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## INTERVOCALIC *ALEF/YODH* INTERCHANGES IN MISHNAIC HEBREW

### RÉSUMÉ

L'alternance intervocalique entre *aleph* et *yoda* est très fréquente en hébreu. Dans cet article les conditions de cette alternance en hébreu mishnique sont définies et comparées à celles des autres sources hébraïques. Il résulte de notre étude qu'il faut distinguer le *yod* originel de l'*aleph* originel. L'*aleph* originel subsiste toujours, sauf quand il constitue la troisième lettre radicale. Dans ce cas, il s'agit d'un changement morphologique (3<sup>e</sup> rad. *aleph* > 3<sup>e</sup> rad. *yod*) plutôt que phonologique. Quand la consonne originelle est un *yod*, elle peut se transformer en *aleph*. Cette évolution peut être analysée selon trois paramètres: 1) les conditions phonologiques: le changement ne survient qu'après la voyelle *qameš*, alors qu'après les autres voyelles le *yod* se maintient dans toute la littérature rabbinique; 2) les différentes branches de l'hébreu rabbinique: dans la branche babylonienne le changement est constant tandis que dans la branche palestinienne elle ne l'est pas; 3) l'hébreu rabbinique par opposition à toutes les autres sources: ce changement n'est conditionné que dans la littérature rabbinique, mais ailleurs il ne l'est pas. Cela prouve que l'hébreu rabbinique, est un dialecte indépendant, avec ses propres règles, qui diffère non seulement de l'hébreu de la Bible et des manuscrits de la mer Morte, mais aussi des sources épigraphiques de l'époque rabbinique.

### SUMMARY

Intervocalic interchange between *aleph* and *yod* is most frequent in Hebrew. This article defines the conditions of this interchange in mishnaic Hebrew and presents a comparison with other Hebrew sources. The author demonstrates that it is necessary to distinguish the original *yod* from the original *aleph*. The original *aleph* always perdures, except when it serves as the third radical letter, in which case this should be read as a morphological rather than a phonological change (3rd radical *aleph* > 3rd radical *yod*). This evolution may be analysed along three parameters: 1) the phonological conditions: the interchange only occurs after a *qameš* vowel, whereas after other vowels the *yod* persists throughout the entire rabbinical corpus; 2) the different branches of rabbinical Hebrew: the interchange occurs consistently in the Babylonian, but not in the Palestinian branch; 3) rabbinical Hebrew vs other sources: the interchange is conditioned only in rabbinical literature, and not elsewhere. This demonstrates that rabbinical Hebrew

constitutes an independent dialect with its own rules, differing not only from biblical Hebrew or from the Dead Sea manuscripts, but also from epigraphic sources of the rabbinical period.

## 0. Introduction

Intervocalic *alef* / *yodh* interchanges are extremely frequent in Mishnaic Hebrew as in other sources, and a number of studies have been devoted to them<sup>1</sup>. In this paper we shall define the parameters of the interchange in Mishnaic Hebrew, shall explain it, and shall compare it with the remaining Hebrew sources.

### 1. The Original Consonantal Alef

The descriptions provided in the research literature do not, generally speaking, differentiate between original consonantal *alef* and original consonantal *yodh*, for in both cases we encounter interchanges involving them. For example: In Ms. PA, there exists an interchange in ל"י roots, such as מנאן / מניין<sup>2</sup>, just as in ל"א roots, like נשואה / נקרויה<sup>3</sup>. Such interchanges are characteristic of all the Mishnaic literature. Hence, it would seem that original *alef* becomes a *yodh*, original *yodh* becomes an *alef*, but each may nonetheless survive without change.

In my opinion, however, original *alef* must be distinguished from original *yodh* for the following reason: in Mishnaic Hebrew an original *alef*, in fact, always survives, such as הוּאִיל (Kil'ayim 5:1), הַיֶּאֱך (Pe'ah 5:2), מֵאָה (Shabbath 16:3), סֵאָה (Sh'vi'ith 1:2), פֵּיֵאָה (Pe'ah 1:3), and it becomes a *yodh* only when it is the third consonant of the ל"א root paradigm. Thus it would seem that the interchanges involving an original consonantal *alef* do not result from a phonological interchange between *alef* and *yodh*, but

\* I would like to thank my teacher, Prof. Moshe Bar-Asher, for his reading this article and for his illuminating comments.

1. BENDAVID 1967-1971, p. 215; BAR-ASHER 1984, p. 210; GINSBERG 1933, pp. 425-426; DODI 1981, pp. 142-145; LEWIN 1921, pp. 30b-31a; MORAG 1964, pp. 124-125; NÖLDEKE 1904, p. 28; KARA 1983, pp. 130-131; KUTSCHER 1959, p. 405, n. 302; KUTSCHER 1959, p. 408; KUTSCHER 1972, p. 45; QIMRON 1987; QIMRON 1978, pp. 87-90; ROSENTHAL 1980, pp. 12, 73-74; SHARVIT 1988, pp. 54-61.

