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Scepticism, Critique, and the Art of Writing: Preliminary Considerations on the Question of Textual Authority in Medieval Peshaṭ Exegesis

The glossed book’s lay-out, difficult to set up and copy, was reserved for works that were among the most fully institutionalized [...] the works of certain classical authors. (Mary Carruthers)

Glosses not only use a variety of strategies to preserve and create authority, but also to undermine and, occasionally, to usurp it. (Suzanne Reynolds)

¹ 'The glossed book’s lay-out [...]’ stems from Mary Carruthers, The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 265; ‘Glosses not only use a variety of strategies [...]’ is quoted from Suzanne Reynolds, Medieval Reading: Grammar, Rhetoric, and the Classical Text (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 7.

² Cf. the definition from the Maimonides Centre’s mission statement: ‘One of the most important research objectives is to examine whether the method of enquiry implied in the term ‘scepticism’ could be regarded an anthropological constant [...] across both Eastern and Western philosophy and culture. The assumption would be that people in every culture express doubts about the claims of authorities to truth, the reliability of texts, and their social or mystical relevance, doubts about the power and presence of divinities, or about the power of reason and the controlling power of social structures and their respective consequences [...].’ (https://www.maimonides-centre.uni-hamburg.de; accessed March 2018).

³ A term introduced by Carruthers, Book of Memory, 243.

⁴ This paper is based on my article “Daneben steht immer ein kluger Kopf: Die Glossenformationen im Codex Wien hebr. 220,” in Diligens scrutinor sacri eloquii. Beiträge zur Exegese- und Theologiegeschichte des Mittelalters. Festgabe für Rainer Berndt SJ, eds. Hanns Peter Neuheuser, Ralf M. W. Stammberger, and Matthias M. Tischler (Münster: Aschendorff, 2016): 53–85, and was reworked under the respective topic during my stay as Senior Fellow at the Maimonides Centre for Advanced Studies—Jewish Scepticism, Universität Hamburg (October 2017–March 2018). My thanks to Jonas Leipziger who arranged, in particular, the edition of the gloss material in this paper, Bettina Burchardt who translated parts of this paper from German into English. Thanks also to all the staff mem-

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In its specific philosophical sense, sourced in Ancient Greek philosophy, scepticism and/or the sceptical approach seek to refrain from any of its own judgements regarding religious beliefs or philosophical views. In that sense, the question is easily declined: There is no philosophical scepticism among the tosafists, for the tosafists were neither philosophers, nor did their critical glosses on the Bible and the Talmud (more precisely: their critical notes and questions on Rashi’s commentaries on the Bible and the Talmud) intend reaching a state of mind beyond any affirmation or denial of religious knowledge or beliefs. However, even if we take ‘scepticism’ in an extended sense, comprised of sceptical and critical strategies, concepts, and attitudes against elements of tradition,⁵ we would hardly label the tosafists’ exegetical discourses as ‘scepticism’ or sceptical thought, although they challenge traditional rabbinic exegesis, and in some cases utter harsh criticism of the Rishonim as their exegetical forerunners. For instance, in Ms Oxford, Bodleian Library, Opp. 34 (Neubauer 186), fol. 116v,⁶ we find various exegetical dicta attributed to Rashbam⁷ describing the new exegetical approach ‘according to the ways of the world’, thus criticising the former exegetical explanations for being ‘neither in accordance with the way of the world, [based on] common knowledge, nor in line with the [meaning of] the verse.’⁸ Moreover, in the same context, we find harsh criticism of his grandfather Rashi whose explanation of Deuteronomy 20:19 is rejected, almost scoffed at, as ‘foolishness.’⁹ However, when dealing with medieval Jewish literature, one always has to wrestle with the question of textual authority, and so we may accede the dictum conveys an undermining of the exegetical authority. But I would like to propose the question: Is textual authority identical with exegetical authority?¹⁰ And if so, must it be labelled a sceptical mode or strategy, even in a very broad sense? Are these exegetical comments a means for conveying sceptical thought? Is a critical attitude towards rabbinic understanding tantamount to a sceptical approach? And

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5 See Bill Rebiger, “Sceptical Strategies in Simone Luzzatto’s Presentation of the Kabbalists in his Discorso,” in Yearbook of the Maimonides Centre for Advanced Studies 2017, ed. Bill Rebiger (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2017): 53.

6 The manuscript is fully digitised online (accessed March 2018).

7 This text was written in a second (later) hand on fol. 116v, after the poem at the end of Parashat Zot ha-Berakha. It is signed with the words לאומש׳ברדוסימ in line 26, and ל״צזריארבלאומש׳ר׳ורתפב (first letter hardly readable due to page-cut). This text is not laid out as a gloss to the Rashi commentary, but is a collection of biblical explanations attributed to Rashbam (starting with Deuteronomy 34:1 in line 1); for the details see Moshe Sokolow, “םישדחתמהתוטשפה: קטעי חידושי פרישות חובים והוראות על›ם - י״כ,” Ale Sefer 11 (1984): 74–76.

8 °ואו הרוהים פרישות קדומים שטנשין עלד משש אורח שעונים ארוכים הוהו על לכ איש 드ארו אלי ת Detaylı נבר בֶּר (line 8–10).

9 °לאו חראות מה פרישinki צייל [...] הוהו הדר בֶּר (line 12–14).

10 See above note 2.
last, but not least: in which way have ‘sceptical’ strategies, concepts, and attitudes to
be qualified in relation to the literary genre in which they appear?

In the following study on the exegetical glosses in Ms Vienna, Österreichische
Nationalbibliothek, cod. hebr. 220, I will present an edition of selected glosses and examine, if, and in what manner, these gloss comments convey negative criticism of Rashi’s Torah commentary, and how and in which way they challenge the authority of the great sage. As some of these glosses have already been attributed to Rashbam, my study will compare them to the printed editions of Rashbam’s Torah commentary (henceforth RTC).

2 The Manuscript Tradition of Rashi and his School

2.1 Textual Witnesses of Rashi’s Torah Commentary

The so-called peshaṭ exegesis by Northern French Jews of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and the question of how exactly it is to be understood, has engaged scholars of Jewish Studies almost continuously for the last 150 years. The main focal point has been—and remains—the commentary by R. Shelomo Yiṣḥaqi (acronym Rashi; ca. 1040–1105), for even to this day, it is considered the fundamental text of Jewish Bible exegesis. His commentary is present in each and every traditional Bible edition. Regarding manuscript tradition and contemporary print editions, Jewish Medieval studies are in a much less comfortable position than their Christian counterparts. This has become even more so in recent years, when the relationship between the literary

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11 An edition of the entire gloss corpus is currently being prepared. All the glosses will be diplomatically edited, and presented as an annotated digital edition according to their mise-en-forme and arrangement on the manuscript’s folio. I am deeply indebted to Clemens Liedtke, M.A., Center for Jewish Studies Heidelberg (Project Corpus Masoreticum; accessed March 2018) for providing me with the electronic tools for the digital edition.

12 See below section 2.3.

13 Among others see for instance Gilbert Dahan, Gérard Nahon, and Elie Nicolas, eds., Rashi et la Culture Juive en France du Nord au Moyen Âge (Paris: E. Peeters, 1997); Avraham Grossman, The Early Sages of France: Their Lives, Leadership and Works [in Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2016); Avraham Grossman, Rashi [in Hebrew] (Jerusalem: The Zalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, 2006); English edition: (Oxford and Portland, OR: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2012); Jason Kalman, “Medieval Jewish Biblical Commentaries and the State of Parshanut Studies,” Religion Compass 2.5 (2008): 819–843; Robert Salters, “The Exegesis of Rashi and Rashbam on Qoheleth,” in Rashi et la Culture Juive en France du Nord au Moyen Âge, eds. Gilbert Dahan, Gérard Nahon, and Elie Nicolas (Paris: E. Peeters, 1997): 151–161; Barry Dov Walfish, “An Annotated Bibliography of Medieval Jewish Commentaries on the Song of Songs,” in The Bible in the Light of Its Interpreters: Sarah Kamin Memorial Volume, ed. Sara Japhet (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1994): 518–571.

14 Cf. Matthias M. Tischler, Die Bibel in Saint-Victor zu Paris: das Buch der Bücher als Gradmesser für wissenschaftliche, soziale und ordensgeschichtliche Umbrüche im europäischen Hoch- und Spätmittelalter (Münster: Aschendorff, 2014).
heritage of Rashi and the documentary evidence of his pupils came under closer scrutiny. It was revealed that the Rashi commentary never really existed, at least not before it made its way into the typographic world. The first printing of Rashi’s commentary on the Torah also marks the beginning of Hebrew book printing *per se* (Reggio di Calabria, 1475).

