

Textual criticism of the Bible in the writings of Jacob Reifmann: a re-evaluation

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ABSTRACT Jacob Reifmann (Poland, 1818–1895), one of the most fascinating figures of the Enlightenment in Eastern Europe, was a prolific scholar and intellectual whose books and articles cover a variety of subjects in Jewish intellectual history. Most of the scholars – scholars of Reifmann’s work and scholars of Jewish biblical research during the Enlightenment – usually present him as someone who worked extensively on the biblical text and proposed hundreds of emendations to the traditional (Masoretic) text. As I will endeavour to show in this article, the place of the critical study of the biblical text within Reifmann’s scholarly oeuvre needs to be re-evaluated. The conclusion reached in the course of our discussion is that Reifmann in fact made only a few suggestions for emending the biblical text, while the hundreds of comments that scholars have understood as proposals for textual emendation should be understood in a different way.

THIS ARTICLE DISCUSSES the place of textual criticism of the Bible in the writings of Jacob Reifmann (1818–1895), a native of Łagów in the district of Kielce in Poland.¹ Reifmann’s positions on the question of the text of the Hebrew Bible are described briefly in several works of research. It is accepted among most of the scholars that his writings include hundreds of suggestions for the correction of corruptions which he found in the text. Thus, Soloveitchik and Rubashov stressed that although Reifmann ‘was very careful in his language and moderate in his research’ he nonetheless ‘found corruptions in the text’ and proposed ‘many emendations’.² Menahem Haran

1. On Reifmann, see his autobiographical work: J. Reifmann, ‘An Outline of My Life History’, *Kneset Israel* 3 (1888), pp. 173–84 (in Hebrew; = *ha-Asif* 6 [1894], pp. 200–206). And see A.M. Habermann, ‘The Wisdom of the Poor (the Life of Rabbi Jacob Reifmann)’, *Gilyonot* 7 (1938), pp. 128–34 (in Hebrew); M. Hershkovitz, ‘You will Keep Faith with Jacob’, *ha-Darom* 18 (1963), pp. 35–78 (in Hebrew). Reifmann’s scholarly oeuvre is immense in its scope and variety and includes many books and articles; some of his writings have been collected in an offprint edition, New York 1991, 2 vols.

2. M. Soloveitchik and Z. Rubashov, *The History of Bible Criticism* (in Hebrew; Berlin: Dvir-Mikra, 1925), p. 155; and see p. 14.

also discussed the 'emendations' of Reifmann,³ as did Haim Shelly, although his position was slightly different.⁴ Chanan Gafni has recently reiterated this position in an article devoted exclusively to the subject.⁵ Gafni repeatedly clarifies that the proposals of Reifmann, although vaguely worded, are in fact textual emendations to a corrupted text.⁶

The presentation of Reifmann as someone who worked on corruptions in the text of the Bible and suggested emendations is not unique to modern scholarship. Soon after the publication of his works and throughout the nineteenth century intellectuals expressed their views of his scholarly work. The attitude of each of them to his writings was determined by the writer's fundamental position on the question of the biblical text. The conservatives who rejected the possibility that the Bible included corruptions vehemently opposed Reifmann.⁷ In contrast, radical emendators of the text praised Reifmann as one of the trailblazers in the critical study of the biblical text.⁸

3. M. Haran (Diman), 'Biblical Research in Hebrew', *Bizaron* 21 (1950), pp. 112–13 (in Hebrew).

4. H. Shelly, *Bible Study in Haskalah Literature* (in Hebrew; Jerusalem: Reuben Mass, 1942). Shelly remarks that Reifmann was more involved in textual criticism of the Bible than all of his contemporaries and those who preceded him in the Jewish literature (*ibid.*, p. 128; see also p. 131). However, at a later point Shelly presents a different position when he states that the 'thirty-two principles' do not serve Reifmann as either terminology or as a camouflage for correcting mistakes in the Bible, but rather he finds in the principles general rules which teach us the spirit and the essence of biblical language (*ibid.*, pp. 132–3). These comments are close in spirit to my conclusions, as will be made clear in the following pages.

5. C. Gafni, 'Jacob Reifmann and Textual Criticism of the Bible', *Shaton: An Annual for Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies* XX (2010), pp. 189–207 (in Hebrew).

