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978-1-107-02621-6 - Rabbis, Language and Translation in Late Antiquity

Willem F. Smelik

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RABBIS, LANGUAGE AND TRANSLATION IN LATE ANTIQUITY

Exposed to multiple languages as a result of annexation, migration, pilgrimage and its position on key trade routes, the Roman Palestine of Late Antiquity was a border area where Aramaic, Greek, Hebrew and Arabic dialects were all in common use. This study analyses the way scriptural translation was perceived and practised by the rabbinic movement in this multilingual world. Drawing on a wide range of classical rabbinic sources, including unused manuscript materials, Willem F. Smelik traces developments in rabbinic thought and argues that foreign languages were deemed highly valuable for the lexical and semantic light they shed on the meanings of lexemes in the holy tongue. Key themes, such as the reception of translations of the Hebrew Scriptures, multilingualism in society, and rabbinic rules for translation, are discussed at length. This book will be invaluable for students of ancient Judaism, rabbinic studies, Old Testament studies, early Christianity and translation studies.

WILLEM F. SMELIK teaches in the Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies, University College London. He is the author of *The Targum of Judges* (1995).

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I do realize that more could be said and done than I have been able to accomplish here, and I hope to work on related issues in the near future. It would have been nice to work on this manuscript some more, but having siphoned off some chapters already, this book had to come to an end. Several ideas and parts of chapters have been presented at conferences and symposia, where I learned much from the responses I received, and some earlier pen exercises for parts of this book were published in the *Journal for the Aramaic Bible*, the series *Judaism in Context* and *BZAW*. My thanks for permission to use and elaborate on these materials to the publishers: Brill, Gorgias Press and De Gruyter, and their editors: Bas ter Haar Romeny, George Kiraz, Ludwig Morenz and Stefan Schorch.

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Abbreviations

General, journals, series, monographs and dictionaries

AB	The Aramaic Bible
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
AJS Review	Association for Jewish Studies Review
AJSL	American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures
ANRW	Hildegard Temporini and Wolfgang Haase (eds.), <i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung</i> (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1972–)
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
ArSt	Aramaic Studies
Arukḥ	A. Kohut, ערוך השלם (Vienna: George Brög, 1842–1984)
AS	Additional Series
b.	ben, bar (as part of a patronym)
BASOR	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research
BCTP	A Bilingual Concordance to the Targum of the Prophets
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium
BiOr	Bibliotheca Orientalis
BIOSCS	Bulletin of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies
BJRL	Bulletin of the John Rylands Library
BSOAS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies
BTA	Babylonian Talmudic Aramaic
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CAD	Ignace I. Gelb et al. (eds.), <i>The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago</i> (Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1964–)
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina
ConBNT	Coniectanea biblica, New Testament
ConBOT	Coniectanea biblica, Old Testament
CRAIBL	Comptes rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres
CRINT	Compendia rerum iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
CSCO	Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium
CULGS	Cambridge University Library Genizah Series
CWT	J. Levy, <i>Chaldäisches Wörterbuch über die Targumim und einen grossen Theil des rabbinischen Schriftthums</i> (2 vols.; repr.; Köln: Joseph Melzer Verlag, 1959).

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DJBA	M. Sokoloff, <i>A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic of the Byzantine Period</i> (Dictionaries of Talmud, Midrash and Targum, 2; Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1990).
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
DJPA	M. Sokoloff, <i>A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic of the Talmudic and Geonic Periods</i> (Dictionaries of Talmud, Midrash and Targum, 3; Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2003).
DSD	Dead Sea Discoveries
EJ	Encyclopaedia Judaica
FJB	Frankfurter Judaistische Beiträge
HALAT	Hebräisches und aramäisches Lexicon zum Alten Testament
HTR	Harvard Theological Review
HUCA	Hebrew Union College Annual
IOTS	International Organization for Targumic Studies
JAB	Journal for the Aramaic Bible
JAOS	Journal for the American Oriental Society
JBA	Jewish Babylonian Aramaic
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JCP	Jewish and Christian Perspectives
JiC	Judaism in Context
JJS	Journal of Jewish Studies
JLA	Jewish Literary Aramaic
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
JNSL	Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages
JPA	Jewish Palestinian Aramaic
JQR	Jewish Quarterly Review
JSHL	Jerusalem Studies in Hebrew Literature
JSJ	Journal for the Study of Judaism
JSJSup	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
JSP	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha
JSQ	Jewish Studies Quarterly
JSS	Journal of Semitic Studies
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies
MARI	MARI: Annales de recherches interdisciplinaires
MGWJ	Monatschrift für die Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judenthums
OBC	Orientalia Biblica et Christiana
OBO	Orbis biblicus et orientalis
OrHex	Field, <i>Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt; sive Veterum Interpretum Graecorum in totum Vetus Testamentum fragmenta. Post Flaminium Nobilium, Drusium, et Montefalconium, adhibita etiam versione Sprohexaplari</i> (2 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1875).
OTS	Oudtestamentische Studiën
PAAJR	Proceedings of the American Academy of Jewish Research