Even the handwritten text-witnesses existing today originate from a noticeably later period and are everything but uniform: the oldest manuscript, Ms Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, cod. hebr. 5 (commentary only) was copied in 1233 in Würzburg and also constitutes the oldest dated, illuminated Ashkenazi manuscript. The second important Rashi manuscript, Ms Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, hebr. 1 (B.H. fol. 1) originates from the thirteenth century (undated) and contains, aside from the Masoretic biblical text (with eclectic annotated Masoretic glosses), the Targum and a commentary attributed to Rashi and is also accompanied by a number of glosses by Rashi’s most eminent pupil, Shema’ya, and the scribe Makhir. The third manuscript, considered to be one of the most important objects for research into Rashi, Ms Vienna, hebr. 220 (Schwarz 23) is also undated, but originates from a considerably later period (thirteenth/fourteenth century). Strictly speaking, the printed editions are unusable for academic purposes: aside from the traditional Bible, editions in the so-called Rabbinic Bibles (*Miqra’ot Gedolot*) are severely flawed. Today one resorts to either Rashi’s Torah commentary in the Abraham Berliner edition or the one contained in *Miqra’ot Gedolot Haketer*. There is as yet, no critical edition available, and of the existing Rashi commentaries, the deviations are occasionally overly extreme. Such findings resulted in numerous discussions among scholars on whether to describe the Rashi corpus as ‘author commentary’ or ‘compilatory commentary’. The discussions, however, were largely too narrowly focussed (providing basically no result).

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15 See in particular the forthcoming book by Kay Joe Petzold, *Masora und Exegese. Untersuchungen zur Masora und Bibeltextüberlieferung im Kommentar des R. Schlomo ben Yitzchaq (Raschi)* (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2018).

16 See, e.g., Joseph Hacker and Adam Shear, eds., *The Hebrew Book in Early Modern Italy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); Moshe Rosenfeld, *Hebrew Printing from its Beginning until 1948: A Gazetteer of Printing, the First Books and their Dates with Photographed Title-Pages and Bibliographical Notes* [in Hebrew] (Jerusalem: M. Rosenfeld, 1992).

17 On the significance of Ms Leipzig, hebr. 1, cf. Grossman, *The Early Sages of France*, 187–193.

18 Abraham Berliner, *Der Kommentar des Salomo B. Isak über den Pentateuch: nach Handschriften, seltenen Ausgaben u. dem Talmud* (Berlin 1866; Frankfurt am Main: Kauffmann, 1905) drew on a wealth of manuscripts but compiled an eclectic text.

19 Menachem Cohen, ed., *Miqra’ot Gedolot ‘Haketer’: A Revised and Augmented Scientific Edition of Miqra’ot Gedolot* (Jerusalem and Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1996); online: Miqra’ot Gedolot ‘Haketer’ (accessed March 2018).

20 See in particular the discussion between Sara Japhet, “The Nature and Distribution of Medieval Compilatory Commentaries in the Light of Rabbi Joseph Kara’s Commentary on the Book of Job,” in *The Midrashic Imagination: Jewish Exegesis, Thought, and History*, ed. Michael Fishbane (Albany: State
Medieval Latin studies already dealing in detail with literary theory in medieval literature, gloss hermeneutics, and medieval reading theories were insufficiently integrated into studies of Hebrew material. However, a number of important published studies conclude that neither the romantic notion of the ‘author’ as found in the nineteenth century nor the battle cry of the ‘death of the author’ based on a one-sided, exaggerated reception of Foucault’s theories are the only alternatives.\(^{22}\) I have demonstrated elsewhere that Rashi’s commentaries are better considered the first ‘Jewish Glossa Ordinaria’, and in terms of their ambition, bear comparison with Gilbert of Poitiers’ (ca. 1080–1154) *Media Glossatura* or the *Magna Glossatura* compiled by Petrus Lombardus (ca. 1100–1160).\(^{23}\) Rashi collects the most fitting Midrashim to highlight the *peshat* of a verse or word, while simultaneously introducing new exegetical and grammatical approaches and insights by intertwining them with classical material well known from the rabbinic texts.

### 2.2 Tosafist, Copyist, Writer, or Author

The problem of a fluctuating tradition, and the question of whether one single ‘author’ (if so, which one?) may have been the guiding spirit of the Northern French exegetical tradition is not confined only to the Rashi tradition, but also includes his school, i.e. the Bible commentators and tosafists he himself trained and bore connection to his *Beit Midrash*. Aside from his acolyte and chronicler R. Shema’ya (ca. 1060–1130),\(^{24}\) this school include his grandsons R. Ya’aqov ben Meïr (Rabbenu Tam; ca. 1100–1171) and R. Shemu’el ben Meïr (acronym Rashbam; ca. 1088–after

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\(^{21}\) See, e.g., Carruthers, *Book of Memory*; Michael T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066–1307* (Oxford: Blackwell, ’1993), esp. 224–252; 270–272; Alastair J. Minnis, “Discussions of ‘Authorial Role’ and ‘Literary Form’ in Late Medieval Scriptural Exegesis,” *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur* 99 (1977): 37–65; idem, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1988); Reynolds, *Medieval Reading*; Richard H. Rouse and Mary A. Rouse, “Ordinatio and Compilatio Revisited,” in *Ad litteram: Authoritative Texts and Their Medieval Readers*, ed. Mark D. Jordan (Kent Emery: Notre Dame, 1992): 113–134.

\(^{22}\) Michel Foucault, *Schriften zur Literatur* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1991).

\(^{23}\) Cf. Hanna Liss, *Creating Fictional Worlds: Peshat Exegesis and Narrativity in Rashbam’s Commentary on the Torah* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), 35–44.

\(^{24}\) Reconstructing R. Shema’ya’s biography is beyond our ability, but he is known as the one who first disseminated Rashi’s literary legacy. Rashi mentions him by name in his commentaries on Genesis 35:16 and Ezekiel 42:11 (source: *Miqra’ot Gedolot Haketer*). It is unclear if and to what degree they were related, by blood or by marriage. According to Grossman, he probably was some sort of ‘assistant’ to Rashi: he edited his commentaries, augmented them with his own glosses (Ms Leipzig, hebr. 1 alone contains more than 250 of Shema’ya’s glosses) and probably also influenced Rashi to no small degree on halakhic matters; cf. Grossman, *Early Sages*, esp. 43–45; 132–133.
and R. Yosef ben Shim’on (ca. 1050–1125) in particular. The latter had probably already received his epithet ‘Qara’ (HebrewArk) at Rashi’s Beit Midrash for his efforts as a Bible teacher and reader.

Abraham Geiger had already referred to R. Yosef Qara as a glossator. According to Geiger, R. Yosef commented less on the biblical text itself than on Rashi’s commentary. Geiger relied on handwritten text-witnesses referring to R. Yosef Qara as מעתיק (‘copyist’) or חתום (‘scribe’). Difficulties in the debate arise due to many of the Hebrew manuscripts not labelling the various tosafists consistently, thus far no criteria have been established enabling accurate attribution of text authorship and precisely its authorial intention. Terminological distinctions between scripтор, compilator, commentator and auctor, as known from Latin medieval contexts, cannot simply be transferred to Hebrew settings, and the relevant manuscripts are at least 130 years more recent than the tosafists mentioned.

Attribution of exegetic commentaries to specific tosafists is also problematic as existing text-witnesses specify the glosses differently to one another. There exist glosses labelled with the originator’s name (‘R. Yosef’; ‘R. Shemu’el’), and those without attribution and glosses that are similar to others yet bear differing names. With such the written evidence hasty attributions are ill-advised. The online resource AlhaTorah cites a comment on Genesis 41:7 in Ms Vienna, hebr. 220 attributed to R. Yosef Qara’s Torah commentary and cross-references it to commentaries by Rashbam, Hizzequini, and Rashi (Ms Leipzig, hebr. 1), and they are, indeed, very similar to one another and very close to R. Yosef Bekhor Shor’s comment (twelfth century; Orléans).

Before an exegetic attribution to one specific exegete is attempted and his approach towards former (rabbinic) commentaries outlined, the gloss-inventory should be assessed and evaluated for each individual manuscript. The debates over attribu-

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25 On the discussion about Rashbam’s biographical data, cf. most recently Liss, Creating Fictional Worlds, 57–61.
26 On R. Yosef ben Shim’on Qara, cf. Ingeborg Lederer-Brüchner, Kommentare zum Buch Rut von Josef Kara. Editionen, Übersetzungen, Interpretationen: Kontextualisierung mittelalterlicher Auslegungsliteratur (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2017), 23–60; Qara’s biographical dates are contested, cf. Mayer I. Gruber, ed., Rashi’s Commentary on Psalms (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004), 64, arguing for the dates 1060–1130, contra Grossman, Early Sages, 258, who assumes the period 1050/1055–1120/1130.
27 Abraham Geiger, Parschandata. Die nordfranzösische Exegetenschule. Ein Beiträg zur Geschichte der Bibel-Exegese und der jüdischen Literatur (Leipzig: Leopold Schnauss, 1855), 20 [German part], 22 [Hebrew part]. According to Geiger, R. Yosef Qara added only glosses to Rashi’s commentary, because he was not capable of composing his own commentary.
28 Cf. Abraham Berliner, “Eine wiederaufgefundene Handschrift,” Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums 6 (1864): 218, who distinguishes between an ‘unknown copyist’ (קריא) and the author (of a commentary); see also the entry on Qara in AlhaTorah; online: Introduction to Qara’s commentary on the Torah (accessed March 2018).
29 See Minnis, “Discussions of ‘Authorial Role’;” idem, Medieval Theory of Authorship, esp. 94–95.
30 AlhaTorah; online (accessed March 2018).
tion that used to focus on a single commentator and/or his school can now be extended to incorporate information on the geo-cultural background of a specific manuscript and its scribal tradition. In addition, one can prevent the premature attribution of a gloss on one single Bible verse. Not all exegetic glosses relate the comment unambiguously, via a prefixed lemma or other paratextual elements (e.g. circles or ornaments), to one, and only one, Bible verse. The reason for this may be that some glosses do refer directly to the biblical text, while others relate to the already existing commentary as their hypotext. According to Suzanne Reynolds, it is the teacher, the grammaticus, who ‘reads’ for the others, the pupils. In that, the glosses turn into ‘written traces of a much fuller reading practice.’