6. Gafni asks, 'Did Reifmann hint at an exegetical methodology that enabled him to solve linguistic difficulties or at a phenomenon relating to the biblical text?' (*ibid.*, pp. 203f.). However, throughout the article he repeatedly presents Reifmann as someone who points out corruptions in the biblical text and suggests emendations: 'despite the vagueness that has been described, an in-depth study ... leads to the conclusion that Reifmann ... [deals with] lacunae that developed in the text of the Bible' (p. 204); 'An analysis of the theory of Reifmann ... compels us to conclude that he believed that the ravages of time made their impressions on the books of the Bible' (pp. 205–6). And see also: 'Reifmann tried to reconstruct the language of the original Bible' (p. 200); 'Reifmann ... proofread the language of the Bible' (p. 201); 'A silent admission of the existence of lacunae and omissions in the standard versions' (p. 206).

7. For examples, see Soloveitchik and Rubashov, *The History of Bible Criticism*, p. 155; Shelly, *Bible Study*, p. 136; Gafni, 'Jacob Reifmann', pp. 201–2, 205–7.

8. See, for example, E. Bezredki, *Et sheqer sofrim o mikra meforash ve-sum sechel* [For Naught Has the Pen Laboured] (in Hebrew; Drohobych: A.H. Zupnik, K.U.K. Hoflieferant, 1905), p. 5; *idem*, *Hagu sigim: nosafot le-machberet Et sheqer sofrim* [The Dross Having Been Separated] (in Hebrew; Drohobych: A.H. Zupnik, K.U.K. Hoflieferant, 1909), p. v. For a survey of the opinions of Jewish scholars in the period of the Enlightenment on the question of textual criticism of the Bible, see E. Breuer and C. Gafni, 'Jewish Biblical Scholarship between Tradition and Innovation', in M. Sæbø (ed.), *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), vol. 3, part 1, pp. 266–77.

Both groups regarded him as a scholar whose primary interest was textual criticism of the Bible.⁹

The place of textual criticism of the Bible in the work of Reifmann needs to be re-evaluated; it is my intention to do so in the following pages.

Reifmann's analysis of the biblical text

Jewish journals in the nineteenth century very often included short discussions of biblical verses. This scholarly genre was sometimes called 'The Wisdom of the Scriptures' or 'The Wisdom of the Bible' (*binah ba-miqra*) and was characterized by a condensed and specific analysis of a verse, usually without basic methodological clarifications. Sometimes these discussions included a reference to the text of the verse in which the writer either stressed the integrity of the traditional text or proposed emending it.¹⁰

Like hundreds of other intellectuals, Jacob Reifmann published short discussions of difficult verses in the genre of 'The Wisdom of the Scriptures'. These analyses were published in instalments¹¹ and they include several suggestions for corrections of corruptions that he found in the books of the Prophets and the Writings. For example, with regard to the verse 'Saul the man was already old', *ba' ba-anashim* (1 Sam. 17:12), Reifmann proposed reading *ba' ba-shanim* instead of *ba' ba-anashim* so that 'the letters were reversed [...] and the *aleph* added'.¹² Similarly, with regard to the verse 'And if someone's kinsman who is to burn incense for him' (Amos 6:10; *u-nesa'o dodo u-mesarfo*), he proposed the reading *u-me'arfo* instead of *u-mesarfo* because 'the shape of the letter *'ayin* in the Samaritan script [the ancient Hebrew script] is similar to the shape of the letter *samech* in our script.'¹³ These remarks reveal his understanding that the text of the Bible includes corruptions. In conformity

9. There are also a few critical comments about Reifmann's books, from which it can be inferred that the writers assumed that he was not dealing with textual criticism of the Bible; for a representative example, see n. 51, below.

10. See, for example, J.H. Mayzach, 'Scriptural Exegeses', *ha-Boqer Or* 4 (1879), pp. 1128–30 (in Hebrew); I.Y. Weissberg, 'Other things', *ha-Boqer Or* 6 (1881), pp. 200–2 (in Hebrew); S. Mandelkern, 'Proof and Witness to the Word', *Otzar ha-Sifrut* 2 (1888), pp. 147–78 (in Hebrew), and many others like this. For other references, see Shelly, *Bible Study*, pp. 106–14; Haran, 'Biblical Research', vol. 21, pp. 111–14.

11. J. Reifmann, 'Notes on Our Holy Books', *ha-Shachar* 2 (1871), pp. 315–16, 347–50, 373–4 (in Hebrew); and see also idem, 'The Wisdom of the Scriptures', *ha-Boqer Or* 4 (1879), pp. 1059–60 (in Hebrew).

12. *Ibid.*, p. 315.

13. *Ibid.*

to the style of the genre ‘The Wisdom of the Scriptures’, Reifmann does not use these remarks to make fundamental comments on issues of the text of the Bible and does not relate to the methodological aspects of the proposed emendations.