2. HANEMAN 1980, pp. 353-354.

3. HANEMAN 1980, p. 414.

4. The examples are adduced from Ms. K, but they represent the situation throughout Tannaitic literature. Much has been written of the significance of ms. K, v., e.g., KUTSCHER 1963, p. 251 ff.

rather from a morphological interchange between the א"ל and ל"י paradigms<sup>5</sup>. Indeed, the shift from the א"ל to the ל"י paradigm is commonplace in Mishnaic Hebrew<sup>6</sup>, and it causes the shift *alef* > *yodh* not only in intervocalic position, as in מצוי, and affects not only the consonant but also the word form, as in חטאתי / לקריתי<sup>7</sup>; מוציא / מקרא<sup>8</sup>; נתמלו / נתמלאו<sup>9</sup>; לקרות / לקרוא<sup>10</sup>.

In Mishnaic Hebrew, unlike Aramaic, the א"ל paradigm did not vanish, and the shift to the ל"י paradigm is only a partial one<sup>11</sup>, and this is the cause of these interchanges. It thus seems that the *alef* / *yodh* interchange in the א"ל paradigm (קרועה / קרועה), too, is to be attributed to this morphological shift and not to the phonological interchange between *alef* and *yodh*<sup>12</sup>.

In contrast, when the original consonant is a *yodh*, the interchanges that occur reflect a phonological phenomenon<sup>13</sup>. Thus Mishnaic Hebrew has no *alef* / *yodh* interchanges; it does have rather a *yodh* > *alef* shift<sup>14</sup>, for the apparent interchanges take place only with an original *yodh*.

5. In other words, מצויין came into being not as the result of the phonological shift of *alef* > *yodh*: מצויין > מצואין, but rather as the result of a broad morphological shift of א"ל > ל"י: מצויין, מצוי, מצוינו > מצואין, מצוא, מצואנו.

6. V. SEGAL 1936, p. 150; HANEMAN 1980, pp. 392-431.

7. HANEMAN 1980, p. 392.

8. HANEMAN 1980, p. 404. The examples are from Ms. PA. The ms. makes no distinction between *šere* and *seghol*, and the form indicates declension according to ל"י.

9. HANEMAN 1980, p. 399.

10. HANEMAN 1980, p. 419.

11. SEGAL 1936, p. 150. And v. Haneman's detailed discussion, HANEMAN 1980, pp. 422-431.

12. There are, in fact, a few isolated instances of an *alef* > *yodh* shift, but they are to be ascribed to certain causes: שאר > שיר, תאומין > תיומין (SHARVIT 1988, p. 61) — stem from Aramaic influence, where the consonant became a *yod*; גמלייל > גמליאל (something like לִיָּאֵל in Biblical Hebrew), כּיילו > כּאילו (SHARVIT 1988, pp. 60-61) — stem from the weakening of the *alef* and the development of a glide consonant *yodh*, under the influence of the *hiriq*.

13. It is true that most of the instances of the *yodh* > *alef* shift are part of the ל"י paradigm, and it may apparently be possible to claim that here, too, are cases of a morphological interchange between the paradigms. There are, however, three indications that demonstrate that we have here a phonological interchange: (1) a few cases are not linked to the ל"י paradigm: אהראין, הרדאה, אהראין (v. in the material adduced *infra*); (2) in the א"ל paradigm the shift *alef* > *yodh* is related to the well-known morphological shift א"ל > ל"י, while in the ל"י paradigm the shift *yodh* > *alef* cannot be related to a morphological shift ל"י > א"ל, for no such shift is known to us in Mishnaic Hebrew; (3) while the *alef* > *yodh* shift in the א"ל paradigm acts precisely like all the other morphological shifts of א"ל > ל"י, without any regularity, the *yodh* > *alef* shift has clear phonological conditioning, as we shall demonstrate *infra*, and so regarding the behavior of original *yodh* — its continued existence *vis a vis* its becoming an *alef* — is a phonological feature.

14. But v. *infra*, n. 18.

## 2. The Original Consonantal yodh

When the original consonant is a *yodh*, a distinction must be made between the Babylonian and Palestinian branches of Mishnaic Hebrew<sup>15</sup>. The Babylonian branch shows uniformity, and so shall be discussed first.

### The Babylonian Branch

For the examination of the Babylonian branch, I examined the entire ms. Enelau 271 of Tractate Pesaḥim<sup>16</sup>. The following is the material in detail<sup>17</sup>:

#### *Yodh > Alef*

1. ל"י *qal*, pf., 3sg + eclectic pronoun: ואפאו (37b); עשאו (19a); עשאוהו (16a); עשאן (37a); צלאו (41a); שתאן (108b);
2. ל"י pattern *haqtala*: הודאה (105a); הוראה (3b); הזאה (67a); התראה (63b);
3. plural of fem. nouns<sup>18</sup>: גלוסקאות (37a); מקשאות (6b);
4. plural of patterns ending in -ay: אחראין (98b); גבאי צדקה (49b); גבאי קופה (13a); זכאין (59b); רשאין (89b);
5. others: הרדאה (36b).