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par.	parallel
PN	personal name
RB	Révue Biblique
REJ	Revue des études juives
RevQ	Révue de Qumran
RRJ	Review of Rabbinic Judaism
SAIS	Studies in the Aramaic Interpretation of Scripture
SFSHJ	South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism
STJHC	Studies and Texts in Jewish History and Culture
SYAP	M. Sokoloff and Y. Yahalom, שירים ארמיים של יהודי, ארץ ישראל בתקופה הבינונית (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1999).
TECC	Textos y estudios 'cardenal Cisneros'
TRE	Theologische Realenzyklopädie
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum
TSMJ	Texts and Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Judaism
VTSup	Vetus Testamentum, Supplements
WBC	World Biblical Commentary
WO	Die Welt des Orients
WTM	J. Levy, Wörterbuch über die Talmudim und Midraschim (4 vols.; Berlin: Benjamin Harz, 1924).
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
WZJT	Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift für jüdische Theologie
YOS	Yale Oriental Series
ZAW	Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
ZDMG	Zeitschrift der Deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft
ZPE	Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik

Primary sources

Ant.	Antiquities of the Jews
Apion	Against Apion
Arak.	Arakhin
ARN A	Avot de Rabbi Nathan A
ARN B	Avot de Rabbi Nathan B
A. Zar.	Avoda Zara
Av.	Avot
b.	Babylonian Talmud (followed by name of tractate)
B. Bat.	Bava Batra
Bek.	Bekhorot
Ber.	Berakhot
Beṣ.	Beṣa
Bik.	Bikkurim

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B. Meş.	Bava Meşia
B. Qam.	Bava Qamma
Cant. R.	Canticles Rabba
Conf. Ling.	De confusione linguarum
Dem.	Demai
Deut. R.	Deuteronomy Rabba
Edu.	Eduyyot
Ev. Rab.	Evel Rabbati
En.	Enoch
Eruv.	Eruvin
Est. R.	Esther Rabba
Exod. R.	Exodus Rabba
FragTg, FragTg ^{PVNL}	Fragmentary Targum (different versions)
Gen. R.	Genesis Rabba
Git.	Gittin
Ḥag.	Ḥagiga
Ḥal.	Ḥalla
Hor.	Horayot
Ḥul.	Ḥullin
JPS	Bible translation by the Jewish Publication Society
Jub.	Jubilees
Kel.	Kelim
Kel. B. Bat.	Kelim Bava Batra
Ker.	Keritot
Ket.	Ketubbot
Kil.	Kilayim
LAB	Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum
Lam. R.	Lamentations Rabba
Leq. T.	Leqaḥ Tov
Lev. R.	Leviticus Rabba
LXX	Septuagint
m.	Mishna (followed by name of tractate)
Mak.	Makkot
Meg.	Megilla
Mek.	Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael
Mek. SbY	Mekhilta de Rabbi Shimon bar Yoḥai
Men.	Menahot
MHG	Midrash HaGadol
Midr. Pss.	Midrash Psalms
Midr. Sam.	Midrash Samuel
Midr. Tan.	Midrash Tannaim
Miq.	Miqwaot
M. Qat.	Moed Qatan
M. Shen.	Maaser Sheni

