *pataḥ* in most circumstances, with *hireq* when preceding *yod*, and with a full vowel before a guttural. The *ḥaṭef* is ignored entirely as an irrelevance. A more significant divergence from standard Tiberian is found in vowel quality, with a slight blurring of the distinction between, respectively, the *u* and *o*, *a* and *ɔ*, and, to a much greater degree, *e* and *ɛ* vowels. It could be ascribed to the influence of a background Palestinian reading tradition, an example of Palestino-Tiberian vocalisation, but is only consistently apparent in the *e/ɛ* vowels.

In other respects, the pronunciation reflected in the vocalisation accords with that of the standard Tiberian reading tradition. This includes even the more potentially problematic renderings, such as the correct pronunciation of the first of two identical
consonants after a long vowel. The absence of cantillation signs might suggest that either the correct cantillation was well known to the user of the book or else it was irrelevant to its intended use. The absence of *dagesh* calls for an explanation. The use of silent *shewa* apparently to mark the fricative pronunciation of the *bgdkpt* consonants means that *dagesh* would serve a purpose only of indicating consonantal length. That it is not used at all suggests that the length of consonants, like the length of vowels, was not of primary interest to the creator of this fragment and may not have been discernible in their reading of it.

### 5.0. CODEX OF PSALMS, T-S AS 68.100

Cambridge University Library T-S AS 68.100 is a fragment on parchment containing Ps. 119.72–92, with stichometric spacing of the text, sof pasuq at the end of verses, and the Tetragrammaton written in full. It is vocalised and cantillated, though the *silluq* accent is not marked. There is no evidence of additional Masoretic paratext. *Rafe* is used on the *bgdkpt* letters and there are some (musical) gaʿyot. The vowels and accents are written in a different ink and with a different pen from those of the consonants. It has the appearance of a leaf from a good quality codex, the work of at least two hands, a scribe (responsible for consonants and sof pasuq) and a vocaliser (vowels and accents), though not a full Masoretic Bible.¹⁷

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¹⁷ It is possible that we have hit just the one fragment of this manuscript where no *masora* is visible (neither marginal, nor Masoretic circles marking notes in the text) and that the parent manuscript did possess
Vocalisation aside, the most noticeable difference from the MT is in the use of accents: *silluq* is absent, and the prepositive disjunctive *deḥi* occurs regularly for *reviaʿ mugrash* and once for conjunctive *merkh*ha. While the ellipsis of *silluq* is a feature shared by Extended Tiberian manuscripts, the swapping of *reviaʿ mugrash* for *deḥi* is not (Díez-Macho 1963, 22–24). The lack of *silluq* may therefore be seen as a general feature of non-Masoretic manuscripts, a symptom of a tendency towards the loss of inessential elements (after all, *sof pasuq* is already present to mark the last word of the verse), rather than a specific pointer of this text’s affinity with the Extended Tiberian family of manuscripts.\(^{18}\)

### 5.1. Consonantal Text of T-S AS 68.100

Consonantally, the text of T-S AS 68.100 is in accordance with the MT, e.g., it shares the defective forms יְבֹאֹ֣וּנִי (MT יִבְאֹנִי) ‘let them come to me’ (Ps. 119.77) and יֵבֹֹ֣ש (MT וּיֵבֹֹ֣ש) ‘let them be ashamed’ (Ps. 119.78). The only exception is יְשֹ֣ו (MT וּיְשֹ֣ו) ‘may

some *masora*. For present purposes this does not matter, as the distinction I offer between those with and those without is purely descriptive, intended to assist in building a corpus to examine for signs of deviation from Standard Tiberian practice.

\(^{18}\) Revell (1977, 174) points out that since *silluq* is regularly preceded by *tifha*, and followed by *sof pasuq*, its writing is superfluous for knowledgeable readers, and consequently it is often not found in Tiberian and Palestinian manuscripts. Conversely, the Aleppo Codex’s tendency only rarely to write the two dots of *sof pasuq* (Yeivin 1980, 176–77) can be seen in the same light, since *silluq* already serves to mark the end of the verse.
they return’ (Ps. 119.79), where both Aleppo and Leningrad have the *plene* spelling.

### 5.2. *Patah* for *Shewa* in T-S AS 68.100

Like the Lamentations manuscript, T-S AS 68.100 does not use ḥatef vowels. It also prefers *patah* to the MT’s simple *shewa*, suggesting an uncoloured pronunciation of vocalic *shewa* as [a], e.g.,

- יֹֽךָ חַסְדַ (MT יֹֽךָ חַסְדְ) ‘your kindness’ (Ps. 119.76);
- יַבֹאוֹּ֣נִי (MT יְבֹאֹ֣וּנִי) ‘let them come to me’ (Ps. 119.77);
- עִוַתֿוֵ֑נִי (MT עִוְּתֵ֑וּנִי) ‘they subverted me’ (Ps. 119.78), without *dagesh forte*;
- בַר (MT בְר) ‘against those who pursue me’ (Ps. 119.84);
- כָּדֶַ֭ב רְ (MT כָּדֶַ֭ב רְ) ‘your word’ (Ps. 119.88);
- דַ֭י (MT דַ֭י) ‘your kindness’ (Ps. 119.76);
- לַחַשְׁנִַת (MT לַחַשְׁנִַת) ‘for your deliverance’ (Ps. 119.81);
- דַ֭רְבְּרַח (MT דַ֭רְבְּרַח) ‘your word’ (Ps. 119.88);
- עַשְמְרַח (MT עַשְמְרַח) ‘and I will keep’ (Ps. 119.88);
- בַ֭שְנְי (MT בַ֭שְנְי) ‘in my affliction’ (Ps. 119.92)

As several of the examples above show, silent *shewa* is usually not represented in T-S AS 68.100, e.g.,

- יֹךָ (MT יֹךָ) ‘your kindness’ (Ps. 119.76);
- יָךְלִשְׁנִַת (MT יָךְלִשְׁנִַת) ‘for your deliverance’ (Ps. 119.81);
- דַ֭רְבְּרַח (MT דַ֭רְבְּרַח) ‘your word’ (Ps. 119.88);
- עַשְמְרַח (MT עַשְמְרַח) ‘and I will keep’ (Ps. 119.88);
- בַ֭שְנְי (MT בַ֭שְנְי) ‘in my affliction’ (Ps. 119.92)

The *shewa* sign is used in T-S AS 68.100 for a vocalic *shewa* occasionally, e.g., under an initial consonant:

- רַ֟י (MT רַ֟י) ‘those who fear you’ (Ps. 119.79);
- בְַטָקְח (MT בְַטָקְח) ‘in your laws’ (Ps. 119.80)
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In לְנַחְמֵֵ֑נִי (MT לְנַחֲמֵֵ֑נִי) ‘for my comfort’ (Ps. 119.76), ‘your mercies’ (Ps. 119.77), and ‘you will act’ (Ps. 119.84), its occurrence on the guttural could be ambiguous, since in the standard Tiberian system simple shewa under אָחָה is silent, never vocalic (Levy 1936, 21* and בּ לִל. 12–14). Given, however, that the shewa sign is not used for silent shewa elsewhere in T-S AS 68.100, we should on balance consider it vocalic here too, marked in contravention or ignorance of the standard Tiberian practice. Compare וְאֶֹ֣חְיֵֵ֑ה (MT וְאֶָֽֽאֱ֗יֵֶ֑ה) ‘that I may live’ (Ps. 119.77), where the ø vowel of het is not marked.