#### *Yodh remains unchanged*

6. Declined forms of ל"י *qal* pass. part.: הבנויות (86a); בדחויין (97b); למנויין (61a); העשויה (37a); עשוין (7a); ראוין (72a); שנויה (78b); תלויות (13a).
7. Declined forms of ל"א *qal* pass. part.<sup>19</sup>: מצויין (4a); קפויין (50a).
8. ל"י pattern *q'tila*: מאפייה (40a); בהוייתו<sup>20</sup> (23a); כביה (54a); עלייה (8b); בעשיית (2b); ועשיית (86b); לעשייתו (58a); לעשייתן (7b); עשיית

15. For this division into branches v. BAR-ASHER 1984 and the literature cited.

16. The references in the quotations refer to Tractate Pesaḥim, according to this ms. Enelau 271.

17. A single example of each word has been adduced generally, yet there is an example of each category from each root. There is no word of this sense whose form differs from that of the example adduced.

18. Of all the categories adduced herein, this is the only one which may contain a true glide vowel, formed as the result of adding the plural morph -ot to a noun ending in a vowel (v. SEGAL 1936, p. 93), and not the *yodh > alef* shift. If this is really the way these forms came about, it means that a glide behaves exactly the same way as consonantal *yodh*, under identical conditioning and with the same difference between Palestine and Babylon (v. *infra*). It is, of course, possible that the glide formed was *yodh* which became an *alef* together with the other categories listed here. Cf. Ginsberg's hesitation, in GINSBERG 1933, p. 425, n. 1.

19. While the original consonant here is *alef*, as a result of the shift ל"א > ל"י, the forms decline as ל"י and the consonant is *yodh*. From now on we can check if it became an *alef* or not, like any original *yodh*.

20. Ms. Enelau is a Yemenite ms., and the Yemenite pronunciation of the word is הָרִיָּה.

- (2b); לרעייה (88b); צלייתו (58a); ראייה<sup>22</sup> (67b); רביה (88b); שתייה (49b).
9. א pattern *q<sup>e</sup>tila*<sup>23</sup>: ברית (50a); בריתו (53b); לבריות (112a); קרית שמע (55a).
  10. Declined forms of word patterns ending in *-i*: מיוניים (119a); מכסדיים (119a); לוויה (67a); נקיייה (37a); עניים (13a); פרסיים (119a); רומיים (119a).
  11. Plural forms of patterns ending in *-ut*: אומניות (55b); גליות (88a); שלגליות (52a); חניות (9b); מלכיות (68a).
  12. Plural forms of patterns ending in *-it*: גומזיות (56a, 56b); גוזיות (56b); דליות (53a); וצלוחיות (27a); תעניות (50b).
  13. Others: אותיות (3a); כנסיות (49b); הגוים (5b); תחיית (68a).

#### Interchanges<sup>24</sup>

14. Plural forms of pattern *q<sup>e</sup>ti*:  
*Alef*: חצאין (114b); חצאי (45b)  
*Yodh*: גדיין (53a); גדיים (53b × 2)
15. ל"י pattern *q<sup>e</sup>tala*:  
*Alef*: הנאה (21b)<sup>25</sup>  
*Yodh*: ראייה<sup>26</sup> (7b)<sup>27</sup>  
 בהניה (27a × 2); הנייה (21b, 23a); ובהנייה (27b × 3)

#### Conclusions

The classification of the material shows that no arbitrary interchanges take place between the consonants. Almost each and every category behaves uniformly, thus indicating that the interchanges are conditioned<sup>28</sup>. In fact, the conditioning in this case is evident: in all categories in which an *alef* appears (1-5), a *qames* precedes the consonant, whereas in the categories in which there is a *yodh* (6-13), it is a different vowel that precedes the

21. According to reliable traditions of Mishnaic Hebrew, the *yodh* is not intervocalic in the following forms: פְּרִיָּה, רְבִיָּה, בְּרִיָּה, קְרִיָּה — but they undoubtedly belong to the *q<sup>e</sup>tila* pattern, their original forms being פְּרִיָּה, רְבִיָּה, בְּרִיָּה, קְרִיָּה. V. KUTSCHER 1963, pp. 271-276. For this reason they are included here.

22. = רְאִיָּה.

23. V. *supra*, n. 19.

24. In this paragraph all instances are listed or the total number of appearances in the ms. is given.

25. 77 times throughout the ms.

26. = רְאִיָּה.

27. 7 times throughout the ms.