These suggestions made by Reifmann in the context of ‘The Wisdom of the Scriptures’ are evidence that he was very familiar with the subject of textual criticism of the Bible. His familiarity with this subject is apparent also from his comments about biblical verses quoted in the writings of the sages and medieval scholars which became corrupted in transcription.¹⁴ The conclusion that Reifmann was aware of the question of the integrity of the biblical text is also made clear indirectly from the fact that he was familiar with the writings of Samuel David Luzzatto (Shadal; Trieste 1800–Padua 1865) and corresponded with him.¹⁵ Shadal is considered a pioneer of biblical criticism in Jewish biblical scholarship and scattered in his writings are close to a hundred suggested emendations, almost all of which are to the books of the Prophets and Writings, although they do include a few suggestions with regard to the text of the Torah (Pentateuch).¹⁶ The emendations proposed by Shadal compel his readers to, at the very least, form their own opinion in this matter. Nonetheless, I would like to argue that Reifmann’s interest in the question of the biblical text was marginal to his work and that a distinction must be made between the aforementioned article (‘Three Very Brief Studies’) and his books.

The principal efforts of Reifmann in the field of biblical research are concentrated in his books *Meshiv Davar*¹⁷ and *Minchat Zikaron*¹⁸ in which he

14. These comments of Reifmann must be understood against the background of his work on the critical study of the text of the classical rabbinic and medieval literature. Among others, see his article ‘Three Very Brief Studies on the Books’, *ha-Shachar* 2 (1871), pp. 342–7 (in Hebrew), and in his books, *Ma’amar Or Boqer* [The Morning Light’s Article] (in Hebrew; Berlin: Z.H. Itzkowski, 1879), pp. 15–8; *Meshiv Davar: mechalkel teshuvot ‘al she’elot shonot* [The Respondent: Containing Answers to Various Questions] (in Hebrew; Vienna: Shtockholzer u. Hirschfeld, 1866), pp. 8–16.

15. Reifmann referred to him as ‘my friend Rashdal’; *Mo’adei Erev: mechalkel mechqarim shonim* [Evening Times: Containing Various Studies] (Vilna: S.J. Finn, A.Z. Rosenkranz, 1863), p. 21; on the correspondence between Reifmann and Shadal, see E. Gräber, *S.D. Luzzatto’s hebräische Briefe* (Cracow: Druck von Josef Fischer, 1891), according to index p. 6.

16. S. Vargon, *S.D. Luzzatto: Moderate Criticism in Biblical Exegesis* (in Hebrew; Jerusalem: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2013), pp. 74–154.

17. *Meshiv Davar*. On the German title page: *Historisch-kritische Abhandlungen: Untersuchungen über die Hagada-Hermeneutik des R. Jose Ha-Gelili*.

18. *Minchat Zikaron: Otzarot bi’urim chadashim ‘al me’ah mi-dibrot sifrei qodsheinu ‘al pi midat ‘derek getzara’ ‘asher be-lamed bet midot le-Rabbi Eliezer ben Rabbi Yossi ha-Glili* [An Offering of Remembrance: Containing New Commentaries on a Hundred Sayings from Our Holy Books According to the

presents a detailed and comprehensive theory. In his opinion, the original kernel of the Midrash of the thirty-two hermeneutic principles¹⁹ included a short list of principles which were in practice tools for understanding the Bible according to its plain meaning (*peshat*). Reifmann attributed this original kernel to the Tanna Rabbi Eliezer son of Rabbi Yossi ha-Glili.²⁰ According to Reifmann, many expansions and examples were added to the original kernel of the Midrash at a later stage, turning it into a set of principles of the *derash* method (homiletical exegesis), and so it became fixed in Jewish tradition for generations. Neither the sages who expanded the original Midrash nor the readers of the Midrash of the thirty-two hermeneutic principles throughout the generations properly understood the original intention of Rabbi Eliezer. In his books, Reifmann discusses with varying degrees of precision each of the principles mentioned in the Midrash but devotes most of his attention to the principles of *derech qetzara* (abbreviation), *muqdam she-hu me'uchar ba-'inyan* (that which appears earlier may be later chronologically), *notarikon* (acronym) and *gimatriya* (numerical correspondence) while expanding and refining them far beyond what is written in the Midrash.²¹

According to Reifmann, the principle of *derech qetzara* applies to cases of biblical lacunae – that is, a word or words missing from the verse, as well as instances of one or more letters missing from a word. The principle of *muqdam she-hu me'uchar* applies to cases of interchange in the order of words and interchange and transposition (metathesis) of letters within a word. Within the category of *notarikon* Reifmann includes cases in which two, three and even four words were combined using their initials into one word and cases in which a word appears abbreviated, without some of its final letters. With regard to the principle of *gimatriya* Reifmann argues that it is a derivative of the Greek word *grammateia* (γραμματεία). In this category Reifmann includes cases of interchanges of letters for phonetical and graphic reasons.²² These

Principle of 'derech qetzara' [= abbreviation] from the Thirty-Two Principles of Rabbi R. Eliezer ben Yossi ha-Glili] (Breslau: D. Schatzki, H. Soltzbach, 1881).