Given this, the shewa under nun in וְָָֽֽיַכֿוֵֶ֑נִי (MT וַָָֽֽיְכֵֶ֑וּנִי) ‘and they made me’ (Ps. 119.73) is probably intended to be vocalic. This is in keeping with the Tiberian rule that shewa under the first of two identical consonants following a long vowel is vocalic. The shewa gaʿya under waw, for the MT’s pataḥ gaʿya, is reflective of the interchangeability of the two a vowels, shewa and pataḥ, in this fragment (a further example is noted below). It represents only graphic divergence from the MT’s practice. The pataḥ under the yod, however, shows a clear difference from the MT, as it reflects a pronunciation of the MT’s silent shewa as vocalic here [vaːykoːna'nuniː] > [vaːyaːkoːna'nuniː] (the gaʿya is a minor gaʿya, i.e., lengthening a closed syllable). This, in a complex multi-syllable word, however, is the only example in the fragment of a clear divergence in pronunciation from the standard Tiberian tradition.
5.3. Ḥaṭef in T-S AS 68.100

Where the MT would use ḥaṭef pataḥ, e.g., for vocalic shewa under gutturals, T-S AS 68.100 can use a pataḥ, e.g.,

אֶַ֭שֶַ֗ר (MT אֶַ֭שֶַ֗ר) ‘give me understanding’ (Ps. 119.73);
הְֲ֝בִינֵַ֗נִי (MT הְֲ֝בִינֵַ֗נִי) ‘that’ (Ps. 119.85);
אֶַ֭שֶַ֗ר (MT אֶַ֭שֶַ֗ר) ‘but I’ (Ps. 119.87);
שְׁבֹ֣רָה (MT שְׁבֹ֣רָה) ‘your servants’ (Ps. 119.91)

Or the fragment uses a simple shewa, e.g.,

לְנַחְמֵֵ֑נִי (MT לְנַחֲמֵֵ֑נִי) ‘for my comfort’ (Ps. 119.76);
ךָרַחֲמֶֹ֣י (MTךָרַחֲמֶֹ֣י) ‘your mercies’ (Ps. 119.77);
תֶַ֭עְשֶה (MT תַעֲשֶה) ‘you will act’ (Ps. 119.84)

Further evidence for the vocalic pronunciation of the shewa sign in general in T-S AS 68.100 can be found in וְָֽתַעְמֹד (MT וַָֽתַעֲמָֹֽד) ‘and it stands’ (Ps. 119.90), where simple shewa not only stands for a vocalic shewa under the ‘ayin, but also substitutes, in the form of shewa ga‘ya, for the MT’s pataḥ ga‘ya under the conjunction—another minor ga‘ya.

5.4. Shewa before Guttural in T-S AS 68.100

Where vocalic shewa immediately precedes a מ consonant, T-S AS 68.100 substitutes a full vowel, e.g.,

[אמרתה] (MT [אמרתה] ‘according to your promise’ (Ps. 119.76);
יִהִי־לִבִֹ֣י (MT יְהִָֽי־לִבִֹ֣י) ‘let my heart be’ (Ps. 119.80);
וֶֶ֭אֶשמַר ה (MT וְְ֝אֶשְמְר ַ֗ה) ‘and I will keep’ (Ps. 119.88), with si-
לنت shewa unmarked and a pataḥ for MT vocalic shewa;
ךָעַבָּ֖י (MTךָעַבָּ֖י) ‘in my affliction’ (Ps. 119.92)
The pronunciation represented by this combination of vowels accords with the realisation of shewa before a guttural in the Tiberian tradition, which matches the quality of the vocalic shewa to that of the guttural following it, unless the shewa itself sits under a guttural (Yeivin 1980, 281–82; Khan 2013a, 98–99).

5.5. T-S AS 68.100 in Conclusion

Altogether a different kind of manuscript from the first example, the Psalms fragment has been carefully produced, probably by two different hands. Consonantly, it is very close to the MT of Leningrad and Aleppo, with only one minor divergence. In accents, it diverges slightly, with a greater use of deḥi and the absence of silluq. Vocalically, it preserves the standard Tiberian phonology, with only one minor syllabic difference in the word יְָָֽֽיַכֿוֹנְנוֵ֑נִי (Ps. 119.73). This is revealed particularly through the apparent free substitution of simple vocalic shewa with pataḥ as well as through the substitution of various contextually conditioned shewa vowels (e.g., before gutturals) with the corresponding full vowel sign. The naqdan of this fragment was wholly familiar with the Tiberian reading tradition.

6.0. Haftara Lectionary, T-S AS 53.90

Cambridge University Library T-S AS 53.90 preserves the text of 1 Kgs 3.25–28 and Ezek. 37.18–21. A torn paper manuscript, it shows no ruling, and the left-hand margin is kept only irregularly, with no elongation of letters or line-fillers. It is partially vocalised: on recto, 1 Kings has only a few words with Tiberian vowel signs; on verso, Ezekiel is almost completely vocalised.
There is no cantillation. The vocalisation is in the same ink as the consonantal text, most likely the work of the same hand. *Dagesh*, and the *šin* and *shin* dots are not marked, though there is an occasional *rafe*. *Sof pasuq* is used at the end of a verse. The Tetragrammaton is written in full.

The fragment contains two *haftarot* according to the annual reading cycle of the Torah, for the *parashot Miq-qaṣ* (מקץ, no. 10, Gen. 41.1–44.17), with its *haftara* from 1 Kgs 3.15–4.1, and *Way-yiggaš* (ויגש, no. 11, Gen. 44.18–47.27), with its reading from Ezek. 37.15–28. On recto there is a partially preserved rubric before the start of the *haftara*: קאל...ביחז...בַּהֲלָוָה...וַיִּגָשׁ...[“And he approached] him” one concludes [with the reading in Ezekiel’. The rubric confirms that the fragment is a lectionary of prophetic readings, although its original extent—whether it covered just a small number of texts, or was part of a more comprehensive work—cannot now be determined. The casual nature of its construction suggests the former.

### 6.1. Consonantal Text of T-S AS 53.90

There are a few corrections in the fragment. The whole top line on recto (1 Kgs 3.25 from ואת הזתי to 3.26 אל המלך כי) appears to be an addition, perhaps in a different hand, and ‘they yearned’ (1 Kgs 3.26) is represented only by *נכ* in the right-hand margin. On verso, the scribe spotted the error *ך* and crossed it through before writing the correct form ‘to you’ (Ezek. 37.18).

The text exhibits a tendency towards more *matres lectionis* than are found in the MT:
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‘my lord’ (1 Kgs 3.26); ‘and make them’ (Ezek. 37.19)—both are defective in the Aleppo and Leningrad codices

But some MT defective forms are retained, e.g., תכתב (MT תִכְתֵֹ֧ב ‘you will write’ (Ezek. 37.20). The interrogative הלא ‘will you not?’ (Ezek. 37.18) is defective in the fragment, but plene in the MT (הֲלָֽוֹא).

‘his fellows’ (Ezek. 37.19) follows the MT’s qere. At 1 Kgs 3.27 the fragment has אַל תמֵיתו ‘do not kill him’ for the MT’s לֹֹ֣א תְמִיֵּ֑הו. This reading is probably influenced by the phrase earlier in 1 Kgs 3.26.