28. Cf. The situation in the Palestinian branch (*infra*), where the arbitrary interchange is recognizable by the frequency of the internal interchanges within the very same category and even within the very same word.

consonant. The quality of the vowel following the consonant is not significant. There are three exceptions (14-15) to this rule, where the original *yodh* survives after the *qamaṣ*:

- גדיים (14): biblical influence is surely apparent here (contrasting with הַצֵּאִין which does not appear in Biblical Hebrew).
- רֵאִיָּה (15)<sup>29</sup>: the *yodh* is maintained to prevent a sequence of two *alef*<sup>30</sup>.
- הַנִּיָּה (15) alongside הַנָּאָה: this is the only case of an interchange in the very same word. It seems to me that the form with the *yodh* is to be read הַנִּיָּה. If this is so, the form moves over to the category of the *q<sup>e</sup>tila* pattern (8), where the *yodh* is a permanent feature: אַפִּיָּה, אַעֲשִׂיָּה and so on<sup>31</sup>.

#### *In Comparison with other Mss.*

In order to see whether the situation as revealed in ms. Enelau is characteristic also of the other Talmudic mss., I examined a selection for forms with *alef* in seven other mss. The selection includes at least one example of each category. The findings are as follows<sup>32</sup>:

- וַאֲפֹא (37b) = BEFGH; וַאֲפֹאָן D
- הוֹדָאָה (105a) = BCDEFG; הוֹרָאָה H
- הוֹרָאָה (3b); הוֹרָאָוֹת DFGH
- הוֹאָה (67a) = BCDEF
- הַתְּרָאָה (63b) = BCDEF
- גְּלוֹסְקָאוֹת (37a) = CDEFGH; גְּלוֹסְקָאוֹתָּ B
- אַחְרָאִין (98b) = BCDFH; אַחְרָאִיןָ E
- זְכָאִין (59b) = BCDF; זְכָאִיןָ E
- הַרְדָּאָה (37a) = B; הַדְּרָאָה H; הַדְּרָאָה DEF; וְבַהֲדְרָאָה G

In each of the mss. *alef* appears always, except for a single case in ms. E, אַחְרָאִיןָ, where the doubled *yodh* indicates they read *ʾahrāyīn* with a conso-

29. The pronunciation רֵאִיָּה is common to all Mishnaic Hebrew traditions (v., e.g., YEIVIN 1985, p. 905).

30. The *alef* of רֵאִיָּה leads also to the Bible-like conjugated form רֵאִיָּהוּ (unlike עֲשִׂאָו), which appears in ms. PA only in this root (HANEMAN 1980, p. 354).

31. The הַנָּאָה / הַנִּיָּה interchange is thus an interchange of two word forms, and not an interchange in consonantal behavior. While I have not found additional evidence for the reading הַנִּיָּה, it seems to be supported by the spelling with a double *yodh*, which appears in ms. Enelau only when the *yodh* is doubled. On the interchange of the patterns *q<sup>e</sup>tila* / *q<sup>e</sup>tala* in ל"י verbs (as עֲנִיָּה / עֲנִיָּהָ, הִרְיָה / הִרְיָהָ) v. KUTCHER 1963, pp. 276-277; KUTSCHER 1969, p. 62. According to Kutcher, the pattern *q<sup>e</sup>tala* in ל"י verbs was an allomorph of the pattern *q<sup>e</sup>tila*. If this is true, the form הַנִּיָּה is not surprising, and this is the original form of this word.

32. The symbols of the mss. are as follows: B = Kolumbia X893-T141; C = Munich 6; D = Oxford 366; E = Vatican 125; F = Vatican 109; G = Sasson 594; H = Munich 95.



*The Palestinian Branch — not following qameṣ*

In the Babylonian branch, as already noted, after all vowels except *qameṣ*, the original *yodh* is maintained. What takes place in the Palestinian branch? As a result of testing all relevant material, the *yodh* is always maintained in this branch as well. Under these conditions, there is thus uniformity throughout Mishnaic Hebrew: nowhere in Mishnaic literature did I find a shift to *alef* not following a *qameṣ*.<sup>42</sup> We shall now adduce three types in which the permanent appearance of the *yodh* in Mishnaic Hebrew stands out.

*Other Sources Contrasting with Mishnaic Hebrew*

After vowels other than *qameṣ*, *yodh* becomes *alef* in other Hebrew sources<sup>43</sup> while in Mishnaic Hebrew the *yodh* is maintained:

	Other Hebrew Sources	Mishnaic Hebrew <sup>44</sup>
Biblical Sources:	עֲרֵבִיָּם (II Chr 17:11)	עֲרֵבִיִּים (Kelim 5:10)
	הַגְּרִיָּים (I Chr 5:19, 20)	בְּבִלְיִים (Yoma 6:4)
		מִצְרִיִּים (Pesahim 10:5)
	תְּלוֹאִים (Hosea 11:7)	תְּלוֹיִים (Karethoth 6:4)
	בְּלוֹאֵי (Jer 38:12)	בְּלוֹיִי (Kelim 27:5)

changes even in a given form, a finding which clearly indicates random interchanges. It would seem that the interchanges in the mss. reflect the original situation in Mishnaic Hebrew. There is no reason to assume that in the original Mishnaic Hebrew there was only a *yodh* and that the *alef* was introduced during the period the language was handed down — under Babylonian influence; v. Kutscher: “The fact that a considerable percentage of the spellings with *alef* [...] are in the plural comes to teach us, that these examples are not to be viewed as the consequence of Babylonian influence” (KUTSCHER 1963, p. 255). Elsewhere he spoke out explicitly against Ginsberg’s statement (in GINSBERG 1933, p. 425), that in the Palestinian branch it is always *yodh* (KUTSCHER 1959, p. 405, n. 302), and our findings here can be added to the evidence he adduced.

42. I have found only a single exception to this rule: צְלוֹאֵן (YEIVIN 1985, p. 696). From this root there is another apparent exception in the Babylonian Talmud: צְלִיָּאה (Sota 4a X2). This appears as early as the Venice printed version, but in all mss. there appears צְלִיָּיה (v. *The Babylonian Talmud with Variant Readings, Tractate Sotah*, Institute for the Complete Israeli Talmud, Jerusalem, 1977), and even in the printed editions, in all other instances in the Talmud there occurs always צְלִיָּיה (v. KASOWSKI 1974, p. 112). The reason for the appearance of צְלִיָּאה in the printed versions is a local one: the word appears in the phrase צְלִיָּאה וְגַמְיָּעה, and was undoubtedly influenced by גַּמְיָּעה. There may be another exception in the interchange adduced by ROSENTHAL 1980, p. 73: דִּימוֹסִיָּות / דִּימוֹסִיָּות, where the consonant appears after the vowel -i. In ms. K, however, the ס is vocalized with a *qameṣ*, and the interchange may have developed from the form in ms. Kaufmann, after which the vowel may have changed. The examples adduced by SHARVIT 1988, pp. 60-61, where there is an *alef* / *yodh* interchange after other vowels as well, all originate in a radical *alef*, and so no *yodh* > *alef* shift has taken place there (for this. V. *supra*, n. 12).

43. In the other sources there are *alef* / *yodh* interchanges following *qamaṣ*. I have adduced here only forms with an *alef*, so as to emphasize the lack of an *alef* under these conditions in Mishnaic Hebrew.

44. The examples are quoted according to ms. K.



Dead Sea Scrolls <sup>46</sup> :	כתריאים, וכריאים	ערכיים (Kelim 5:10) בבליים (Yoma 6:4)
	גואים	גוים (Shevi'ith 5:9)
Bar-Koseba Letters <sup>47</sup> :	עניאין גואין	עניים (Shevi'ith 5:3) גוים (Shevi'ith 5:9)

Sharvit considers the difference between Mishnaic Hebrew and the other sources, and writes<sup>48</sup>: “And so, the morph **יאים**-, which developed in Hebrew during the Second Temple period, vanished from Mishnaic Hebrew despite the frequent appearance of the parallel morph in Aramaic”<sup>49</sup>. This apparently surprising feature is now resolved: in Mishnaic Hebrew the *yodh* does not become an *alef* except following a *qamaṣ*, and so the *yodh* is maintained in all these forms<sup>50</sup>.

*The splitting-up of the ay diphthong — in contrast to oy, uy.*

There is evidence in Mishnaic Hebrew of the splitting-up of the final diphthongs *ay* > *ayi*, *oy* > *oyi*, *uy* > *uyi*<sup>51</sup>. Following this splitting-up we find words spelt and vocalized with a consonantal *alef* instead of *yodh*, like **שמאי**, **דמאי**<sup>52</sup>. Now this *alef* appears only in forms originating in a final *ay* diphthong, where, after the split, a *qamaṣ* comes into being before the *yodh*. In contrast, in the case of the diphthongs *oy*, *uy*, whose split does not result in a *qamaṣ* before the consonant, the *yodh* is preserved at all times<sup>53</sup>: **ראוי**,<sup>54</sup> **תלוי**,<sup>55</sup> **אוי**,<sup>56</sup> **גוי**,<sup>57</sup> **כוי**,<sup>58</sup> **מבוי**,<sup>59</sup> Mishnaic Hebrew has no forms like **ראואי**, **גואי**, **מבואי**, like those which appear in other sources<sup>60</sup>. The reason for this,

45. In ms. K and in ms. PB the word is vocalized **בְּלוֹי**, yet in ms. Jerusalem (HEB 4° 1336) we find **בְּלוֹי**.

46. V. KUTSCHER 1959, pp. 404-408; QIMRON 1978, p. 87.

47. V. KUTSCHER 1977, pp. נג, סא, טג.

48. SHARVIT 1988, pp. 58-59.

49. Kutscher, too (KUTSCHER 1959, p. 407; KUTSCHER 1977, p. סז), notes that one cannot apparently find such forms as **וכריאים** in Mishnaic Hebrew.