2.3 Rashbam’s Torah Commentary: A Gloss Commentary?

In his introduction to the edition of Rashbam’s Torah commentary, David Rosin held the view that Rashbam had probably written his commentary as a gloss commentary:

Rashbam wrote his commentary in the margins of his Bible editions [עברית/books], and the first copyist [והsetStatus], who introduces himself as ‘the young (man)’ and who was a pupil of R. Eli’ezer of Beaugency,\(^\text{32}\) added the beginnings of the biblical verses on which Rashbam commented [as lemmata] when he copied his commentary into a separate book, in order to render Rashbam’s gloss explanations [-Febrauni יומם] easier to understand.\(^\text{33}\)

Rosin understood Rashbam’s commentary on the Torah to be a gloss commentary, as it was a way but not the only way of commenting on the Bible and other (pagan) classical texts in the Middle Ages. Nonetheless, Rosin’s evaluation is remarkable, since the (compound) manuscript he used for his edition\(^\text{34}\) was not a glossed Bible, but a Rashi commentary arranged according to the weekly Torah portions which, in most cases, were appended by Rashbam’s comments. Hence the manuscript did not contain Rashbam’s commentary as a separate book but as a compilation (drawn from a different source), re-arranged according to the Rashi commentary as its hypotext. Un-

\(^{31}\) Reynolds, Medieval Reading, 29.

\(^{32}\) Cf. the addenda in RTC to Deuteronomy 1:2; more in David Rosin, Der Pentateuch-Commentar des Samuel ben Meir nach Handschriften und Druckwerken berichtet und mit kritischen, erklärenden, vergleichenden und den Nachweis der Stellen enthaltenden Anmerkungen (Breslau: S. Schottlaender, 1881), 199 incl. n. 20.

\(^{33}\) Rosin, Pentateuch-Commentar, XXXVI [Hebrew; my translation]; similarly, also David Rosin, “R. Samuel b. Meïr (ם״בשר) als Schrifterklärer,” Jahresbericht des Jüdisch-Theologischen Seminars Fraenkel’scher Stiftung (1880): 91.

\(^{34}\) Described in detail in Rosin, Pentateuch-Commentar, XXXII–XLIII; on this manuscript, see also Rainer Wenzel, Moses Mendelssohn, Einleitungen, Anmerkungen und Register zu den Pentateuchkommentaren in deutscher Übersetzung [Moses Mendelssohn, Gesammelte Schriften, JUB vol. 9A: Schriften zum Judentum, vol. III/4, ed. Daniel Krochmalnik] (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 2016), 41.
fortunately, the manuscript of Rashbam’s Torah commentary is the only manuscript in existence. It found its way into the Breslau Seminary by way of the Mendelssohn and Fraenckel families and vanished as a result of the Nazi persecutions. The Rosin edition was re-edited and annotated in 2009 by Martin Lockshin.35

In 1985, Sara Japhet and Robert Salters discussed the literary form of Rashbam’s commentary, and concluded with a qualitative distinction between ‘glossary’ and ‘well-structured, premeditated composition’.36 In their introduction to the Qohelet commentary, Japhet/Salters took up a position contrary to Rosin’s assumption, arguing that Rashbam’s commentary was ‘by no means a glossary,’ but a ‘well-structured, premeditated composition, the writing of which is guided by a literary insight into the book of Qoheleth.’37 In distinguishing between a gloss and ‘a continuous and fluent presentation, comprising complete sentences and written in a brief and concise idiom,’38 Japhet/Salters (at least implicitly) characterised the ‘act of glossing’ as inferior to the ‘act of writing/composing.’

Japhet/Salters also attempted the same claim for Rashbam’s Torah commentary but had to acknowledge the dearth of available manuscripts—a dearth far worse today than that of Rosin’s period, as the very manuscript he used to prepare his edition no longer exists. Similarly, Elazar Touitou rejects Rosin’s opinion with the argument that it is hardly conceivable that the space between the lines or in the margins would allow for a commentary of such proportions.39 He added that one would also expect a commentary noted in the margins to have been intended for private perusal and not publication.

The debate appears to have gone down a blind alley. As a result, this study proposes accessing the glosses differently and focussing on external parameters. To determine the function of a gloss text it seems reasonable to not only compare the glosses in a manuscript to other texts in terms of their semantic content, but also to make the most thorough going investigations possible of their placement on the page, their shape and form and as a result, make their communicative function become apparent. Accessing the exegetic glosses via the manuscript’s layout, mise-en-page, mise-en-texte, and the direction of the writing can also focus attention to details, hitherto unnoticed, concerning the relationship between the gloss and the hypotext.

35 Martin I. Lockshin, ed., ריאמן בלאומשון תורוות שומרא, תואחסוניות עיון עיון כתובות, תורוקמינויצ, 2 vols. [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Chorev, 2009) [henceforth quoted as: Lockshin, Perush ha-Tora].
36 See Sara Japhet and Robert B. Salters, eds., The Commentary of R. Samuel ben Meir Rashbam on Qohelet. Edited and translated (Jerusalem: Magnes Press; Leiden and Boston: Brill, 1985), esp. 42. Cf. also Eran Viezel, “‘The Anxiety of Influence’: Raschbam’s Approach to Rashi’s Commentary on the Torah,” AJS Review 40.2 (2016): 290 incl. n. 47, who, in a very similar way, takes Rashbam as an ‘author’ and, thus, regrets the idea of gloss commentary.
37 Japhet/Salters, Commentary on Qohelet, 42.
38 Ibidem, 38.
39 Cf. Elazar Touitou, Exegesis in Perpetual Motion: Studies in the Pentateuchal Commentary of Rabbi Samuel Ben Meir [in Hebrew] (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2005), 81.
2.4 The Glosses in Ms Vienna, ÖNB, Cod. Hebr. 220

Ms Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, cod. hebr. 220 (Schwarz no. 23; vel-

um; undated; thirteenth/fourteenth century) comprises 276 folios and contains a re-
cension of Rashi’s commentary on the Torah, the Prophets (Nevi’im) and almost all 

Hagiographa (Ketuvim). Schwarz distinguishes two scribes who identify themselves 
as Menaḥem (םחנמ) fol. 16v (he penned 1v–22v) and Avraham (םהרבא) fol. 

25rv, 26v. The Rashi commentary is arranged in three columns of continuous 
text, almost without any further formation and formal arrangement. At first glance, 
there appears to be no distinction between biblical lemma and commentary.

The manuscript is heavily glossed by several hands, especially on the first 25 fol-

ios (i.e. in the Book of Genesis/Bereshit; the Book of Exodus/Shemot begins on fol. 

26r). At least two groups of glosses, written in two hands, can be recognised: the first 
group GL₁, which, according to Schwarz, originates, from the first scribe (upon which 

we will focus subsequently) and a second, GL₂, which continues beyond fol. 22v and 
glosses intensely beginning on fol. 25. GL₂ in particular, originates from a distinctly 
later period; written in Italian cursive script indicates the late fifteenth and sixteenth 

century. The hypotext commented on is thus not the biblical text itself, but the recen-
sion of Rashi’s commentary. As a result, from the outset, the glosses can have several 
functions: They may re-explain the biblical text, largely independently of Rashi, or 

perhaps expand upon, modify, or disprove Rashi’s commentary.

GL₁ was written with a different pen, but the same ink as the main text, allowing 
one to assume that the manuscript’s scribe (Menaḥem) is also responsible for the 
glosses. The script indicates the time of the manuscript’s copying, and in a marginal 
gloss on fol. 152v, the scribe ponders the fact that, in his Vorlage the tribe of Gad was 
missing in the listing of tribes: ואין המדות תמה ובא ממצאים שבטי גד ומצריים. The glosses 

from GL₁ can be attributed to different (groups of) authors:

40 See Arthur Zacharias Schwarz, Die hebräischen Handschriften der Nationalbibliothek in Wien 
(Wien, Prague and Leipzig: Strache, 1925); online: Manuscripta Mediaevalia, 28–29 (accessed 
March 2018).

41 Cf. Schwarz, Die hebräischen Handschriften, 28. The Catalogue of the Institute of Microfilmed 
Hebrew Manuscripts (accessed March 2018) names one Avraham ben Menaḥem (ארבראמ בנס מנהם) as 
scribe, but leaves open whether other scribes contributed. However, different hands (in particular, 
Avraham over-elongates the Hebrew letters Qof and Nun) as well as a change in ink are easily ob-
served (cf. the transit from fol. 22v to 23r). In addition, beginning with fol. 30rv, fantastical ani-
mal-creatures, depicted in the same ink used for the main text, start showing up. Finally, the peculiar 
distribution of the glosses (cf. the following table) points to a change of scribe.