6.2. Vocalisation of T-S AS 53.90

Most of 1 Kings is unvocalised, perhaps because it was a familiar text that posed little difficulty in its reading. The addition of a qibbûs to תַּחַת (MT תַּחַת ‘in front of the king’ (1 Kgs 3.28) appears superfluous, given the commonplace nature of the words. From this point on, however, the text is mostly vocalised.

No dagesh, forte or lene, is written, even in the fully vocalised portion of the text, e.g.,

ךָעַמְ (MT כָּעַמְ ‘your people’ (Ezek. 37.18); דַּבֵֹר (MT דַּבֵֹר ‘speak’ (Ezek. 37.19)

19 And this fragment is not alone: the critical apparatus in BHS also notes ‘mlt Mss ָא’ for the reading at 1 Kgs 3.27.
Rafe, however, is occasionally used to mark the spirant pronunciation of bgdkp consonants, e.g.,

לתשא (LT: לִתְשַׁא) ‘to do’ (1 Kgs 3.28)

6.3. Ḥaṭef in T-S AS 53.90

The fragment eschews ḥaṭef signs completely, preferring pataḥ in every case where we would expect ḥaṭef-pataḥ:

הלא (MT: הָלָא) ‘is it not?’ (Ezek. 37.18); אָנִי (MT: אָנִי) ‘I’ (Ezek. 37.19); נשיתים (MT: אֵשֶׁר) ‘which’ (Ezek. 37.19); יעלים (MT: אֲשֶׁר) ‘and make them’ (Ezek. 37.19); עלייהם (MT: עֵלֵיהֶם) ‘on them’ (Ezek. 37.20)

6.4. Shewa before Yod in T-S AS 53.90

Although shewa, both vocalic and silent, is used in the fragment, e.g., יֶהְבָּטֵן ‘and the tribes of’ (Ezek. 37.19), on the three occasions in the text that it directly precedes yod, a more phonetic transcription with hireq occurs:

בִּי (MT: בִּי) ‘in the hand of’ (Ezek. 37.19); בַּי (MT: בַּי) ‘in my hand’ (Ezek. 37.19); בִּי דִּי (MT: בְּיְ דִּי) ‘in your hand’ (Ezek. 37.20)

This pronunciation of shewa before yod as an i vowel is reflective of Tiberian pronunciation (Khan 2013a, 98), if not the practice of standard Tiberian vocalisers. It is quite frequent in non-Masoretic Bible texts from the Genizah, as can be seen from its use in T-S AS 44.35 above. Manuscripts with Palestinian vowel signs, too, can place a Palestinian i vowel before yod, where
standard Tiberian would have a shewa, though inconsistently (Revell 1970a, 90; Heijmans 2013a, §3f).

6.5. Differences in Vowel Quality in T-S AS 53.90

The vocalisation exhibits a small number of qualitative differences from standard Tiberian pronunciation, with pataḥ occasionally replacing segol in the environment of the gutturals:

אפרים (MT אֶפְרַיִם) ‘Ephraim’ (Ezek. 37.19); אח (MT אֶחָד) ‘one’ (Ezek. 37.19)

However, יַע the wood’ (Ezek. 37.19) shows that a distinction between segol and šere is maintained. הנה (MT הנה) ‘behold’ (Ezek. 37.19) has e in place of i in a closed, unstressed syllable, a pronunciation found in the Palestinian vocalisation tradition (Heijmans 2013a, §3d), but possibly also reflecting the common realisation of closed, unstressed /i/ as a central vowel [e] in various Sefardi reading traditions, such as Baghdad, under the influence of the Arabic vernacular (Ya‘aqov 2013; Shatil 2013).

6.6. T-S AS 53.90 in Conclusion

The fragment is a small paper haftara lectionary, only partially vocalised and with no cantillation, a more casual piece of work than the preceding examples. Dagesh is entirely ignored, perhaps indicating a disinterest in consonantal length, but the use of rafe shows the fricative versus plosive distinction is probably maintained. Haṭef vowels are generally avoided, and ḥireq is used for shewa before yod. The interchange of some vowels could be in-
dicative of a different background pronunciation from the Tibe-
rian, but they mostly reflect the lowering of the $\varepsilon$ vowel in the
guttural environment.

7.0. **Writing Exercise, T-S AS 5.144**

Cambridge University Library T-S AS 5.144 contains the text of
Lev. 18.11–23 and 18.25–19.3, written on both sides of a parch-
ment leaf. There is no evidence of ruling. The text includes Tibe-
rian vowels and cantillation signs, and verse endings are marked
with *sof pasuq*. There are no further Masoretic signs. The Tetra-
grammaton is abbreviated. Given the divine abbreviation, the
lack of *masora* and the fact that the text of Leviticus is the most
frequently used book of the Bible for learning to write Hebrew
(Olszowy-Schlanger 2003, 65), the fragment is probably a writ-
ing exercise.

*Dagesh* is not used, either *forte* or *lene*, nor does *mappiq* oc-
cur where it is expected (which is frequently in this part of Levit-
icus), e.g.,

אִמְךָ (MT אִמְךָ) ‘your mother’ (Lev. 18.13); אִשָּׁה (MT אִשָּׁה) ‘his wife’ (Lev. 18.14); עֶרֶבֶת (MT עֶרֶבֶת) ‘her nakedness’
(Lev. 18.15); בֵּית (MT בֵּית) ‘her daughter’ (Lev. 18.17)

An erroneous *mappiq* appears in אָשֶׁר (MT אָשֶׁר) ‘a woman’
(Lev. 18.19).

7.1. **Consonantal Text of T-S AS 5.144**

There are only a small number of differences from the MT in the
consonantal text of the fragment, two *plene* forms for the MT’s
defective, and one defective for the MT’s *plene*:
Elsewhere the text remains close to the MT in the use of *matres lectionis*, e.g., בְּחַיֶָֽיָה (MT בְּחָֽיָה) ‘in her life’ (Lev. 18.18); עַמִּיתְךָ (MT עַמִּיתֵךְ) ‘your neighbour’ (Lev. 18.20).

There is one uncorrected error, an ellipsis of אלהיכם in Lev. 18.30 after the divine name. The construct אָשֶׁה is corrected to אָשֶׁה in Lev. 18.17.