50. Regarding the parallel forms in Aramaic (such as **כשדאין**, **כשדאה**, **רביעאה** in Biblical Aramaic according to the *Qere*; **כנענאה**, **קדמאי** in Onkelos), besides their being outside the framework of Mishnaic Hebrew, the consonant appears in them after a *qamaṣ* and so cannot be compared with Mishnaic Hebrew forms.

51. V. QIMRON 1987, p. 261, n. 10 and the literature adduced there.

52. V. BEN-HAYYIM 1977, p. 47, n. 88; BAR-ASHER 1980, p. 44.

53. Though in these forms, too, a dot, apparently a *hiriq*, appears under the *yodh*, indicating the splitting-up of the diphthong.

54. QIMRON 1987, p. 261.

55. BAR-ASHER 1980, p. 43.

56. YEIVIN 1985, p. 277.

57. YEIVIN 1985, p. 277; BEIT-ARYE 1965, p. 39.

58. Ms. K, *Bikkurim* 2:8.

59. Ms. K, *Erubin* 1:1.

60. V. QIMRON 1987, p. 260.

as already noted, is that the *yodh* > *alef* shift took place in Mishnaic Hebrew only after *qamaṣ*.

Only a single example has been adduced from Mishnaic literature of an *alef* resulting from the splitting-up of *oy*: נוֹאֵי (alongside נוֹי)<sup>61</sup>. Now this form specifically is derived from the root נואה, which contains a radical *alef*. It thus appears that the form נוֹאֵי was not derived from נוֹי, with an intervocalic *yodh* > *alef* shift (like שְׁמֵאֵי), but rather that the opposite is true: נוֹאֵי is derived from the original root<sup>62</sup>, whereas נוֹי is a secondary form reflecting the disappearance of the *alef*<sup>63</sup>.

#### *The Passive Participle ל"י as opposed to ל"א*

The declined forms of the passive participle of ל"א show an instability in the realization of the final consonant: קרואה, נשואה, קרואין, נשואין, קרואין, נשויין, מצויין, קרויה, מצויה. All these interchanges relate to the ל"א paradigm. In the ל"י paradigm, as Sharvit has already pointed out<sup>64</sup>, in all Mishnaic literature only *yodh* appears<sup>65</sup>: פנויה, בנויה, פנויים, שרויים, ראויים, צלויים, עשויים, מנויין, חצויים, בנויים. This is so because the *yodh* > *alef* shift does not take place after *shuruq*<sup>66</sup>. The *alef* / *yodh* interchange in the ל"א paradigm results from morphological considerations — from a partial ל"א > ל"י shift, rather than from an intervocalic *alef* / *yodh* interchange<sup>67</sup>.

61. V. BAR-ASHER 1980, pp. 43-45 and n. 238; YEIVIN 1985, pp. 276-278; YEIVIN 1965, p. 73; QIMRON 1987, p. 261.

62. V. R. Tanḥum of Jerusalem: "פקאלו מנהו נואי ל'מת רואי חולי יופי" (H. SHY, *Al-Muršid Al-Kāfi of Tanḥum Ḥayeruṣālmī*, Letters ל-ש (dissertation), The Hebrew University, 1975, p. 63); from this one can learn not only that the *alef* in this noun is a radical (as BEN-ḤAYYIM 1977, p. 47, n. 88, did), but also how the noun was formed.

63. The *yodh* came into being under the influence of the *hiriq*, as in כּיילו, גמלייל (v. *supra*, n. 12).

64. SHARVIT 1988, p. 59.

65. Thus, for example, in ms. PA there is always a *yodh* in the ל"י paradigm (HANEMAN 1980, pp. 369-370), and *alef* / *yodh* interchanges appear only in the ל"א paradigm, like קרויה / נשואה (HANEMAN 1980, p. 414); in Safra, ms. Vatican 66 there is always a *yodh* in the ל"י paradigm (NAEH 1989, p. 263), while *alef* / *yodh* interchanges appear only in ל"א: קרואין / קרויין (NAEH 1989, p. 223); in ms. Erfurt of the Tosefta, *yodh* always appears in words derived from ל"י (NATAN 1984, p. 252), while there are interchanges only in ל"א: קרויה / נשואה (NATAN 1984, p. 237). This feature is especially noticeable with the root עשה. The root is known for its extraordinary tendency towards *alef*, and it is declined in all mss. like the forms עשוא, עשאם, עשוא — with *alef* (v. BAR-ASHER 1985, p. 82, n. 32). Nevertheless, there is no trace of forms like עשואים.