42 With the exception of the transitional pages, fol. 20v, 21r, which are arranged in one or two col-
umns, resp.

43 Only the beginning of the weekly Torah portions is highlighted.

44 Unfortunately, some pages are cut off at the bottom, making it impossible to discern ascriptions.
a. ***ףסוי׳ר*** R. Yosef

b. תפסות, mostly abbreviated as *תפס* or *תפסות* (pl. *tosafot*); ‘(supplementary or explanatory) addendum’; anonymous glosses, by the so-called tosafists, to the comments by Rashi that are, depending on the manuscript, occasionally integrated directly into Rashi’s commentary

c. ***ר. שמעון בר יישנא***

d. ***ר. שמעון***

e. ***ר. שimson***

f. ויר? מייצול מקחצי רבן דוי

Furthermore, an entire array of gloss information in group GL¹ does not provide an ascription (we will see, however, that at least some imply an ascription!). Moreover, one further group was prevented from giving us an ascription because the last and crucial line at the bottom or lateral margin has been cut off.²² The Torah segment, beginning on fol. 23r, shows only faint traces of the later glossator’s ink (GL²).

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45 Torah: Fol. 1v; 2r; 2v; 3v; 4r; 6v; 7r; 8v; 9r; 12r; 13r; 13v; 14v; 15r; 16r; 17r; 18r; 19r; 19v; 20v as *‘tosefet R. Yosef’*; 21r; *haftarot* and commentaries to the prophets: 95r; 101v; 103r; 103v; 107v.

46 Explicitly on fol. 2r.

47 Torah: Fol. 1v; 2r; 3r; 4v; 5r; 6r; 6v; 7r; 8r; 10v; 11r; 11v; 12r; 12v; 13r; 13v; 14r; 14v; 15r; 16r; 17v; 19v; 21r; 21v; 22r; *haftarot* and commentaries to the prophets: 149r; 149v. Tosafot are (anonymous) meta-commentaries by the tosafists (*Ba’ale ha-Tosafot*), whether on Rashi’s commentaries on the Bible or on the talmudic tractates.

48 Fol. 19r; cf. Efraim Elimelek Urbach, *The Tosaphists: Their History, Writings and Methods* [in Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1986), 630 incl. n. 43, 643 incl. n. 18. Urbach’s discussion shows a similar tangle of ascriptions in the Talmud commentaries; Simcha Emanuel, *Fragments of the Tablets: Lost Books of the Tosaphists* [in Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2006), 358, only names R. Shemu’el bar Yi’shaq ha-Levi of Worms, who is probably not identical with the R. Shemu’el discussed here.

49 Torah: Fol. 8v; 9v; 11r; 15v; 16v.—On the question of whether R. Shemu’el is indeed identical with Rashbam, Rashi’s grandson, cf. in particular the discussion in section 3.4.3.

50 Fol. 18r; the identity of R. Shimshon, is impossible to determine from this gloss alone. Any attempt to resolve this issue, is dependent on the tosafists’ glosses being comprehensively documented and comparing the results with their parallels in the Bible and Talmud commentaries

51 This last attribution is rather interesting, fol. 2v; Schwarz, *Die hebräischen Handschriften*, 28, transcribes ויר בר יישנא מלפייסנה, but without solving the problems of identity and location (Lucena?; Córdoba province). Heinrich Gross, *Gallia Judaica: Dictionnaire géographique de la France d’après les sources rabbiniques* (Paris: Publications de la Société des Études Juives, 1897), 291, identifies the toponym as *איזゾא bazaisza* Lisieux/Lizieux, a town in Basse-Normandie, which would be fitting, since all of the names identified so far, point to tosafists from Northern France. Regarding a commentary on Job, Leopold Zunz, *Zur Geschichte und Literatur*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Veit und Comp., 1845), 79, mentions Shemu’el, the grammarian, and a certain R. Meir of ליזיאו in addition to Rashi and Qara (again without solving the problem of the toponym).

52 Torah: Fol. 1v; 2r; 2v; 3r; 4r; 4v; 5r; 6v; 7r; 8r; 9r; 10v; 11r; 11v; 12r; 13v; 14v; 16r; 16v; 17r; 18r; 18v; 19r; 19v; 20r; 20v; 21v; *haftarot* and commentaries to the prophets: 95r; 102v; 103r; 107v; 108v; 149r; 149v; 150v; 151r.
Elazar Touitou and myself have already edited some of the glosses attributed to one ‘R. Shemu’el’ (this is all we have with which to identify him) and analysed their relationship to Rashbam’s commentary on the Torah.\(^5\) While Touitou acknowledges an attribution to Rashbam as secure, I feel this leaves some serious questions unanswered raising fresh problems. They pertain, in particular, to the relationship between these glosses and the RTC.\(^5\) It is important to state that the glosses have only been evaluated thus far in terms of their exegetical statements and not in light of their placement in the manuscript or outward appearance. Such an extension of the questions concerning the glosses, (bearing in mind that the commentaries could well have been used in a scholastic context), may provide important results, which, in turn, could assist in solving problems of the glosses’ authorship or, more generally, how *peshaṭ* commentaries were actually implemented in the Middle Ages.

Indeed, it is notable that each gloss possesses a specific *mise-en-forme*, even if it is not quite consistently applied. This finding has so far not been taken into account. It is possible that it is nothing more than an arbitrary way of embellishing the manuscript: The scribe did not wishing to write the glosses in the margins in a ‘boring’ manner. But the shape of the glosses may be a clue to the utilisation of the manuscript. The glosses are certainly eye-catching, since only the smallest part appears as rectangles or simply unarranged. Some texts go around corners and are arranged at right angles;\(^5\) ‘balls’ or ‘heads’, i.e. circles with or without directly attached texts;\(^5\) sharply pointed triangles (mostly, but not always when the gloss is closed with *tosefet/tosafot*);\(^5\) and combinations of circles and triangles.\(^5\) The glosses specifically attributed to R. Shemu’el are mostly in the shape of a ‘head’ (with or without ‘shoulders’). Perhaps the glossator let the abbreviation ר שאר evolve via י׳ש into ראש (‘head’).\(^5\) However, some glosses explicitly attributed to R. Shemu’el do not display a head’s form, whereas some of the heads explicitly bear other signatures (e.g. R. Yosef).\(^5\) A page cut prevents some glosses to connect to a name, others remain anonymous.

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\(^{53}\) Cf. Touitou, *Exegesis in Perpetual Motion*, 189–195 (however, Touitou missed some connections between the glosses, having ascribed no significance to the glosses’ shape); Liss, *Creating Fictional Worlds*, 45–55; eadem, “Glossenformationen,” 24–26.

\(^{54}\) See above section 2.3.

\(^{55}\) Fol. 2rv; 4r and on other folios.

\(^{56}\) Fol. 6v; 7r and on other folios.

\(^{57}\) Fol. 1v; 4rv and on other folios.

\(^{58}\) Fol. 4v; 5r.

\(^{59}\) Thanks to Dr. Kay Joe Petzold (Project Corpus Masoreticum; accessed March 2018) for sharing this idea with me.

\(^{60}\) See for instance fol. 6v that displays two heads, of which the left one is signed with י׳ש כי; the head on fol. 7r is signed with י׳ש, the heads on the bottom of fol. 8v, 9v are, again, signed with י׳ש; see above note 44.
The subject of book ‘forms’ (including *mise-en-texte* and *mise-en-page*) has come in for renewed academic scrutiny recently. Implementing text-anthropological means here requires more than simply identifying the commentaries’ *Sitz im Leben* but to consider the history of their materiality. By using materiality in its broadest sense, we have also to regard the people who dealt with the artefacts/manuscripts as the original ‘locus of the text’.

The goal is not so much to write a history of the manuscript as to write the story of the people involved in it, by extrapolating the narrative contained in the materiality of the document. So far, this aspect has barely been considered in Judaic Medieval studies, in spite of its potential to bear fruitful results. The following sample descriptions of several glosses in Ms Vienna, hebr. 220, are to be understood as the first step towards a better understanding of the exegetical glosses of the Northern French exegetic school and their disputes with elder exegetical traditions. In order to relate an ‘author’ to these glosses, I will focus on some of the glosses explicitly attributed to R. Shemu’el, and present a description of the gloss, edition/translation, and a short comment.