The text of Leviticus included in the fragment contains a number of *parashiyyot*, i.e., paragraph breaks, of which only one is marked in the fragment: there is a space after the end of Lev. 18.30, which is a *parasha petuḥa* in the MT (Leningrad) and in Maimonides’ list in the *Mishne Tora* (*Tefillin, Mezuza ve-Sefer Tora* 8). Although the fragment is torn, causing the loss of the rest of the line, an open paragraph should start on the next line. The next line, however, begins with the final word of Lev. 19.1. Therefore the fragment does not follow the usual method of noting an open paragraph, and either treats it as a closed paragraph (*parasha setuma*), which would leave a space within a line, or just leaves an indeterminate amount of space without strict adherence to the usual medieval format of the open paragraph. No space is left for the closed paragraphs (*setumot*) at Lev. 18.15, 16, and 17. Similarity to the layout of the MT is therefore more superficial than rigorous.
7.2. Ḥatef and Shewa in T-S AS 5.144

The text of Leviticus in T-S AS 5.144 uses only full vowels and shewa, with no ḥatefs. Pataḥ and segol always substitute for their ḥatef equivalents, e.g.,

- נָתַתָה (MT נָתַתָה) ‘her sister’ (Lev. 18.18);
- הַעַמִית (MT הַעַמִית) ‘your neighbour’ (Lev. 18.20);
- אֱלֹהֶיךָ אַנִי (MT אֱלֹהֶיךָ אַנִי) ‘your God I am’ (Lev. 18.21);
- וּתַעַש (MT וּתַעַש) ‘you will do’ (Lev. 18.26);
- אַשֶַר (MT אַשֶַר) ‘who’ (Lev. 18.27)

Full vowels also sometimes occur in place of simple (vocalic) shewa:

- בַנִֹת (MT בַנִֹת) ‘in impurity of’ (Lev. 18.19);
- וְנִכְרַת (MT וְנִכְרַת) ‘and they will be cut off’ (Lev. 18.29)

This includes the use of a pataḥ for vocalic shewa under the first of two identical letters following a long vowel:

- בְתוֹכַכֶָֽם (MT בְתוֹכְכֶָֽם) ‘in your midst’ (Lev 18.26)

Conversely, shewa twice occurs in place of pataḥ, again demonstrating the pronunciation of shewa as an a vowel:

- בְטַמַאֲכֶַ֖ם (MT בְטַמַאֲכֶַ֖ם) ‘when you defile’ (Lev. 18.27);
- דַבֵֵ֞ר (MT דַבֵֵ֞ר) ‘speak’ (Lev. 19.2)

Unexpectedly, shewa and hireq interchange in אָחָיו (for MT אָחָיו) ‘your brother’ (Lev. 18.16), though the repetition of the same form later in the verse preserves a hireq, אָחי.
7.3. Differences in Vowel Quality in T-S AS 5.144

T-S AS 5.144 exhibits some variation from the MT in the interchange of ɛ and a vowels. Forms of עֶרְו 'nakedness' regularly have pataḥ in place of segol under the ‘ayin, e.g.,

עַרְוַַ֥ת (MT עֶרְוַַ֥ת) ‘nakedness’ (Lev. 18.15);
תְגֶלֵֵ֑ה (MT תְגֶלֵֵ֑ה) ‘her nakedness’ (Lev. 18.15)

Pataḥ occurs similarly under ‘alef in (MT עָלָהוּ) ‘the native’ (Lev. 18.26). All of these presumably reflect the lowering of ɛ under ע. An oddity, perhaps reflecting an uncertainty over ɛ and a, is found in תְגֶלֵֵ֑ה (MT עֶרְוַַ֥ת) (Lev. 18.14). Occurrences of similar forms show pataḥ in each case, however: תְגֶלֵֵ֑ה (Lev. 18.13); תְגֶלֵֵ֑ה (Lev. 18.15). In תְגֶלֵֵ֑ה (Lev. 18.15), damage obscures the vowel under the preformative, so it is unclear whether this is a morphological variant, תְגֶלֵֵ֑ה, or whether the shewa substitutes for pataḥ in a closed syllable. A further case of ɛ for a in a non-guttural environment occurs in (for MT עַבְדוּ) ‘in impurity of’ (Lev. 18.19).

There is variation in the vocalisation of conjunctive waw before the labial ב"c consonants:

מָצִירֵךְ (MT מָצִירֵךְ) ‘and her daughter’ (Lev. 18.17); but מָצִירֵךְ (MT מָצִירֵךְ) ‘and from among your offspring’ (Lev. 18.21)

 Conjunctive waw before shewa has no vowel:

שָׁמְרֶנְהָן (MT שָׁמְרֶנְהָן) ‘and you shall keep’ (Lev. 18.30)

Perhaps the student was flummoxed at this point.
7.4. T-S AS 5.144 in Conclusion

We can question the competence behind the production of this fragment: it is probably a writing exercise, rather than a Bible proper. There are indeed a number of errors. But it does display also, to varying degrees, some of the trends found in the other fragments described above: the redundancy of dagesh, the replacement of ḥaṭef with the equivalent full vowel, and pataḥ in place of simple shewa. Where it differs from the others is in a more frequent interchange of e and a vowels, mostly in the environment of gutturals. This may be best ascribed to the writer’s status as a language learner and is possibly influenced by their Arabic vernacular, with the imāla, i.e., the raising of a to e, attested in vocalised Judaeo-Arabic texts from the Genizah (Wagner 2010, 63), being a possible culprit.

8.0. Study Bible, T-S AS 59.215

T-S AS 59.215 is a paper bifolium containing Prov. 27.27–28.21 and 30.7–24 from a small-format codex. It is fully vocalised, with cantillation and (phonetic) gaʿya, and it contains a number of paratextual Masoretic features, including a seder sign and spaces marking the parashīyyot. The script is square, the paper was ruled, and there are line fillers consisting of the first letter, or letters, of the following word. The vocalisation and cantillation are in the same ink as the consonantal text, however, suggesting that one hand produced the whole work. It can be classified as a good-quality small-format Bible, intended for private study or as a ‘lap Bible’.
The margin contains a decorated seder marker (at Prov. 28.16) as well as four qere readings (some of which are in different ink and perhaps in different hands). They are marked with the masoretic circle in the body of the text and by ק in the margin. They fall at Prov. 28.10 (אברעם), 30.10 (בש gratuites), 30.15 (אדני), and 30.18 (אדני). The instances of qere at Prov. 28.10 and 30.15 are not noted in Codex Leningrad or the Aleppo Codex, and אברעם at 30.15 reflects a consonantal difference from the text of both of these codices (which have ארבע). There is perhaps sufficient variation in the script and ink to suggest that these two instances of qere might be the work of a subsequent corrector of the fragment, who used the device to correct the text, rather than to record ketiv and qere in the standard sense.

The parashiyyot petuḥot at Prov. 28.16, 30.9, 30.14, 30.17, and 30.20 are all marked in accordance with the MT, leaving a large space and starting the following verse on a new line. Only at Prov. 28.4 does it appear that no extra space was left at the end of the verse (the manuscript is damaged at this point, but not so much that we cannot be reasonably sure), where both the Aleppo Codex and Codex Leningrad have a petuḥa section.

Despite the apparent quality of the work, the copyist erred in omitting a whole verse, Prov. 30.11, probably through haplography on the initial word דור. A further error in the divine name in Prov. 30.10 was fixed by the scribe in the course of writing: a Tetragrammaton was deleted with supralinear dots and the correct form, אדני (with the qere אדני given in the margin), written immediately after it. Yet another error missed out a quiescent
'alef, but was again immediately corrected by deletion and re-writing: וְָֽיֹאכְלַ֥וּה ‘and they will eat’ (Prov. 30.17).