66. In Biblical Hebrew there is indeed the form תלואים as adduced *supra*, but not in Mishnaic literature.

67. I stress this as against the theory that passive participial forms with *alef* in the ל"א paradigm (such as נשואה) could belong to the ל"י declension, the *alef* resulting from a *yodh* > *alef* shift (\*נשוייה > נשואה); v. HANEMAN 1980, p. 414: "It is not to be concluded that the forms

### Conclusion regarding the Palestinian branch

In the Palestinian branch there are arbitrary interchanges after *qames*; when not following a *qames*, the *yodh* is preserved to this day, as in the Babylonian branch<sup>68</sup>.

### 3. A Comparison of the Two Branches

In existing literature the intervocalic *alef* / *yodh* interchange is mentioned as one of the features distinguishing between the branches: in Babylon — *alef*, in Palestine — *yodh*<sup>69</sup>. According to our findings, there is a difference but not an extreme one. Thus it should be restricted in its wording and defined as follows: after a *qames* and before any other vowel, a consonantal *yodh* becomes an *alef*— in Babylon, at all times; in Palestine, on occasion; under other conditions Mishnaic Hebrew is uniform and has no signs of a shift to *alef*.

with *alef* oppose the ל"י paradigm (though in P there is no example of this kind [...] for the *alef* and *yodh* are to be viewed as alternatives [...] in such an intervocalic position (cf. הודאה / הודייה and so on)". This theory was formulated because the condition — depending upon the previous vowel — had not been identified, and so it seemed possible to compare the הודאה / קרויה interchange with that of הודאה / הודייה. As already noted, in the ל"י paradigm not only ms. PA but also all Mishnaic Hebrew sources have not a single *alef*, because the shift *yodh* > *alef* does not take place under these phonetic conditions (unlike the הודאה / הודייה interchange, which takes place after a *qames*). The conclusion is thus that forms with an *alef* are indeed opposed to the declension of ל"י.

68. The fact that the *yodh* > *alef* shift took place specifically after a *qames* was noted by a number of scholars, but only with regard to Aramaic: v. NÖLDEKE 1904, p. 28; MORAG 1964, pp. 124-125; DODI 1981, p. 144. I have not uncovered any attempt at wording the conditioning for Hebrew, and in accordance with our conclusions here, this rule is applicable to Mishnaic Hebrew as well. KUTSCHER 1959, p. 405, n. 302, wrote that the shift takes place in Mishnaic Hebrew “between two *a*: vowels”; he meant that this shift took place between two *a* vowels as well, and not only with other vowels. It is more precise to say that in Mishnaic Hebrew the shift takes place after a *qames*, irrespective of the vowel following the consonant.

69. LEWIN 1921, pp. 30b-31a; GINSBERG 1933, pp. 425-426; BENDAVID 1967-1971, p. 215; KUTSCHER 1972, p. 45; ROSENTHAL 1980, pp. 12, 73-74; BAR-ASHER 1984, p. 210. Furthermore, הוואה in *Mekhilta deMillu'im* / הוייה in the main *Safra* (HANEMAN 1974, pp. 87-88) is like the other differences between these sources (cf. BAR-ASHER 1984, p. 213, n. 153). This distinction is found also in the comparison of the Babylonian vocalization tradition with that of Tiberias, for in the Babylonian tradition there is a slight tendency towards *alef*, in contrast to the custom in the Tiberian tradition (YEIVIN 1985, pp. 264-265). In a few sources this interchange appears as an interchange between “better” sources and “not so good” ones (themselves influenced by the Babylonian tradition); v., e.g., KAHANA 1982, p. 144. Thus one must view the *alef* predominant in the printed versions of the Mishna. This interchange corresponds to the difference between Eastern and Western Aramaic: in the east — תליתאה, רוחנין, תליתא, רוחנין, in the west — תליתא, רוחנין, תליתא, רוחנין; v. LEVIN, GINSBERG and BENDAVID, *ibid.*, and also KARA 1983, pp. 130-131 and the sources he notes. The difference also exists between Eastern and Western Syriac: v. Nöldeke 1904, p. 28. It would seem that Aramaic had its influence felt everywhere: in Babylon — on the trend towards *alef*; in Palestine — on the trend towards *yodh*.

#### 4. Explanation of the Feature

A number of explanations have been proposed for the interchanging *alef* and *yodh*: a confusion of the א"ל / י"ל paradigms<sup>70</sup>; dissimilation from the *hiriq* which spread by analogy to other forms as well<sup>71</sup>; *alef* and *yodh* vanished in intervocal position, the letter representing a neutral glide without any real phonetic significance<sup>72</sup>.

These explanations are all fine for the other sources, but they are unable to explain away the existing distinction in Mishnaic Hebrew between the *qamaṣ* and other vowels. Had this been a case of a confusion of paradigms, dissimilation which spread or the noting of a glide vowel of no phonetic significance, the appearance of the consonants would not be limited according to fixed conditions. We must seek an explanation that copes with the conditioning that has been discovered.