### 3 Edition, Translation, and Explanation of the Gloses

#### 3.1 Fol. 8v

##### 3.1.1 Description

The first gloss explicitly attributed to R. Shemu’el is found on fol. 8v, where the main text containing Rashi’s commentary on Genesis 20:16 begins. This gloss, written in the top margin above the middle column, is attributed in its first section to R. Shemu’el (‘ומש׳ר). Furthermore, the gloss contains a French translation of the biblical lemma *לְלָמַיִם* (who [would have] said) from Genesis 21:7. As this translation is located after the name ascription, it is not entirely clear whether it was part of the original comment. The gloss was centred above the second column, apparently consciously arranged into a circular form, a ‘head’ of sorts; this is clear from the abbreviation of the name *שֶׁמֶר* (row 7) and the inclusion of a space filler vellum (row 8). Judging from the biblical lemma, it belongs to the Rashi text which begins in the middle column in row 11 with  מִלְּלִי (lemma Genesis 21:7). The Bible text says (Genesis 21:7): *And she said: ‘Who said unto Abraham, that Sarah should give children suck? For I have borne him a son in his old age.’* The Rashi commentary reads:

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61 In this respect, this effort is committed to answering the basic questions put forward by Heidelberg’s Collaborative Research Centre 933 *Material Text Cultures*. One objective is to try and apply the notion of ‘text-anthropology’ to various artefacts (including those from manuscript cultures); see in particular Markus Hilgert, “Text-Anthropologie: Die Erforschung von Materialität und Präsenz des Geschriebenen als hermeneutische Strategie,” in *Altorientalistik im 21. Jahrhundert: Selbstverständnis, Herausforderungen, Ziele*, ed. Markus Hilgert (Berlin: Deutsche Orientgesellschaft, 2010): 85–124.

62 Ms Vienna, hebr. 220, fol. 8v, middle column, row 11.
Who said unto Abraham—This is an expression of praise and importance (in the sense of): “See, Who it is, and how great He is. He keeps (his) promise, he promises and performs!” However, the two comments—the gloss and Rashi—are not connected with paratextual elements. This could be seen as a clue that this comment was intended not so much as a super-commentary on Rashi, but as an alternative comment on the biblical text. Another clue pointing to this is the gloss being placed on top of the French translation of the biblical lemma מִי מַלֶּל as a concluding, almost categorically final, comment.

### 3.1.2 Edition and Translation

מִי מַלֶּל
לְאַבְרָהָם מָסַב
לְכָל הַשָּׁםְעַ יִצְחָק
לִצָּהַר מַלֶּל אַבְרָהָם
יוֹלַד לְךָ בְּבֵר שָׁם
שְׁמַהוּ שְׁילֵדוֹתָיו
לְאָמְרוֹתֵי ר. שֵׁם
מִי מַלֶּל כְּר・ר・
רִיִּיסְיָטִים
כָּל הַשָּׁםְעַ יִצְחָק

*Who said to Abraham:* This refers to [the previous verse] Everyone who hears will laugh with me (Genesis 21:6): Who brought my father the news and said, A boy is born to you, and gave him such joy (Jeremiah 20:15), Yet I have borne a son in his old age (Genesis 21:7). [An explanation by] R. Shemu’el. [The Hebrew expression] מִי מַלֶּל [means in Old French] ‘qui risit/risoit,’

‘[Everybody] laughed [about it].’ *Everybody who heard* (Genesis 21:6) [such a thing] laughed [about it].

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63 The form מִי מַלֶּל is a verbal form of the Old French ris (→ riser) ‘laughter/laugh’; see the references in MousketR (online: Dictionnaire Étymologique de l’Ancien Français), 29377: *et cil risent* (date: 1243), or ChevCygnePrNaissT (online: Dictionnaire Étymologique de l’Ancien Français), 100,4: *s’en risent moult boînement* (date: end of thirteenth century).—I thank Dr. Marc Kiwitt (former member of the team) and Dr. Stephen Dörr from the project Dictionnaire Étymologique de l’Ancien Français for explaining and contextualising the Old French gloss. The reading מִי מַלֶּל is unlikely.
3.1.3 Explanation

The gloss (G_8v/1) takes up the same lemma from Genesis 21:7 as in the Rashi commentary. It begins, using intertextual exegesis, by explaining the Hebrew expression מיקהללואֵלמימ as directly connected with the preceding text (Genesis 21:6b), according to which Sarah interprets the laughter in the sense of ‘being laughed at.’ This understanding is also paraphrased in the last sentence of the gloss: Anyone who heard about the two old people’s bliss would make fun of such news. By doing so, the gloss stands in direct opposition to Rashi’s commentary in the main text body. Rashi justifies the usage of the uncommon verb מיקהללמ as connected with the importance of the divine promise and Sarah’s appropriate reaction to this great deed of God. RTC argues similarly.

Therefore, both Rashi and RTC understand the subject of the lemma מיקהללמ to be divine, while our R. Shemu’el to whom the gloss is attributed assumes a human subject who is unable to comprehend such a miracle and therefore jokes about it: Divine greatness (in the indicative mode) is in contrast with the expression of human doubt (in the subjunctive mode). In its first part (lines 1–7) the gloss insists on a decided different understanding as in the Rashi commentary (and in the printed RTC) without explicitly refuting Rashi’s explanation.

In order to leave no doubt about the intended exegetic message of the Hebrew expression, the gloss concludes with an Old French translation (pitron) that segues into another Hebrew summary. The fact that the Old French translation appears after the name ascription to R. Shemu’el leads one to conclude that only the actual peshat exegesis belongs to Shemu’el’s commentary, and that the French gloss was added by the scribe. Interestingly, there is another Old French rendering for מיקהללמ in this context in the so-called Glossaire de Leipzig:

Drawing on Job 8:2 (לmatesןאמדע) מיקהללמ in this Glossaire it is translated as parlà (parla; in Modern French: ‘affirma/déclara’). Irrespective of our scribe knowing this translation or not, and from wherever he obtained this translation, it certainly intends to support the peshat at hand. The explanatory gloss (pitron) is the result of French cultural contacts, indicating this

— Hanna Liss
manuscript was still used in a French-speaking and French-reading environment and auditorium. The French gloss does not simply support the *peshaṭ* exegesis, at the same time it demonstrates that here, the *peshaṭ* is guided by the protagonists’ logic insinuated in the narrative. As the gloss contrasts so vividly with Rashi’s and RTC’s explanations, one may consider either the glossator (as an independently thinking ‘head’) placed the explanation in its specific shape as a sign indicating he favours R. Shemu’el’s explanation (not merely for ease of access), or that he wished, for the first time, to place R. Shemu’el ‘ahead’ of his fellow scholars.

To sum up: by presenting a comment on the same lemma as in the Rashi commentary yet not in the margins of a Bible codex, but in the margins of a Rashi commentary as its hypotext, the gloss not only adds a second, alternative reading, but by means of the French *pitron* exposes Rashi’s understanding of the verse as erroneous, and, thereby, undermines his exegetical authority.

3.2 Fol. 9v

3.2.1 Description

On fol. 9v, three glosses are marked with the signature י“א ש,ר. The first one (G_9v/1; 4 lines) is written upside down in the top margin. This one, too, displays a very specific form; its first two lines run precisely above the middle and left columns, but its third and fourth only above the left and, in accordance with the reading direction, last column on this folio. The gloss is signed with the full name of R. Shemu’el. The biblical lemma quoted at the outset contains the beginnings of the sentences of Genesis 23:17–18. It is, therefore, related to the Rashi commentary that starts in the left column in row 30. As in our latest example, there are no additional paratextual signs that connect the gloss to Rashi’s commentary. The commentary closes with a summarising remark that encapsulates the whole explanation in one short sentence.

G_9v/4 (starting with הפרש) and G_9v/5 (starting with והא ש; directly underneath G_9v/4) are located in the bottom margin, below the left column, and display several peculiarities. Firstly, they are clearly linked together. At the end of each line, G_9v/4 is shaped into a left- and up-turning peak; they are joined by a line from G_9v/5, moving upwards and curving in the direction of the circle/head. Judging by the form, one would expect this to be a single gloss. However, the two *lemmata* are obviously distinct, having been taken from different verses and are introductions to two different commentaries, each of which is expressly ascribed to י“א ש,ר. At any

French: Between Language and Cultural Dynamics,” *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 226 (2014): 25–56; idem, “Les glossaires hébreu-français du XIIIe siècle et la culture juive en France du nord,” in *Cultures et Lexicographie. Actes des Troisièmes Journées allemandes des dictionnaires en l’honneur d’Alain Rey*, eds. Michaela Heinz and Alain Rey (Berlin: Frank & Timme, 2010): 113–125; see Liss, *Creating Fictional Worlds*, 229–249, 257–268.
rate, row 6 of G_9v/4 features a paratextual symbol, a circle, pointing to Rashi’s commentary (left column, row 39), thereby identifying the gloss more as an engagement with Rashi’s commentary than with the biblical lemma itself.

G_9v/5 comments on the biblical lemma from Genesis 24:7, one that neither Rashi nor RTC discuss.\textsuperscript{70} RTC, however, does comment on the very similarly structured passage in Genesis 24:40.

3.2.2 Edition and Translation

So Ephron’s field arose [...] etc. to Abraham as his possession (Genesis 23:17): The silver was paid in the presence of the Hittites, so that they witnessed the proceedings, and only after he [Abraham] had buried her [Sarah], the text says: Thus the field [...] passed from the Hittites to Abraham, as a burial site (Genesis 23:20). [Even] after the land passed from Ephron (to Abraham) as his possession in the presence of the Hittites, it did not yet have the character of a burial site. [This was only the case] after he had buried Sarah, with the permission of the sons of the city. Only then [the piece of land] [...] passed from the Hittites to Abraham, as a burial site (Genesis 23:20). No one re-designates [a piece of] land as a burial site without permission by the neighbouring [landowners]. [An explanation by] R. Shemu’el.