Dagesh and rafe (including rafe on final mater lectionis ה-) are used throughout, though with some variance from the MT. We find b for an expected b in:

ותְְ֜אֵביוֹנִַ֗ים (MT וְְ֝אֶבְיוֹנִַ֗ים) ‘and the needy’ (Prov. 30.14); בְֿנֵי (MT- Leningrad בְֿנֵי) ‘children of’ (Prov. 30.17); בְֿלֵי (MT- Leningrad בְֿלֵי) ‘in the middle of the sea’ (Prov. 30.19)

And b for b in:

אֶשְבַֿע (MT | אֶשְבַ֨ע) ‘I will be full’ (Prov. 30.9)

Dagesh forte is frequently omitted, e.g.,

מְכַֿס (MT מְכַ֨ס) ‘he who covers up’ (Prov. 28.13); שִנְיו (MT שִנְיוּ) ‘his teeth’ (Prov. 30.14); תֵֿנָה (MT תֵֽנָה) ‘they’ (Prov. 30.15); לִֿיקְה (MT לִֽיקְהַ) ‘to obey’ (Prov. 30.17); יִקְרוּ (MT יִקְרַ֥וּ) ‘he will pick it out’ (Prov. 30.17)

In contrast, dagesh lena is more consistently applied. Not only is mappiṣ omitted in Prov. 30.23 בַֿרְבַּת (MT בַּרְבַּת) ‘her mistress’, but the final he is given rafe, as if a mater lectionis.


The consonantal text of the fragment differs from the MT when it comes to the representation of the o vowel, without showing a strong tendency towards plene or defective forms overall:

שִלְׁשִַי (MT שִלְׁשִׁי) ‘when rejoicing’ (Prov. 28.12); שִלְׁשִׁי (MT שִלְׁשִׁי) ‘three’ (Prov. 30.15); עֵרוֹב (MT עֵרוֹב) ‘ravens of’ (Prov. 30.17); שִלְׁשִׁי (MT שִלְׁשִׁי) ‘three’ (Prov. 30.21)
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The u vowel is written *plene* in the fragment:

ירוחם: יְחַפֵּש (MT יְחַפֵּש; ‘will be searched for’ (Prov. 28.12)); יְרוּחַם (MT יְרוּחַם; ‘they will have mercy’ (Prov. 28.13)); יְרַחְצָם (MT יְרַחְצָם; ‘oppressed’ (Prov. 28.17)); רְיִיקִם (MT: רְיִיקִם; ‘not washed’ (Prov. 30.12))

The text has *plene e* in contradiction to the MT in רְיִיקִם (MT לְיִיקִם; ‘vanities’ (Prov. 28.19) and a defective i in תְּלָהְקַת (MT תְּלָהְקַת) ‘to obey’ (Prov. 30.17). Furthermore, *yod* has been added above the line a number of times, probably by the original hand, where it is present in the MT:

Rich: יְשִׁיר (MT יְשִׁיר; ‘rich’ (Prov. 28.6)); בְּעֵיניו (MT בְּעֵיניו; ‘in his eyes’ (Prov. 30.12); including רֵאש (MT רֵאש; ‘poverty’ (Prov. 30.8), where the quiescent ʾalef is replaced by yod.

Further corrections are evident, e.g., מַעֲשָׂקִים (MT מַעֲשָׂקִים) ‘oppressor’ (Prov. 28.16). The sheer number shows the care taken to produce an accurate consonantal text, but one uncorrected difference remains at וּבִֿמקַ֥ום (Prov. 28.12), where the MT reads וּבְקַ֥וּם ‘when they rise’. The fragment’s reading is possibly under the influence of the earlier phrase atProv. 25.6.

8.2. Ḥaṭef and Shewa in T-S AS 59.215

Ink transfer and staining leave some of the vocalisation signs in the fragment ambiguous or unreadable. There is evidence, however, of some systematic editing of the vocalisation, correcting
the more phonetic elements towards a standard Tiberian rendering. For instance, *pataḥ* has been erased (faint traces remain) and replaced with *shewa* in:

- הֹֿ֣מְכַסֶ (originally מְכַסֶ; MT מָכַסֶ) ‘he covers’ (Prov. 28.13);
- בְדַם (originally בַדַם; MT בַדַם) ‘to the blood of’ (Prov. 28.17)

Other variations in vocalisation from the standard MT, mostly involving *shewa* and ḫaṭef, remain uncorrected, however. In Prov. 30.14 מַתְלַעַ֫וֹתֿ יוּ (MT מְָֽתַלְעַ֫וֹת יּוּ) ‘his teeth’, an apparent ḫaṭef pataḥ gaʿya stands in place of the MT’s shewa gaʿya. This is a graphic difference only, as the two are pronounced identically, and reflects the more phonetically transparent approach attributed to the school of Aharon ben Moshe ben Asher, which tends to extend the use of ḫaṭef pataḥ across the full consonantal range of Hebrew (Yeivin 1968, 24–25). There are ink spots, bleeding of ink, and mirrored text down this side of the page, however, so whether this is a correction from an original -מ or -נ, or was always so, is unclear.

*Pataḥ* is found in place of ḫaṭef pataḥ in עַנִיֵּים (MT עֲנִיֵּים) ‘the poor’ (Prov. 30.14), with omission of *dagesh* too. *Pataḥ* is similarly preferred to vocalic *shewa* in אֵל־יִתְֿמַכוּ־ב (MT אֵל־יִתְמְכוּ־ב) ‘let no one hold him back’ (Prov. 28.17), which, unlike הֹֿמְכַסֶ and בְדַם, noted above, was not subsequently corrected to *shewa*.

### 8.3. Differences in Vowel Quality in T-S AS 59.215

T-S AS 59.215 exhibits a small number of variations in vowel quality. *Segol* substitutes for *pataḥ* under ʿayin in:
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The use of two segols in segolates with a het or ‘ayin as the third radical is characteristic of the Palestinian vocalisation system (Yahalom 1997, 25). Although the spelling of the divine name יֶהַ֫וֹ ה (MT יְהַ֫וֶה, [ʔaʔoːˈ澶") ‘the LORD’ (Prov. 30.9) has a shift of a > e unconditioned by gutturals. There is a shift of ē > ā in:

אֲֶ֭רִי נֶֹ֭הַם (MT אֲרִי־נֶֹ֭הֵם, ‘a growling lion’ (Prov. 28.13)

Two other changes in vowel quality from the MT can be noted:

ū > ū, בְֶ֝֝צֶע (MT בְֶַ֝֗צַע, בְֶצֶע, marked with rafe in MT-Leningrad, בֿ) ‘unjust gain’ (Prov. 28.16)

The interchange of ē and e is typical of the Sefardi reading tradition (Henshke 2013b). Similarly, ū > ū in a closed stressed syllable is also characteristic of the Palestinian vocalisation tradition (Yahalom 1997, 17–18; Heijmans 2013a, §3c). However, the attendant Palestinian shift of ū > ū in an open syllable is not attested in אֲֶ֭רִי נֶֹ֭הַם (Prov. 28.13).

8.4. T-S AS 59.215 in Conclusion

This is the best quality Bible manuscript of the fragments assembled here. In most respects it is similar to the MT; it is fully vocalised and cantillated, and it employs almost the full range of paratextual features, such as the marking of qere and the graphic
representation of the parashiyot. It also appears to have undergone some later correction towards the MT, in both the consonantal and vocalic layer; it may have passed through the hands of more than one owner, as a valued object.

Where it does deviate from the MT, it does so in similar fashion to the other texts assembled here, though to a lesser extent. There is a tendency for pataḥ to replace ḥatef and shewa, but, unlike most of the other texts, also for ḥatef to replace shewa. None of these reflect phonetic changes from the standard Tiberian pronunciation. The variations in vowel quality that do occur, though comparatively isolated, might reflect the influence of Palestinian pronunciation. The prominent and decorated seder marker at Prov. 28.16 suggests that the triennial pericope was particularly meaningful to the intended user of this text. Probably this was a Bible manuscript produced for a member of the Palestinian congregation of Fustat and perhaps therefore we might expect artefacts of the Palestinian pronunciation to turn up in its vocalisation.