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MT	Masoretic Text (Hebrew Bible)
Myst.	<i>De Mysteriis</i>
Naz.	Nazir
Ned.	Nedarim
Nid.	Nidda
Num. R.	Numbers Rabba
PalTg	Palestinian Targum
Pes.	Pesaḥim
Pesh	Peshitta
Pes. K.	Pesiqta de Rav Kahana
Pes. R.	Pesiqta Rabbati
Pit. Tor.	Pitron Tora
PRE	Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer
Qid.	Qiddushin
Qoh. R.	Qohelet Rabba
Quaest. in Gen.	Quaestiones in Genesin
R. Hash.	Rosh Hashana
SamTg	Samaritan Targum
San.	Sanhedrin
Sef. T.	Sefer Tora
Sek. T.	SekhelTov
Semaḥot	see Ev. Rab.
Shab.	Shabbat
Sheq.	Sheqalim
Shevi	Sheviit
Shevu.	Shevuot
Sifre Deut.	Sifre Deuteronomy
Sifre Num.	Sifre Numbers
Syb. Or.	Sybilline Oracles
Sof.	Soferim
Sot.	Sota
Soh.	Massekhet Sopherim
SOR	Seder Olam Rabba
Suk.	Sukka
t.	Tosefta (followed by name of tractate)
Taan.	Taanit
Tam.	Tamid
Tan.	Tanḥuma
TanB.	Tanḥuma Buber
T. d. Eliyy.	Tanna debe Eliyyahu
Tem.	Temura
Ter.	Terumot
TgCant	Targum Canticles
TgCG	Cairo Geniza Targum Fragments

TgChr 1	Targum 1 Chronicles
TgChr 2	Targum 2 Chronicles
TgEst-I	Targum Esther I (Targum Rishon)
TgEst-II	Targum Esther II (Targum Sheni)
TgJon	Targum Jonathan
TgLam	Targum Lamentations
TgNeof	Targum Neofiti
TgNeof ^m	marginalia in Targum Neofiti
TgOnq	Targum Onqelos
TgPsJ	Targum Pseudo-Jonathan
TgPs, TgPss	Targum Psalm(s)
TgRuth	Targum Ruth
TgTos	Tosefta Targum
T. Jud.	Testament of Judah
T. Naph.	Testament of Naphtali
Tos.	Tosafot
Vit. Mos.	De vita Mosis
Vulg.	Vulgata
y.	Palestinian Talmud, or Yerushalmi (followed by name of tractate)
Yad.	Yadayim
Yalq. S.	Yalqut Shimoni
Yev.	Yevamot
Yom.	Yoma
Zev.	Zevahim

Manuscripts and editions

AIU ₄₇	MS 47, Alliance Israélite Universelle, Paris
AIU ₁₄₇	MS 147, Alliance Israélite Universelle, Paris
Arx	2023, 2027 of the Chapter Archive of La Seu d'Urgell, Catalonia
Barco	Talmud Bavli, מסכת סנהדרין, Gershom ben Moses Soncino, 1497, Barco?
Baz	Fr. ebr. 21, Archivio Storico Comunale, Bazzano
Bol	Fr. ebr. 437, Archivio di Stato, Bologna
Cas ₄	J.I.4, Biblioteca Casanata, Rome
Ces	Cesena, Archivio della Curia Vescovile Fr. ebr. 7
CG ₁	T.-S NS 219.40 (Cambridge Genizah Collections)
CG ₂	T.-S NS 258.144 (Cambridge Genizah Collections)
ColX	Columbia X893, Columbia College, New York
Ena 2075.2	Elkan N. Adler 2075.2, The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York
Erfurt	Or. fol. 1220, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz
EscGI ₃	Escorial G-I-3
Flor	Plut. II.I,7-9, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence

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Fr. ebr. 14	Fr. ebr. 14, Archivio Storico Comunale di Bazzano
Gött	Hs 3, Niedersächsische Staats und Universitätsbibliothek, Göttingen
Guad	Talmud Bavli, מסכת יומא, מסכת קדושין, Guadalajara, ca. 1480
Günz	Günzburg 1134, Russian State Library, Moscow
H671	Hébreu 671, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
H1337	Hébreu 1337, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
Ham165	Cod. hebr. 165, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Hamburg
Ham169	Cod. hebr. 169, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Hamburg
Herz1	MS 1, Yad HaRav Herzog Institute.
Jer1515	Heb. 8° 515, National Library, Jerusalem
Kaufman A50	Kaufman A50, Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest
Krotoshin	Palestinian Talmud, Jerusalem: Shiloh, 1969, repr. Krotoshin edn. 1886.
Lon400	Harley 5508, British Library, London
Lon402	Add. 25.717, British Library, London
Lon445	Add. 27.296, British Library, London
Lon5558	Or. 5558 K 23-27, British Library, London
Mon88	Montefiore 88, London, formerly in Jews' College
Mun6	Munich 6, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich
Mun95	Munich 95, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich
Mun140	Munich 140, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich
Ox3	Opp. add. fol. 3 (Neubauer 147), Bodleian Library, Oxford
Ox20	Heb. d. 20 (Neubauer 2675), Bodleian Library, Oxford
Ox23	Opp. add. fol. 23 (Neubauer 366), Bodleian Library, Oxford
Ox24	Marshall Or. 24 (Neubauer 151.2), Bodleian Library, Oxford
Ox51	Opp. add. fol. 51 (Neubauer 2335), Bodleian Library, Oxford
Ox106	Opp. add. fol. 106 (Neubauer 2334/11), Bodleian Library, Oxford
Ox248	Opp. 248 (Neubauer 367), Bodleian Library, Oxford
Ox249	Opp. 249 (Neubauer 369), Bodleian Library, Oxford
Ox370	Opp. 762 (Neubauer 370), Bodleian Library, Oxford
Ox2666	Heb. c. 21, 23 (Neubauer 2666), Bodleian Library, Oxford
Ox2674	Heb. d. 45, 55 (Neubauer 2674), Bodleian Library, Oxford
Ox2833	Hebr. 2833, 20-21, Bodleian Library, Oxford
Parml47	147, Biblioteca Palatina, Parma
Parml173	3173, Biblioteca Palatina, Parma (Cod. De Rossi 138)
Pes1510	edn Pesaro, Italy, 1510
Pes1511	edn Pesaro, Italy, 1511
Pes1515	edn Pesaro, Italy, 1515
Pes1516	edn Pesaro, Italy, 1516
Rab15	Rab. 15, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York
Rab108	Rab. 108, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York
Rab218	Rab. 218, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York
Rab1608	Rab. 1608, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York
Rab1623	Rab. 1623, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York
Reuz	Reuchlin 2, Badische Landesbibliothek, Karlsruhe.