\textsuperscript{70} On fol. 9v and 10r, Rashi’s commentary discusses placing the hand under the thigh as the expression of a covenant.
G.9v/4: Place your hand under my thigh (Genesis 24:2; 47:29): There are [different] ways to seal a covenant in the Torah: The calf they cut in two (Jeremiah 34:18), [or rather] passing between its halves—that is a way of sealing a covenant. The palm of Zebah and Zalmunna in your hand (Judges 8:6.15). If you have stood surety for your fellow, given your hand for another (Proverbs 6:1)—this is also a way of sealing a covenant. We see this placing of the hand under the thigh [both] with the son—Josef—and with the servant—El’ezer—when he makes an oath to the father or master, and the honouring by son and servant are comparable, as it is written: A son should honour his father, and a slave his master (Malachi 1:6). And they had this custom in these days. [An explanation by] R. Shemu’el.

G.9v/5: He will send His angel before you (Genesis 24:7): This is prophetic speech [by Abraham]: ‘I know that he [i.e. the servant] will succeed [in his mission].’ Likewise, [this refers to] the whole section: Just as he took me out of my father’s house, he promised me that he would make me successful. Therefore, I am sure that you will succeed in [fulfilling your mission]. And she said: drink (Genesis 24:14) [...] and I know that she [i.e., Rebecca] will say: ‘Drink!’ and will not rebuff me, which proves that [God] granted [him] some of the indications and omens [he had asked for]. [We cannot say anything to you, either bad or good (Genesis 24:50). They were not?] and they could not delay [the matter], since the matter proceeded from YHWH (Genesis 24:50). We will call the girl (Genesis 24:57). You said that your master was quite sure that you would accomplish [your mission]. ‘If she will go with that man, we will know that it is from YHWH (Genesis 24:50) and that all your words were right.’ [An explanation by] R. Shemu’el.
3.2.3 Explanation

G_9v/1 discusses a biblical turn of phrase that, at first glance, seems redundant: according to Genesis 23:17, a piece of land passed to Abraham ‘as his possession’ (in the presence of the Hittites), while Genesis 23:20 states that it passed to him ‘as a burial site.’ The gloss explains that initially, the piece of land is bought by Abraham and passes into his possession (witnessed by the Hittites), but that it took another act ‘from the Hittites,’ i.e. their permission, to convert it into a burial ground. This is also emphasised by the last sentence: only with the permission of surrounding real-estate owners can a piece of land be re-zoned as a cemetery. As a result, R. Shemuel’s explanation agrees neither with Rashi’s nor with RTC’s comment. Rashi’s commentary is not at issue in this gloss at all, as its primary concern, on the basis of Bereshit Rabbah 58:8, is the use of the root קם from Genesis 23:17 to signify the ‘elevation’ of a piece of land’s status when it passes into a king’s hands by way of sale by a private citizen (הריית). Rashi focusses on the changeover of the owner, and in addition exposes Genesis 23:17 to be an incomplete sentence that has to be supplemented by Genesis 23:18. RTC claims, following the Babylonian Talmud, Qiddushin 27a, that Abraham’s transaction was only brought to a final and irrevocable end after he put the piece of land to use by burying his wife. But this aspect is not at issue in the handwritten gloss, as indicated by the last sentence, which does not concern itself with the act of purchase but with the social context in which it occurred. G_9v/1 presents a peshat explanation that harmonises the social conventions of the biblical narrative with contemporary regulations, i.e. an exegesis compliant with the sensus historicus, or rather, what the exegete believed it to be. The question still remains as to why the gloss was written upside down. Possibly, the writer wanted to make it obvious, even at first glance, that in this instance, a peshat commentary is forwarded that runs contrary to the usual aggadic and halakhic explanation as given by Rashi and RTC. The argument is exposed rather indirectly and with the help of graphic means (mise-en-forme; mise-en-page). We may therefore characterise the glossator’s ‘challenge of tradition’ a fight with closed visor.

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71 רוקש שבת עפרון. המקומא היהת לו שלוש מי היהים ילד מלך מפרושו של מקרא יוקים והיימה ועליהן לאלברחו (Ms Vienna, hebr. 220, fol. 9v, left column, row 30): ‘So Ephron’s field arose: It was a raising [as regards the importance of its owner], since it passed from the possession of an ordinary person into the possession of a king (cf. BerR 58:8). However, the plain meaning of the verse is: The field and the cave and all the trees were made sure (Genesis 23:17) to Abraham as a possession (Genesis 23:18) etc.’

72 לёрנבת טקע ההוא טשור תמד תפה, דברות: ותפב המקף יהו, אלל אֶל תמד אַלת שהזא אֵל תמד אַל תמד והזא אֵל תמד [Hebrew quotation unvocalised]: ‘To Abraham as his purchase: when the money was given—as it is written ‘he shall give the money and it will become his.’ However, it passed [to Abraham] as a burial site from the children of Heth (Genesis 23:18), and was secured to Abraham [as his purchase] only after he had buried Sarah, his wife. Only then it passed as a burial site from the children of Heth (Genesis 23:20).’

73 הוא is the 3rd pers. sg. of the consecutive imperfect of קם ‘rise.’
Contrary to Rashi’s explanation,74 where he argues that a person entering into a covenant has to take a holy object into his hand, e.g., a Torah scroll or Tefillin, G_9v/4 insists that ‘placing under the thigh’ has nothing to do with the body part, but, rather, with the manner and degree of submission (son to father; servant to master). In addition, the gloss explains that biblical tradition knows of different ways to seal a covenant, and that even a handshake between parties was recognised. This line of argument fully agrees with the sensus historicus.

G_9v/5 expounds a lemma that is ignored by Rashi’s commentary. The relation to RTC is of particular interest in this instance, as G_9v/5 seems to elaborate on a commentary that RTC offers as an explanation to Genesis 24:40–50,75 according to which Abraham already knew that they would succeed in their endeavour. G_9v/5 uses this literary context to ascribe prophetic qualities to Abraham, then extends this reasoning to the whole paragraph, Genesis 24:7–57 (with the result that all its protagonists are considered to have prophetic ability!). Notably, this means G_9v/5 tells us that even the servant was endowed by God with prophetic powers, as he established a sign that he already knew Rebecca would enact. Furthermore, contrary to RTC’s explanation, stating the family agreed to the terms rather hesitantly, here they are portrayed taking a much more positive stance for Abraham’s (prophetic) confidence helps to guarantee the servant’s success. The ‘art of narration’ displayed in G_9v/5 is similar to RTC in as much as direct speech is interwoven with the commentary, turning it into more of a retelling than an exegesis, which is characteristic of the peshat exegesis of the second generation after Rashi.76 This gloss simply ignores its hypotext (Rashi) and refers directly to the biblical narrative.

74 Ms Vienna, hebr. 220, fol. 9v, left column, row 37–fol. 10r, right column, row 2: תחת רכיב שנותננים’ו Under my thigh: Whoever takes an oath must take some sacred object in his hand, such as a Torah scroll or Tefillin (cf. bShev 38b). As circumcision was the first command given to Abraham, and it was very special to him because he suffered great pains while complying, he chose this (bodily) ‘object’ (cf. BerR 59:8).’ See also Rashi on Genesis 47:29.

75 Ed. Lockshin, Perush ha-Tora, vol. 1, 47–49 [Hebrew quotation unvocalised]):ierce לא תלעך. יד את א vidéo אנא אבואה: לא ארימט רכיב, והרもらえる שמתה הקדשה ברכו וה ieee ורבעך ושתי, ואל תסבתו או הבניה תלל רבנות, כבעל הרבנות, בצボー ו는데, ושם, כמקודש ברכו והושע, ודם רכיב [רבעך]. והר-required: הבו [רבעך]. והר-required: הבו [רבעך]. והר-requi-

76 See Liss, Creating Fictional Worlds, esp. 120–135.
3.3 Fol. 11r

3.3.1 Description

Fol. 11r is a textbook example of how, and with what purpose in mind, the writer integrated exegetic commentaries as glosses into his work. It also illustrates why it is important to pay proper attention to the glosses’ mise-en-forme.

On fol. 11r, there are three glosses sitting side-by-side (G_11r/1–3, from right to left), two of which are (discernibly) un-signed. Only the left one bears the signature of לאומש׳ר (hereinafter: G_11r/3). The gloss in the centre is signed with the letter ’ת tosafot—the signature appears in the middle of the gloss. All three glosses were deliberately shaped, with the use of abbreviations and/or space fillers, into R. She-mu’el’s characteristic layout of a head or circle form, and each was placed under one column of Rashi’s commentary. The first anonymous gloss (hereinafter G_11r/1) begins with the lemma to Genesis 25:21, ותשאחכנל, and is found below the right column, whose first row contains Rashi’s commentary to Genesis 25:16. The second gloss (hereinafter G_11r/2), signed with a ’ת in the third row and therefore identifiable as a gloss by an anonymous tosafist, is located below the second column whose first row contains Rashi’s commentary to Genesis 25:20. The biblical lemma to G_11r/2, however, does not begin there, but in the last row of G_11r/1 (with חקליתרוכבתא from Genesis 27:36) and is therefore linked to this commentary. The third gloss (G_11r/3) was placed below the leftmost column, which contains Rashi’s commentary to Genesis 25:22 (starting already in row 31 of the middle column) and whose last row contains the commentary to Genesis 25:27, concluding on fol. 11v/row 10. A paratextual link to Rashi’s commentary is absent in all three glosses.