9.0. CONCLUSIONS

The fragments under inspection here are a mixed bunch, which is deliberate, as they have been chosen to display something of the range of Common Bibles found in the Cairo Genizah, with a necessary emphasis on those with Tiberian vocalisation. Despite sharing commonalities of form, in function they might have been quite different: to prepare for liturgical reading, for writing practice, as a study Bible, or as a lap Bible. The principal feature that they all share, however, is a lack of masora proper, and, for the
purposes of classification, this provides a clear point of demarcation between ‘Common’ and ‘Masoretic’ Bibles.

The Genizah is undoubtedly an important source of Masoretic Bibles too. Leaves from dozens of Great Bibles are scattered through the different Genizah collections, reflecting the vitality of the Jewish communities who were able to produce such weighty and expensive codices. Recent research has revealed the presence in the Cairo Genizah of leaves from Masoretic Bibles produced by some of the greatest scribes of their day, such as Samuel ben Jacob, who also copied the Leningrad Codex (Phillips 2016). The documentary evidence they left behind reveals how much the Egyptian Jewish elite were prepared to pay for such prestige works of biblical art and how specific they were in the details of their commissions, regarding the consonantal text, the vocalisation, the masora, and other features (Outhwaite 2018, 330–33). The ownership, commissioning, and production of Bibles was at the heart of Jewish culture in the Genizah world, with a highly skilled scribal community and knowledgeable consumers.

From the same world come the thousands of leaves of Common Bibles that saturate the Genizah Collection. The appetite for Bible ownership extended beyond the topmost level of society, but the capacity for commissioning expert scribes to fill this need did not; hence the widescale production of Common Bibles, penned by less-expert hands. Many words have been used to describe them—‘popular’, ‘vulgar’, ‘sub-standard’—but ‘common’ suits them best, if only because they are indeed the most common form of the Bible among all the manuscript fragments found in
the Genizah Collection. As a medium that, in many cases, may never have left the ownership of its original producer, they can be quite unregulated, perhaps the closest we might come to witnessing the reading of the Bible by the Jewish community of the Middle Ages. It is this unofficial nature, this potential lack of mediation, that makes them such a valuable group of manuscripts.

Of course, no two Common Bibles are alike. Those that most closely mimic the MT are liable to give us the least evidence of the realia of the reading tradition of the medieval congregations. They do, however, point at the expertise available in the community generally, which was able to produce small-format, relatively cheap Bibles to this quality. The Proverbs fragment, T-S AS 59.215, is a case in point. It was carefully produced, and it has even undergone later correction towards the MT to remove some of its idiosyncrasies. Even so, it has preserved a number of examples that allow us a glimpse into how the creator of this manuscript pronounced their Hebrew, in this case that the shewa was pronounced as an a vowel, in line with Tiberian phonology. Entirely at the other end of the scale are the more rustic manuscripts, of which T-S AS 44.53 is a good example. Here, the scribe has reimplemented the Tiberian graphemic system according to rules of their own devising, and has used unorthodox spellings such as שֶׁב (for שָׁא) and ראשם (for ראשם). As a consequence, we can see exactly which elements of the reading tradition were of more importance to the owner of the manuscript, and the phonetics of much of it are revealed.

Given these two extremes, and the wealth of material that sits between them, it is hard to generalise about the Common
Bible in the Cairo Genizah, especially given the potential geographical and temporal spread of the manuscripts that found their way into the collection. However, drawing on the analysis above, we can point to a number of features that can be found across different manuscripts, and draw some broad conclusions concerning the reading traditions associated with them.

9.1. The Consonantal Text

We ought to begin with the question of the consonantal text. I have already said that I do not believe these manuscripts are particularly useful for textual criticism in the traditional sense of establishing the reading of the consonantal text of the Hebrew Bible. Goshen-Gottstein shares this view, though he states it more baldly: “There is perhaps one chance in a thousand that any ‘deviation’ might turn out to be something else than either the outcome of non-TBT [= non-Tiberian Bible Text] reading habits (‘Sefardi’, ‘Yemenite’, etc.) or simple bowdlerization because of lack of care or ignorance” (Goshen-Gottstein 1963, 40). What facts can we derive from the analysis of the five Common Bibles here that back up his and my assertions? There are only a few consonantal differences that reflect different readings (other than some obvious errors of omission). Two minor differences occur in the text that departs most frequently from the MT, and gives the impression of not having been copied from a Vorlage at all, T-S AS 44.35, and can probably be ignored as errors. Two more occur in ‘better’ texts, at 1 Kgs 3.27 in the haftara lection T-S AS 53.90 and at Prov. 28.12 in the study Bible T-S AS 59.215. In both cases, we can find similar readings elsewhere (1 Kgs 3.26 and Prov.
that probably influenced these, and they too should therefore be regarded as simple errors. The former, however, is a reading shared by a number of other manuscripts, so, if an error, it is one frequently made, and this in itself is worth noting. The latter is in a high-quality manuscript, though not one without errors (it has missed out, for example, the whole of Prov. 30.11), and its careful presentation of the parashiyot and qere readings deserves attention (and, indeed, should dispel calumnies of ‘ignorance’). In particular, it preserves several instances of qere that are not found in the MT (Aleppo and Leningrad), one of which also has a minor consonantal difference, מַעַרְשֵׁה at Prov. 30.15 instead of ארבעה. Its orthography is interesting too, as it frequently does not match the MT’s, in both plene and defective forms, yet it shows signs of careful correction. As a copy of the Bible, even without a masora to safeguard it, it appears to conform to some kind of textual tradition, just one not identical to the mainstream MT.

Across all the fragments, there is not a prevalence of matres lectionis, as perhaps might be expected, or a plethora of respellings. There are exceptions: T-S AS 44.35 has more the character of a text produced by dictation, or from memory, than by copying. But the other fragments have a mix of plene and defective forms that show a general adherence to the norms of MT spelling. We do not know how these texts were produced, and it is likely that they have a variety of different origins: copied from codices preserved as public property in the synagogues (which numbered in the dozens, according to the booklists), copied from other Common Bibles begged or borrowed off friends or family, pro-
duced by dictation or, perhaps even, by prodigious feats of recollection. It is fair, then, to slightly moderate the earlier assertions, and suggest that while most will not provide useful evidence for textual criticism (beyond assisting us with further knowledge of the kinds of errors that Bible copyists are capable of), that is not to say that none of them will. The careful text and paratext of T-S AS 59.215 give all appearance of having been copied from, or at least collated with, a reliable Vorlage, and should therefore be given due consideration for their textual value.20

Beyond the variable value of the consonantal text, the phonetic value of the manuscripts is unquestionable, as I hope I have displayed above. Far from the mixed results of the consonantal survey, the analysis of these Bibles’ vocalisation clusters around a number of interesting features, speaking to the vitality of the Tiberian pronunciation tradition in the post-Masoretic period, and the conservatism of the Genizah world’s Bible reading.