Scal3	Or. 4720, Scaliger 3, State University of Leiden.
Son1483	Talmud Bavli, מסכת ברכות, Soncino 1483
Son1488	Talmud Bavli, מסכת גטין, Soncino 1488
Son1489	Talmud Bavli, מסכת חולין, מסכת בבא קמא, מסכת נדה, מסכת שבת, מסכת קדושין, Soncino 1489 (separate editions)
Spet	Yevr. II A 293/1, RNL, St. Petersburg
Stutz2	Orient 32, Landesbibliothek, Stuttgart
t2	Urbinate Ebr. 1 (MS Kennicott 228), Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
t6	Hébreu 17, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
t10r	First Rabbinic Bible, Bomberg, Venice, 1516–1517
t11r	Second Rabbinic Bible, Bomberg, Venice, 1524–1525
t12	Antwerp Polyglot (Biblia Regia), Antwerp, 1569–1572.
t114	parm. 2867 (De-Rossi 345), Biblioteca Palatina, Parma
t127	hébreu 40 (Sorbonne 36; Kennicott 218), Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
t159	Levy 19, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Hamburg
t189	Pluteo III.1, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence
t702	MS H. 116 (Montefiore 7), formerly in Jews' College
t703	M1-3, Bibliotheca Antigua, Salamanca
t705	Ms. Reuchlinianus No. 3, Karlsruhe, 1105/6
t714y	Or. 1474, British Library, London
t715y	Or. 2211, British Library, London
t816	Biblia hebraica 116-Z-40 (Villa-Amil 5), Biblioteca Complutense, Madrid
t1132	MS 21-22 (Gottheil VI), Comunità Ebraica, Rome
t1174	Cod. Hebr. 20, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Hamburg
TS AS45.6	T.-S. AS 45.6, Cambridge Genizah Library
TS AS 75.129	TS AS 75.129, Cambridge Genizah Library
TS E1.43	T.-S. E1.43, Cambridge Genizah Library
TS E1.96	T.-S. E1.96, Cambridge Genizah Library
TS E2.38	TS E2.38, Cambridge Genizah Library
TS E2.39	TS E2.39, Cambridge Genizah Library
TS E2.40	TS E2.40, Cambridge Genizah Library
TS E2.41-42	TS E2.41-42, Cambridge Genizah Library
TS F1(1)30	T.-S. F1(1)30, Cambridge Genizah Library
TS F1(1)31	T.-S. F1(1)31, Cambridge Genizah Library
TS F1(2)20	T.-S. F1(2)20, Cambridge Genizah Library
TS F2(1)167	T.-S. F2(1)167, Cambridge Genizah Library
TS F2(2)3	T.-S. F2(2)3, Cambridge Genizah Library
TS F2(2)54	T.-S. F2(2)54, Cambridge Genizah Library
TS F2(2)62	T.-S. F2(2)62, Cambridge Genizah Library
TS F2(2)73	T.-S. F2(2)73, Cambridge Genizah Library
TS Misc. 28.74	T.-S. Misc. 28.74, Cambridge Genizah Library
Val9	The Valmadonna Trust 9 (Sassoon 594), formerly in London
Vat30	Cod. Vat. ebr. 30, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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Vat32	Cod. Vat. ebr. 32, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Vat60	Cod. Vat. ebr. 60, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Vat108	Cod. Vat. ebr. 108, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Vat109	Cod. Vat. ebr. 109, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Vat110	Cod. Vat. ebr. 110, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Vat111	Cod. Vat. ebr. 111, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Vat113	Cod. Vat. ebr. 113, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Vat115	Cod. Vat. ebr. 115, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Vat116	Cod. Vat. ebr. 116, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Vat118	Cod. Vat. ebr. 118, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Vat119	Cod. Vat. ebr. 119, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Vat120	Cod. Vat. ebr. 120, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Vat121	Cod. Vat. ebr. 121, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Vat122	Cod. Vat. ebr. 122, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Vat123	Cod. Vat. ebr. 123, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Vat125	Cod. Vat. ebr. 125, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Vat130	Cod. Vat. ebr. 130, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Vat133	Cod. Vat. ebr. 133, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Vat134	Cod. Vat. ebr. 134, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Vat140	Cod. Vat. ebr. 140, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Vat487	Cod. Vat. ebr. 487.8, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Ven	Babylonian Talmud, Venice 1519–1523
Ven1523	<i>editio princeps</i> Palestinian Talmud, Venice, 1522–1523
Ven1545	Genesis Rabba, Bomberg, Venice 1545
Vienna	MS Heb. 20 (Schwartz 46), Nationalbibliothek, Vienna.
Vilna	Babylonian Talmud, 20 vols., Jerusalem: Hatalmud, no date; repr. Vilna 1880–1886

Note on manuscripts and editions

An asterisk after the abbreviation of a manuscript indicates the first hand; a superscript 'm' a marginal, or interlinear, correction or alternative reading (e.g., Gött*, Gött^m).

For the Guadalajara and Soncino edns I followed A.K. Offenbergs, *Hebrew Incunabula in Public Collections: A First International Census* (Bibliotheca Humanistica & Reformatorica, 47; Nieuwkoop: De Graaf Publishers, 1990). Where doubts remain concerning the date I have adopted his estimated date.

Note on textual symbols

Wherever relevant, the following textual symbols are used in quotations of primary sources:

- [...] lacuna, faded, abraded or corrected text
- ⲛ letter is partially legible or visible; probable reading
- (ⲛ) text erased by the scribe or another hand
- [ⲛ] interlinear or marginal reading
- [ⲛ] interlinear or marginal addition by another hand
- Ⲥ scribal correction of the manuscript
- Ⲥⲛ editorial correction of the reading in the textual witness

Note on transliterations

In this book I have adopted a simplified system of transliteration based on modern Hebrew pronunciation; ⲛ and ⲣ have not been represented, while ⲃ = b, Ⲅ = v, Ⲉ = ḥ (pronounced as the ‘ch’ in ‘Loch’), Ⲗ = t, ⲗ = k, Ⲙ = kh, ⲙ = p, Ⲛ = f, ⲛ = ṣ (pronounced as ‘ts’ in ‘lots’), ⲟ = sh, ⲟ = s, ⲟ = s, ⲟ = t.

Rabbinic names have been transliterated according to this system, such as Shmuel, Yaaqov, even when certain names are more commonly known by their standard English names, although the names of the biblical books and biblical protagonists have been referred to by their standard names, e.g. Samuel, Jacob, and so on. In quotations of other (secondary) sources, the original transliteration given in these sources has been preserved.