Accordingly, we shall propose an alternative explanation: the *yodh* contains the high front vowel *-i*, while a *qameṣ* is a low back vowel<sup>73</sup>. There is thus a strong contrast between the *qameṣ* and the *yodh*, a contrast reflected in traditional vocalization, for example, in the vocalizing of a final diphthong ay, like הַיְ, מְתִי, דְּבַרְי — all vocalized with a *pataḥ* contrary to the usual vocalization rules which require a *qameṣ* under these conditions. In these cases the consonant has influenced the vowel. It would appear that in the case before us, the vowel has influenced the consonant, and so the *yodh* has become an *alef* after a *qameṣ* by partial assimilation to the vowel<sup>74</sup>.

#### 5. Summary

An *alef* > *yodh* shift takes place only in the final consonant of the א"ל paradigm, and belongs to the morphological shift of א"ל to י"ל. A *yodh* > *alef* shift in Mishnaic Hebrew depends on the preceding vowel, whereas in

70. V. GESENIUS 1910, pp. 216-217.

71. In other words: כַּשְׂדָּאִין > כַּשְׂדִּיִן (dissimilation), and hence כַּשְׂדָּאָה by analogy from כַּשְׂדָּאִין; v., e.g., BAUER-LEANDER 1922, p. 215; KUTSCHER 1959, p. 404 ff.

72. BERGSTRÄSSER 1918, §15h, §17n; QIMRON 1987, pp. 260, 264; QIMRON 1978, pp. 89-90.

73. For the precise character of the *qamaṣ*, v., e.g.: BEN-HAYYIM 1977, pp. 36-37; ELДАР 1989, pp. 6-7; MORAG 1963, pp. 102-105.

74. These conditions seem to exist in a number of other sources as well, besides Mishnaic Hebrew. For instance, in Biblical Aramaic all the known interchanges between *kethiv* and *qere* of this type take place after a *qamaṣ*, like רַבִּיעֵא / רַבִּיעָאָה / יְהוּדָאִין / יְהוּדָיִן. In these forms, too, the original consonant is *yodh*, and so here the same explanation can be relevant.

other Hebrew sources it takes place under any and all conditions. The three distinctions reflected in this topic are:

1. Babylon vs. Palestine — after *qamaš*: in Babylon — only *alef*, in Palestine — *alef* and *yodh* interchange.
2. Mishnaic Hebrew vs. all other Hebrew sources — after other vowels: in Mishnaic Hebrew — only a *yodh*, in all other Hebrew sources — *alef* and *yodh* interchange<sup>75</sup>.
3. After *qameš*, in contrast with other vowels — in all of Mishnaic Hebrew: after *qameš* the *yodh* may become an *alef*, while after other vowels the *yodh* is preserved.

	Mishnaic Hebrew		Other Hebrew Sources
	Babylon	Palestine	
After <i>qamaš</i>	א	א / י	א / י
After other vowels	י	י	א / י

## 6. Conclusions

It is generally known that when studying Mishnaic Hebrew — as is usual in the study of an ancient language — one often hesitates whether the situation reflected in the sources available to us, most of which having been written down some thousand years after Hebrew ceased to be a spoken tongue, actually reflects an authentic situation or a later language which came into being with the development of the text. One of the cases where it is quite certain that we are dealing with an authentic situation is when conditions are discovered for the appearance of a textual feature which were most likely unknown to those who handed the text down. The distinction between a *qamaš* and other vowels surely reflects an authentic distinction, since the scribes were certainly unaware of it; furthermore, this distinction does not suit the situation in Biblical Hebrew, which was the main source for textual emendation.

It is against this background that we must emphasize the difference between Mishnaic literature and other Hebrew sources. At first glance the form גואיך in the Bar-Koseba letters seems authentic, whereas the form גויים in Mishnaic literature seems to be a literary and artificial form, which came into being while the text was being handed down under the influence of

75. It should be stressed that the resemblance between the epigraphic sources and the Babylonian branch in this matter — when both show a preference for *alef* — is no more than an illusion, for the preference for *alef* in these two sources is in fact in two different spots on the system. This subject reveals the uniformity of Mishnaic Hebrew, in contrast with the other Hebrew sources.

Biblical Hebrew. And now it becomes clear that the form גויאין and related forms is missing in Mishnaic sources, and not by chance; for it is entrenched in a recognized rule, and if this is the case, then we have here an original distinction between the language of the Mishnaic literature and that of the epigraphic texts. This item joins the evidence pointing to the fact that the language of Mishnaic literature was not identical with that of contemporary epigraphic sources<sup>76</sup>, and so a methodological conclusion can be drawn as well: the best way to prove a distinction between the language of the epigraphia and Mishnaic Hebrew, while overcoming the credibility gap between these languages, is by locating linguistic distinctions which certainly reflect the original Mishnaic Hebrew.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

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