9.2. Lack of the Ḥaṭef Vowel

The commonest feature, found in four out of the five Common Bibles analysed here (only T-S AS 59.215, the finest of the bunch differs), is a reluctance to use the ḥaṭef sign. Three of the fragments have no occurrences of it (T-S AS 44.35; T-S AS 53.90; T-S AS 5.144), and even the closest manuscript to the MT, T-S AS 53.215, occasionally replaces ḥaṭef with pataḥ. Of morphophono-

20 And indeed, as the colophon of T-S Misc. 24.137.3 shows (see footnote 2 above), some of these modest-looking Bibles may well have had very illustrious predecessors.
logical significance in the Tiberian system, the sign is phonetically superfluous if the intended user of the text is familiar enough with the pronunciation tradition. One of the hallmarks of Aharon ben Moshe ben Asher’s approach to marking vowels was a preference for ḥaṭef signs, providing greater clarity to the presence and timbre of the vocalic shewa (Yeivin 1968, 24–25). It was a sign intended to remove doubt and ambiguity. In our fragments we find a similar dislike of ambiguity, of simple shewa in particular, but the solution is different. These fragments tend to employ a full vowel, usually pataḥ, in place of the missing ḥaṭef. We can only speculate whether the full vowel is deliberate, a consequence of their education, or a lapse; it may well be different for the various fragments, as might be guessed from their varying qualities.

In some cases, there is a different approach: ḥaṭef is replaced with simple shewa, e.g., as a vocalic shewa under gutturals, against standard Tiberian practice. T-S AS 68.100 does this on a number of occasions. There is no resulting ambiguity, however, because a vowelless guttural, where the MT would have a simple (silent) shewa, in that fragment is unmarked. Thus, the simple shewa sign is always vocalic in that fragment, and ḥaṭef is not required to avoid ambiguity.

9.3. Pataḥ for Vocalic Shewa

A related feature to the avoidance of ḥaṭef, common to four out of the five fragments, is the use of pataḥ for shewa in some or all cases when it is to be pronounced vocalically. This accords with
the standard Tiberian pronunciation of *shewa* as [a] when unconditioned by a following guttural or *yod* (Khan 2013b), a feature preserved also in the Yemeni reading tradition of Biblical Hebrew (Ya’aqov 2013). This contrasts with the Sefardi pronunciation tradition, such as the reading traditions of Tunisia, Aleppo, and Baghdad, where unconditioned *shewa* is pronounced as an [e] of varying lengths (Henshke 2013b). This realisation of *shewa* as a front vowel ultimately derives from the Palestinian pronunciation tradition (Khan 2013b), where *e* vowels commonly occur in place of Tiberian *shewa* (Heijmans 2013a).

All the fragments discussed here retain the original Tiberian realisation of *shewa*, even T-S AS 53.219, which appears closer to the Palestinian reading tradition in other ways. Israel Yeivin’s analysis of Tiberian vocalised *piyyut* manuscripts from the Cairo Genizah reveals that they similarly often use *pataḥ* in place of *shewa*, e.g., בָּנוֹ ‘son’ (Cambridge University Library Add.3367.8). He reaches the same conclusion, that the [a] pronunciation of unconditioned *shewa* is pervasive (Yeivin 1990, 176–77). The reading traditions evidenced in all these sources point to the retention of the Tiberian

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21 With rare exceptions, where problematic cases in the Tiberian tradition, such as the *shewa* under forms of הָנָא, retain the Tiberian pronunciation as an *a* vowel, e.g., in the tradition of Djerba (Henshke 2013, §6). This was most likely due to the use of *ḥaṭef pataḥ* signs (instead of simple *shewa*) in those particular cases, which consequently caused the retention of the original Tiberian quality.

22 However, *a* vowels also occur for Tiberian *shewa*, suggesting a mid-central realisation (Heijmans 2013a, §3e), or a shift in its realisation from a short low vowel [a] to a short central vowel [e] (Yahalom 2016, 164).
pronunciation of *shewa*, and show very little evidence for the influence of the Sefardi-Palestinian reading tradition on the vocalisation.

The use of a *pataḥ* sign for the *shewa* vowel avoids the ambiguity inherent in the *shewa* sign itself. In some of the texts *pataḥ* only substitutes in particular circumstances, such as when *shewa* occurs under the first of two identical consonants following a long vowel. This was a problematic linguistic circumstance discussed widely in the medieval literature, e.g., by Aharon ben Moshe ben Asher in his *Diqduqe ha-Te'amim* and by Abū al-Faraj Hārūn in his treatise, *Hidāyat al-Qāriʾ* (Heijmans 2018, 98–100). It must have been a pronunciation considered prone to error. Such cases put a great reliance on either the reader’s expert knowledge of the Tiberian system or the presence of additional linguistic signage, such as the secondary *gaʿya* accent. Neither of these is a given with the fragments here: *gaʿya* rarely occurs in any but the highest-quality Common Bibles, since it is an advanced component of the cantillation system, and, indeed, its occurrence varies greatly even in Masoretic Bibles. Nor were the users of these fragments necessarily likely to have been masters of the Masoretic arts. Uncertainty is avoided, therefore, through the use of *pataḥ*. The outlier in its approach is again the Lamentations fragment, T-S AS 44.35, which is not content just to replace *shewa* in difficult circumstances, but, showing no fidelity to the accepted system, replaces vocalic *shewa* universally with a *pataḥ* sign: אָוָךְ לַרַוח תִי ‘your ear for my relief’ (Lam. 3.56).
9.4. Other Vowel Signs for Vocalic Shewa

It is less frequently that we find a vowel other than patah substituting for shewa. Two out of the five fragments show examples, where MT shewa occurs before a guttural or yod. In each of the cases, the alternation is phonetically in accord with Tiberian pronunciation, replicating the vowel under the guttural or, when before yod, giving hireq. Sporadic occurrences of such vocalisations can be found across the Common Bible corpus of the Genizah—a few other examples:

- בִחִיר י (MT בְחִיר ָֽי׃) ‘my chosen ones’ (Isa. 65.22, T-S AS 48.187);
- רִאִיתֶם (MT רְאִיתֶם ‘you saw’ (Deut. 4.15, T-S AS 49.125);
- הַיִשְרֵאֵלִָֽי׃ (MT הַיִשְרְאֵלִָֽי׃) ‘the Israelite’ (Lev. 24.10, T-S AS 53.45);
- שֵאֵת (MT שְאֵַ֥ת) ‘a swelling’ (Lev. 13.28, T-S AS 57.167);
- וֹבִי ד (MT וֹ ַ֥בְי ד) ‘in his hand’ (Isa. 53.10, T-S AS 65.47);
- וְהִיִיתֶֹ֣ם (MT וִהְיִיתֶֹ֣ם) ‘and be’ (Lev. 11.44, T-S AS 48.141)

Similar vocalisations can be found among liturgical poetry manuscripts from the Genizah, with hireq in place of shewa before a guttural (itself with hireq) or before yod relatively common (Yeivin 1990, 161, 166, 168–69, 177), e.g., ‘into the hand of’ (Cambridge University Library Add.3367.8). Other vowels though are less frequently found, and Yeivin believes that the levelling of these conditioned shewas to that of the uncoloured vocalic shewa [a] is ongoing in this period (i.e., the tenth–twelfth centuries CE, the assumed period of the piyyut manuscripts’ production). This levelling is complete in Sefardi-Palestinian pronunciations (e.g., בְחִירָּ֣י [bɪˈχiːrɔɪ] > [Vehiˈraːj]), such as the
reading traditions of North Africa (Henshke 2013a, §6). The evidence of these Common Bible fragments strongly differs and shows that the traditional Tiberian pronunciation of *shewa* was followed in most linguistic circumstances. We do not see the same levelling to the uncoloured pronunciation of *shewa* at all. That this is also different from the evidence of roughly contemporary *piyyut* manuscripts is not a contradiction. The biblical reading traditions generally display a more conservative pronunciation than those of the non-biblical—the Mishna, prayers, and liturgical poetry.