3.3.2 Edition and Translation

G_11r/1: [...] on behalf of his wife (Genesis 25:21): for his wife. If so, why do I exist? (Genesis 25:22): She feared dying of her affliction, but the prophet answered her: Don’t be afraid! You will not

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77 This commentary already begins on fol. 10v, column 3, last row.
78 It concludes with the space filler חקליתרוכבתא from the word חקליתרוכבתא.
It is just the way of women who are pregnant with twins, because two nations are in your womb (Genesis 25:23). Behold, often enough I am at the point of death (Genesis 25:32), that is to say, close to the end of my days, like: He will bring my term to an end (Job 23:14). Thus did Esau spurn (Genesis 25:34): In the end he would regret it (after all), since it is written (there):

he [took away] (from me) my birthright (Genesis 27:36).

G_11r/2: He took away (from me) (Genesis 27:36), but (at that time) he had not yet seen the future.栯 (=) (an anonymous, explanatory) addendum. Aside from the previous famine etc. (Genesis 26:1): This (verse) is meant to convey that, just as Abraham moved to Egypt in the days of the (first) famine, Isaac intended to move to Egypt, (that is) through the Philistines' land, because this was the shortest way from Canaan to Egypt. (But,) as it is written: God did not lead them by way of the (land of the) Philistines etc. (Exodus 13:17), (so) it is also (meant) here, because the Holy One said:

G_11r/3: Do not go down to Egypt (Genesis 26:2), as your father (once) did, since you are blessed in this land, and so one (thereafter) finds Isaac sowed etc. and YHWH blessed him (Genesis 26:12). (An explanation by) R. Shemu’eł.

3.3.3 Explanation

G_11r/1–3 are glosses on the biblical text of Genesis 25:21–26:2. First of all, the exegesis to Genesis 25:22f., which both the Midrash and Rashi’s commentary conduct in a strongly anti-Christian tone,79 is here reduced to its peshaḥ: Rebecca’s worries were unfounded, as the prophet informs her, because her condition is the result of being pregnant with twins. This exegesis closely parallels the commentary in RTC, though they are not verbatim copies.80 The other comments, too, show close kinship
not with Rashi’s comments but with RTC, which is in part due to the fact that they also concern themselves with the narrative’s literary arc—as the cross-reference between Genesis 25:34 and Genesis 27:36 demonstrates.

G_11r/1 deserves special attention; firstly, it appears to be an unsigned gloss and only when closely scrutinised does it reveal itself to be closely tied to G_11r/2. Secondly, it compresses a major biblical literary arc (Genesis 25:21–34) into a form whose exegetic content parallels that of RTC. In G_11r/2, however, this is labelled as a tosafist’s addendum. At this point, it should be clear that the circular form of R. Shemu’el’s commentaries is not chosen arbitrarily. There are two possible explanations for this:

1. The explanation to Genesis 25:34 (including the reference to Genesis 27:36) was available to the glossator as an anonymous tosafist’s addendum. He felt that it went well with other literary-theoretical peshaṭ explanations of R. Shemu’el, and therefore integrated it into the triple configuration of glosses signed with R. Shemu’el. This being the case, he would have bestowed an ‘author’ upon an anonymous explanation, but also left a hint for future scholars by adding the attribution ‘ת, enabling us to reconstruct how medieval gloss collections turned into ‘author’s collections’, like RTC, that provide commentary without any hypotext. Alternatively,

2. the commentary on Genesis 25:34 (including the reference to Genesis 27:36) was available to the glossator but as an anonymous tosafist’s addendum and as an explanation by R. Shemu’el. In this instance, he would have wished to credit both originators (by using signature and head shape).

G_11r/2 and G_11r/3 explain why going to Egypt would not have been in Isaac’s best interest, while pointedly disagreeing with Rashi’s commentary on Genesis 26:2.81 In particular, drawing on the Midrash, Rashi explains that Isaac is comparable to a burnt offering (‘olah) which one is not allowed to present on the wrong side of the curtain, for it would be rendered void. G_11r/3, however, insists (indirectly) on the peshaṭ that follows from the immediate literary context. There is no need for the Midrash.

81 Ms Vienna, hebr.220, fol. 11v, middle column, row 2: Do not go down to Egypt: Since he thought of going down to Egypt as his father had gone down in times of famine. Do not go down to Egypt for you are a burnt-offering without blemish, and [residence] outside the Holy Land is not worthy of you.’ Cf. BerR 64:3 and TanB, Toldot 6.
Strictly speaking, G_11r/3 is already part of fol. 11v, because Rashi’s commentary ad loc. begins there (second column, second row ff.). That it was nevertheless placed on fol. 11r can be explained by the desire to combine G_11r/3 with G_11r/1 and G_11r/2, thereby identifying the three heads as a connected commentary by R. Shemu’el. It is apparent that the glossator focussed much more on the biblical text as his hypotext than on Rashi’s: the triple-form appears on the page on which, with *Parashat Toldot* (Genesis 25:19–28:9), the specific narrative arc, to which these commentaries pertain, arises.

### 3.4 Fol. 15v

#### 3.4.1 Description
There is only one gloss (G_15v/1) on fol. 15v that was written by the first scribe (Menahem). It is attributed to R. Shemu’el, and it, too, is instantly recognisable as a Shemu’el ‘head’, as it was given this form by filling in blank space where necessary. This gloss was placed below the first (right) column, in which the last row of Rashi’s commentary on Genesis 32:25 begins. The lemma (‘and [*wrestled*]’) comes with a paratextual reference (circle), which, however, is not repeated in the gloss itself, and is probably meant to refer explicitly to the biblical lemma to link the gloss to the biblical hypotext and not to Rashi’s commentary.

#### 3.4.2 Edition and Translation

> erek erek
> אַשָּׁנְא הָנָּה הָנָּה
> הבשׂחָה הָבָשׂחָה אָשָׂא
> תפַּקְּרָה הָאָמָרָה לְהָדָר
> יֶנֶּקֶּב מַדָּא רֵצָר לְוַיּוֹפַּק
> נֵטָקָה לְפֹּטָק בּוֹמָשׂה שָנָנָה
> שְׁאִמַּל לְעַמִּל לְשׁוֹב מֵזָר
> מַמְּרַמְּה לַאָהֵדָה טַעַמ
> וַתְּשִׂיב לָעַלָּתָא
> בַּדּוֹרָה
> נַנְנָכָה רִפְּאֶשֶׁת הָמְחַהָה. אֲכִין מִאֵנָה
> בְּבֶלְעַמְּרָה רְחָר אֶפֶּּנֶּקָּה כִּי הָדָלְל הָאָנָה נְנָכָה
> כִּי לְכַלִּמְלִם בָּהֶם עַל עַנֵּת קָוֶם נְנָכָה
> רֶק שְׁמָנוֹלָא

*And there wrestled a man with him* (Genesis 32:25). The Holy One, Blessed be He, promised him *I will surely do you good* (Genesis 32:13), but he did not believe him, and Jacob was greatly afraid

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82 There is, however, an additional gloss on fol. 15v, introduced with דִּי and written in the later hand (below the left column).
and distressed, and therefore, he was struck. Likewise, we find in the [story of the call of] Moses that the Holy One, Blessed be He, said to him: *Go back to Egypt, and I will be with you*, but he answered him: *Send someone else, whomever you want!* (Exodus 4:13), and [immediately] he was struck. YHWH met him and sought to kill him (Exodus 4:24). Similarly, in [the story of] Balaam, *God’s anger blazed up, because he was going* (Numbers 22:22), and [immediately] he was struck. Likewise, this happens to all those who disobey a vow that they will get struck. [An explanation by] R. Shemu’el.

### 3.4.3 Explanation

The commentary begins with the wrestling match, which it interprets as a punishment for Jacob’s lack of trust. It attempts to establish a cause-and-effect chain between Jacob’s fear (Genesis 32:8) and the wrestling match at the Jabbok (Genesis 32:25ff.): Jacob did not react properly to God’s promise and was punished for it. In contrast to Rashi who not only focuses on the morphology of the verbal form كيفאיו, but also devotes significant attention to the ‘man’ (איש) whom he labels Esau’s guardian angel (שם אשר), the gloss tries to trace the greater narrative arc, and additionally cites other examples from the Torah (Moses and Balaam) to prove how God punishes those who show reluctance in trusting in the divine word. It is clear the gloss is not dealing with Rashi’s comments on the immediate verse, but addressing the biblical text directly.

There is an analogous argument in RTC, in which the examples of Moses’ and Balaam’s divine punishment are also present (though their inclusion feels rather forced).