19. H.G. Enelow, *The Mishnah of Rabbi Eliezer or the Midrash of Thirty-Two Hermeneutic Rules* (New York: Bloch, 1933).

20. The attribution of the Midrash to the Tanna Rabbi Eliezer was accepted by all the sages of the Middle Ages but has been rejected by modern scholarship. The dating of the Midrash has not yet been determined; see the bibliography in R.C. Steiner, 'Muqdam u-Me'uchar and Muqaddam wa-Mu'ahhar: On the History of Some Hebrew and Arabic Terms for *Hysteron Proteron* and *Anastrophe*', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 66 (2007), pp. 39–40 n. 41.

21. *Meshiv Davar*, pp. 27–9, 49–63.

22. γραμματεία (from γράμμα 'letter' or γράμματευσ 'writer') means, among other things,

four principles in effect cover the most important known textual phenomena in the study of the text of the Bible.

In his books *Minchat Zikaron* and *Meshiv Davar*, Reifmann compiled close to two hundred examples of biblical readings in accordance with these principles while continuously pointing out that he had many other examples which he was unable to include. All of the examples are from the books of the Prophets and Writings but in certain cases he brought supporting examples from the Torah. His suggestions are based on reasoning and he often brings in support from the Aramaic translations, from the Syriac translation and from classical rabbinic literature. A few of his examples are known from the writings of critical Bible scholars from the modern period,²³ but they comprise an insignificant minority of a plethora of complex proposals, some of which are completely unnecessary and reveal more than anything else a creative mind and extensive methodological licence.

As stated above, most of the scholars of Reifmann's work and even many of his contemporaries regarded the suggestions for alternative readings as suggestions for the correction of the text. In my opinion they are wrong. Reifmann's proposed readings imply that the text of the Bible intentionally included abbreviations and missing letters and words and can be characterized by the use of complex grammatical and stylistic phenomena. These features are the work of the authors of the Bible themselves, an integral part of its unique character and style, and not mistakes which occurred in the process of its transmission. In other words, Reifmann's proposals are not suggestions for emendations to the traditional text but rather exegetical comments based on a number of fixed and proven key principles. It can be inferred from his methodology that the difficulty in understanding the Bible is not the result of corruptions which developed in the course of its long transmission, but derives from the fact that the keys to understanding the Bible are no longer known to its readers. In this way Reifmann switched the discussion from the question of the text of the Bible to the question of the language and style of the Bible. In fact he repeatedly states that his method is a direct continuation

the attribution of numerical value to letters, exactly like the Hebrew *gematria*, but it can also refer to all practices of scribes and their work, and in any case is not specific to only a letter-for-letter exchange. See W. Bacher, *Die exegetische Terminologie der jüdischen Traditionsliteratur, Erster Teil: Die bibelexegetische Terminologie der Tannaiten* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs'sche, 1905), p. 127 n. 3; S. Sambursky, 'On the Origin and Significance of the Term Gematria', *Journal of Jewish Studies* 29 (1978), pp. 35–8.

23. Haran, 'Biblical Research', p. 113.

of the method of some of the medieval exegetes and grammarians. These are not empty words. For example, the passages that he clarifies by using the principle *derech qetzara* he compares to the examples from medieval rabbinic exegesis, in particular to the twenty-fifth portal of *Kitāb al-luma* (*Sefer ha-Rikmah*) of Jonah Ibn Janāh.²⁴ In the twenty-fifth portal, Ibn Janāh discusses cases in which ‘the Hebrews [...] remove and take away words [...] to simplify and shorten’.²⁵ In other words, like Ibn Janāh, Reifmann believed that the missing words or letters are normative grammatical and stylistic phenomena appearing in the Bible which must be recognized in order to correctly interpret the Bible. In his opinion, the principle of *muqdam she-hu me’uchar* (earlier which is later) is also a normative grammatical phenomenon familiar to us from the transposition of letters in the words *simlah–salmah* and *kebes–keseb*. In his books Reifmann repeatedly refers to these two examples and it would appear that he saw them as prototypic examples for proving the grammatical admissibility of his suggestions for readings based upon *muqdam she-hu me’uchar*.²⁶ Reifmann connected the principle of *grammateia*, the interchange of letters for phonetic and graphic reasons, to the phenomenon of ‘the exchange of letters’ that the medieval exegetes and grammarians worked on in great detail. This phenomenon can also be included in the category of normative linguistic phenomena appearing both in the Bible and in post-biblical literature, both in Hebrew and in her sister languages.²⁷ In addition, the phenomenon of *notarikon* is not a result of textual corruption but an intentional practice of authors. In his opinion this practice was hinted