9.5. Variation in Vowel Quality

Among the five Common Bible fragments there are few divergences from standard Tiberian vowel quality. Most occur in the Lamentations manuscript, T-S AS 44.35, the most transparently phonetic in its vocalisation. It shows evidence of an almost complete shift of *ɛ* > *e*, suggesting the influence of Palestinian pronunciation, as happened in the Sefardi pronunciation, with its neutralisation of *segol/šere* and *patah/qames* (Henshke 2013b). The concomitant shift of *ɔ* > *a* also occasionally occurs in T-S AS 44.35, but is not consistent and may in fact be a morphological variant (loss of pausal forms).

Slightly more frequent in the fragments is variation between *a* and *ɛ*. T-S AS 59.215 shows segolate nouns such as יָשָׁנָה with two *segols* [ˈbeːʃən], suggestive of Palestinian pronunciation. Whereas the *haftara* lectionary T-S AS 53.90 and the writing exercise T-S AS 5.144, both at the more basic end of the Common Bible scale, show a shift of *ɛ* > *a* around the guttural consonants.
A few other interchanges ($i > e$, $a > \epsilon$, $e > a$, $u > o$) occur in such small numbers, that they can probably only be considered the sort of isolated occurrences that are liable to occur in any manuscript. What is probably most significant therefore is the extent to which, T-S AS 44.35 aside (and even that not wholly), the fragments tend to reproduce the original quality of Tiberian vowels without much variation. Certainly, there is not the evidence of a wholesale neutralisation of $e/\epsilon$ and $\sigma/a$ as in the Sefardi pronunciation.

9.6. Variation in Consonantal Quality

The only fragment to show more than minor variation in the pronunciation of the consonants is T-S AS 59.215, which has $ב$ [b] for the MT’s $ב$ [v] three times and [v] for [b] once. This is surprising given the otherwise polished nature of this fragment, yet it does show considerable difference from the MT in regard to orthography as well. Perhaps this shows a lack of distinction in pronunciation between the plosive and fricative allophones, such as is found in some Yemeni pronunciations (Ya’aqov 2013), or perhaps a free variation, such as is found in the pronunciation of Baghdad’s Jews (Shatil 2013, §2). However, sufficient regard is shown to maintaining the distinction graphically across most of the fragments presented here, suggesting, on balance, that this is not likely. Even T-S AS 44.35, which uses neither dagesh nor rafe signs, still maintains the fricative pronunciation of $ב$, [v], as shown by its spelling of $ן$ שפ at Lam. 2.14 as well as its singular use of shewa as an apparent marker of the fricative pronunciation, e.g., $ב$וועז [haʼto:v] ‘the best’ (Lam. 4.1). In the other
fragments the *rafe* sign occurs to mark fricatives (with the exception of the writing exercise, T-S AS 5.144).

### 9.7. The Absence of *Dagesh*

The use of *rafe* or, in T-S AS 44.35’s case, *shewa*, shows that the plosive versus fricative pronunciation of the *bgdkpt* consonants is still operative. *Dagesh*, however, occurs quite infrequently in these fragments; this contrasts with its greatly increased presence in the Extended Tiberian system. On the contrary, the Common Bible fragments given here largely manage without *dagesh* even to distinguish the allophones of the *bgdkpt*. The further lack of *dagesh forte* to mark the gemination of consonants is striking. The two most complete fragments in their vocalisation, T-S AS 68.100 and T-S AS 59.215, both mark *dagesh forte*, but the other three fragments do not. This suggests that consonantal length may not have been a significant feature in their pronunciation of the text, at least in the informal environment in which these texts figured, or that it was sufficiently familiar not to require explicit marking.\(^{23}\) In formal reading of the Bible, the pronunciation traditions of Tunisia (Henshke 2013a, §4), Aleppo (Henshke 2013b), and Baghdad (Shatil 2013, §3) all retain the gemination of most consonants, as does the Yemeni pronunciation (Ya’aqov 2013). While the absence of *dagesh* in these Common Bibles should not be taken alone as evidence for the absence of gemination, we can perhaps conclude that gemination was of less importance to the reading tradition in the eyes of these fragments’ users than the

\(^{23}\) The vocalised autograph fragments of the tenth-century poet Joseph ibn Abitur tend not to mark *dagesh* either (Yeivin 1990, 161).
correct pronunciation of the plosive and fricative allophones of the \textit{bgdkpt} consonants, since these are marked far more frequently (mainly through the presence or absence of \textit{rafe}) than the geminated consonants.

\textbf{9.8. Overall Conclusion}

This analysis has looked at only five fragments from the Taylor-Schechter Additional Series. This is but a drop in the Common Bible ocean, and generalisation should therefore be avoided. Indeed, there a number of significant differences between the fragments—from their presentation of the biblical text and its paratext to their quite varied approaches towards the marking of vowels. The degree of casualness and of competence can be wholly different between any two Common Bible manuscripts. But, overall, and allowing for both lapses in competence and more casual approaches to reproducing the text, we should note the clear knowledge of the Tiberian reading tradition displayed by all the fragments. A couple do suggest some influence of the Sefardi-Palestinian pronunciation in aspects only of their reading; others show occasional laxity, but nevertheless aspire to the prestige Tiberian pronunciation. There is a tendency to drop signs that are of less immediate importance to the readers, either because they have no effect on phonetic quality, since their role is performed by other signs, or because they facilitate aspects of the reading tradition that may not have been significant or even discernible to these average users: all \textit{ha\text{"a}f} vowels, \textit{shewa} when it denotes \textit{\text{"o}} vowel, \textit{dagesh}, some or all cantillation signs and particularly \textit{ga\text{"a}ya}. It was \textit{ha\text{"a}f} (for Ben Asher), \textit{ga\text{"a}ya} (for the difference
between Ben Naftali and Ben Asher), and *dagesh* (for the innovation of Extended Tiberian) that so occupied the Masoretic experts, but it is evident from these texts that the level of phonological detail these signs provided was irrelevant to most users. To this we could also add the *parashiyyot*, which were such a marker of quality in Maimonides’ eyes, but which are rarely represented in Common Bibles. It does not necessarily imply ignorance or lack of competence in the reading tradition, only a lack of interest or necessity. Although some of the peculiarities of the vocalisation tradition (e.g., that a simple *shewa* under a guttural should always be $\emptyset$) might have been less than perfectly understood.

One feature is phonetically in accordance with the Tiberian reading tradition again and again in the fragments: the pronunciation of *shewa*—its quality under normal circumstances, before guttural consonants, before *yod*, and on the first of two identical letters. No matter what other phonetic changes they display and despite the idiosyncrasies of marking the vocalisation, they all assiduously maintain this aspect of the Tiberian reading tradition. This testifies to the conservatism of the biblical reading tradition and the continued and pervasive influence of the prestige reading tradition, the Tiberian reading tradition, in the Genizah world of the High Middle Ages.

10.0. References

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