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83 Ms Vienna, hebr. 220, fol. 15v, right column, last row:龙门, menaḥem explained it as "man covered himself with dust," as an expression [belonging to the semantic field of] "dust," since they were raising the dust with their feet through their movements. However, it appears to me that it means "he became bound up" (2 Kings 9:14) and this is an Aramaic expression, as in "after they became bound up [with it]" (cf. bSan 63b) and "and he would bound the [four threads unto the loop] to form a slipknot" (cf. bMen 42a)—an expression of entanglement, for such is the way of two people who are struggling to throw each other—that one hugs and twines himself round [the other] with his arms. Our Masters of blessed memory explained that he was Esau’s ministering angel (cf. BerR 77:3).

84 And there wrestled aman with him: Menahem [ibn Saruq] explained it as "man covered himself with dust," as an expression [belonging to the semantic field of] "dust," since they were raising the dust with their feet through their movements. However, it appears to me that it means “he became bound up” (2 Kings 9:14) and this is an Aramaic expression, as in “after they became bound up [with it]” (cf. bSan 63b) and “and he would bound the [four threads unto the loop] to form a slipknot” (cf. bMen 42a)—an expression of entanglement, for such is the way of two people who are struggling to throw each other—that one hugs and twines himself round [the other] with his arms. Our Masters of blessed memory explained that he was Esau’s ministering angel (cf. BerR 77:3).
its ‘retelling’, which deals with the motif of Jacob’s flight on an almost epic scale, reflects another developmental stage of peshaṭ exegesis, both with respect to literary technique and the psychological characterisation of the biblical protagonist.⁸⁵ If the gloss at hand in Ms Vienna, hebr. 220, did indeed originate with Rashbam, it would be compelling evidence that the commentary in RTC should be attributed to a (later) scholar: mi-de-ve-Rashbam (Ps.-Rashbam) rather than Rashbam himself.⁸⁶

4 Conclusion

Already this initial glimpse on the case studies presented here shows that these tosafists’ glosses do not comment on their hypotext, Rashi, but expound the biblical text by focussing on the plot of the biblical narrative and its story line, the psychology of the biblical characters, or on contemporary profane lore and knowledge. However, with regard to their literary shape, it is important to underline that they do not constitute a continuous and fluent presentation, but a gloss commentary that along with its external mise-en-texte represents the consensus patrum, in this case: the consensus magistri, i.e. Rashi. By adding explanations on the biblical text into (a recension of) the Rashi commentary, the tosafists not only show that in the Christian environment the Bible had become an important tool for their intellectual discourse at

a journey or refuses a journey against God’s will, is punished: In the [story of the call of] Moses it is written [first]: “Send someone else, whomever you want!” (Exodus 4:13), [and then the text goes on]: And YHWH’s anger blazed up against Moses […] However, according to the peshaṭ [there is a more explicit perceivable effect]: Since Moses was reluctant to go, it came to pass on the way at the lodging-place, YHWH met him and sought to kill him (Exodus 4:24). Likewise, in [the case of] Jonah, who was swallowed up into the belly of the fish [as a result of his refusal to go] (cf. Jonah 2:1). Similarly, in [the case of] Balaam, God’s anger blazed up, because he was going (Numbers 22:22), and [as a result] he became lame, as it is written: And [the ass] squeezed Balaam’s foot […] (Numbers 22:25) and he went off lame (Numbers 22:3) [which means] “lame,” [as in] “And his bones were dislocated” (Job 33:21).’

85 I have demonstrated elsewhere that RTC displays a quite fascinating psychological sensitivity. Jacob’s fear of Esau is the main reason for his attempt to flee. However, RTC does not refer to this emotional state of mind explicitly, but rather indirectly through the motif of Jacob’s attempt to flee, i.e., the depiction of his preparations for escape and the events occurring to him. I compared this literary technique, in which a character’s activities are indicators of his internal state of mind, to literary features in the romances of Chrétien de Troyes (c. 1140–c. 1190) which often make use of this specific literary practice. On the whole subject, cf., in detail, Liss, Creating Fictional Worlds, 66–67, 154–161; eadem, “Kommentieren als Erzählen: Narrativität und Literarizität im Tora-Komentar des Rashbam,” Frankfurter Judaistische Beiträge 34–35 (2009): esp. 103–110 and 118–121.

86 This would also solve some of the problems that occur when comparing the RTC with the romances of Chrétien de Troyes and their literary features, since Chrétien wrote his major poems and romances (Érec and Enide; Cligés; Yvain, the Knight of the Lion; Lancelot, the Knight of the Cart, and Perceval, the Story of the Grail) in the last third of the twelfth century, not earlier than 1170, a date in time that Rashbam did not experience any more, as he died probably no later than 1158. I will address this question in more detail in the edition of the entire gloss material to follow.
eye-level with the (Babylonian) Talmud, but also elevate (a recension of) the Rashi commentary to the status of a ‘canonical’ text: Instead of glossing the Bible (any Bible manuscript) and thereby labelling it as the basic authority, they chose a Rashi commentary to adhere the glosses to. In that, these glosses constitute Rashi as an \textit{auctor} (comparable to the biblical ‘\textit{auctor}’), an authority that from now on will become a further authoritative \textit{source-text} for all later generations. This means that, although their comments, in most cases, pointedly disagree with their teacher Rashi (i.e. Rashi, the man), and thereby seem to undermine his exegetical authority, they create Rashi for the first time, i.e. the Rashi commentary \textit{in toto as a textual authority}:\textsuperscript{87} the second \textit{torah} alongside the Torah. In so doing, the tosafists’ writings from Northern France match perfectly with the formal Latin scribal culture: ‘This textual format [... is thus an applied mnemonic containing numerous visual helps to memory in its features, and also laying out graphically the relationship of the auctor and all its progeny, including their disagreements.’\textsuperscript{88} Furthermore, by means of a gloss commentary the glossator does not intend to create a sharp demarcation line between his own literary creation and the hypotext to which he appends his glosses. Due to the fact that the glossator appends exegetical remarks on the Bible to a Rashi text, the claim of authorities is hidden by means of a literary form that supports the Rashi as a textual authority while at the same time refuting his exegetical results. In other words: The glosses transform an \textit{individual} person—Rashi—as the exegetical teacher and author of a Bible commentary into a \textit{textual authority}.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\node[draw,circle,inner sep=0] (A) at (0,0) {Bible};
\node[draw,circle,inner sep=0] (B) at (2,0) {Rashi};
\node[draw,circle,inner sep=0] (C) at (1,1) {glosses};
\node[draw,circle,inner sep=0] (D) at (1,-1) {textual\ authority};
\draw (A) to [bend left] (B);
\draw (B) to [bend left] (C);
\draw (B) to [bend left] (D);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

Quite a different picture emerges in comparing medieval gloss commentaries to Judeo-Arabic authored works of which we find its earliest exponents, not by chance, in the works of savants living in the Islamic cultural context and active in the fields of either philosophy or grammar in the tenth and eleventh centuries (R. Saadiah Gaon, R. Shelomo ibn Gabirol, R. Judah Halevi, Menaḥem ibn Saruq or Dunash ibn Labrat and, later, R. Abraham ibn Ezra). The figures here reveal themselves as authors by constantly exhibiting a clear-cut hermeneutical starting point and a dis-

\textsuperscript{87} Cf. the introductory quote by Reynolds, \textit{Medieval Reading} (see note 1).
\textsuperscript{88} Carruthers, \textit{Book of Memory}, 268.
tinctive grammatical, exegetical, or philosophical approach in their attempt to demarcate themselves from other authors. In philosophical as well as in most of the grammatical and exegetical treatises one finds an introduction (haqdamə), in which the author’s method as well as his critique is explicitly stated, or, as in philosophical as well as (later) kabbalistic exegesis, forward the claim that any exegetical endeavour should lead to the discovery of some deeper meaning ‘behind’ the literal surface. A ‘doubting author’ sets up a counter authority about a subject, a belief, in medieval philosophical terms: a res. By contrast, a gloss does not necessarily aim to explicitly doubt anything, but to explain the issue at hand or append new ideas on a text: a verbum. Scepticism/sceptical thought always expresses doubts about a res. We might, therefore, conclude at this point that the investigation of glosses in a medieval manuscript as a form of test case could prove that when dealing with medieval Jewish tosafist literature an extension of the term scepticism/sceptical thought beyond its epistemological meaning actually causes more problems than it solves. In addition, future studies on the question of the different patterns of critical thought in tosafist literature should be carried out far more in relation to the literary form in which it is expressed than has been done up to the present.

89 See Bill Rebiger, “The Early Opponents of the Kabbalah and the Role of Sceptical Argumentations: An Outline,” in Yearbook of the Maimonides Centre for Advanced Studies 2016, eds. Giuseppe Veltri and Bill Rebiger (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2016): 51.

90 On the distinction between res and verbum, see also Carruthers, Book of Memory, esp. 234–237.
Illustration II: Ms Vienna, hebr. 220, fol. 9v. © Österreichische Nationalbibliothek
Illustration III: Ms Vienna, hebr. 220, fol. 11r. © Österreichische Nationalbibliothek
Illustration IV: Ms Vienna, hebr. 220, fol. 15v. © Österreichische Nationalbibliothek