24. Reifmann refers to Jonah ibn Janāh as ‘the father of the *pashtanim* (those who interpret according to the plain meaning of the text)’; *Meshiv Davar*, pp. 37, 59.

25. Ibn Janāh, *Sefer ha-Riqmah – Kitāb al-luma* (ed. M. Wilenski; 2nd edn; Jerusalem: ha-‘akademiah le-Lashon ‘ivrit, 1964), p. 263.

26. Among others *Meshiv Davar*, pp. 28, 62; *Minchat Zikaron*, pp. 6, 15; and see J. Reifmann, ‘The Wisdom of the Scriptures’, *Keneset ha-Gedola* 1 (1890), p. 85 (in Hebrew). For the transposition of letters in the words *simlah–salmah* and *kebes–keseb*, see e.g. P. Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, vol. 1 (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Biblico, 1996), pp. 74–5 §17b.

27. On the interchange of letters in the writings of the medieval grammarians (as well as the transposition of letters and the removal or addition of letters), see I. Eldar, ‘An Ancient Genizah Treatise on Interchangeable Letters in Hebrew’, *Tarbiz* 57 (1988), pp. 488–91 (in Hebrew) and the bibliography there; M. Perez, ‘The Application of Permutation of Letters in the Commentaries of Rav Saadia Gaon’, *Tarbiz* 52 (1983), pp. 515–22 (in Hebrew); idem, “‘Permutation of Letters’ in the Biblical Exegesis of R. Abraham ibn Ezra”, *Studies in Bible and Exegesis* V (2000), pp. 249–69 (in Hebrew); and in his doctoral dissertation, ‘The Philological Exegesis of R. Jehuda Ibn Bal’am’ (in Hebrew; Ph.D. thesis, Bar Ilan University, 1978), pp. 327–406. See also A. Maman, *Comparative Semitic Philology in the Middle Ages: From Sa’adiah Gaon to Ibn Barūn (10th – 12th C.)* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), *passim*.

at in the Bible itself in the expression ‘expert scribe’ (*sofer mahir*; Ps. 45:2), the meaning of which, according to Reifmann, is a scribe who writes according to the method of *notarikon*.²⁸

Reifmann therefore presents his method as a direct continuation of the grammatical and stylistic principles discovered within the Bible by Rabbi Eliezer, used later by the medieval biblical exegetes and grammarians, rules that do not in any way relate to the question of the text of the Bible. In fact, Reifmann neither discusses the text of the Bible, in any place, nor presents his suggestions for readings as corrections of a corrupted text. In contrast, he wrote many clarifications stressing that all of his work is based on normative grammatical rules. For example, he stresses that ‘The letters *aleph*, *hey*, *vav* and *yod* are interchangeable’,²⁹ and notes their tendency to drop out of words: ‘the *aleph* disappeared, as is the way with the letters *aleph*, *hey*, *vav* and *yod*’.³⁰ Reifmann refers to this type of grammatical rule, which he mentioned also in letters to friends,³¹ as ‘a linguistic rule’ and ‘the way of our holy tongue’,³² expressions which indicate that under discussion are normative grammatical phenomena. Reifmann often notes, at the end of his suggested readings, that he could bring in examples from other verses for the linguistic or stylistic principles upon which he relied (as he puts it, ‘and also many more’). This repeated comment is another indication that he was dealing with normative phenomena. In several cases he connects his comments to the manner of expression and style of the authors of the Bible. For example: ‘the authors of our holy books sometimes chose [to write in this way]’;³³ ‘it is the way of the Bible in many places to write first in vague language and to explain it well afterwards’;³⁴ and so forth. Sometimes he would question the reasoning of the authors: for example, ‘the metaphor lacks a reference [...] and perhaps they did

28. *Meshiv Davar*, pp. 50–52.

29. *Minchat Zikaron*, p. 7.

30. *Minchat Zikaron*, p. 13.

31. Among others in a letter to Judah Leib Gordon (The National Library, Jerusalem, Arc. 4° 761): ‘The omission of the connecting *vav* occurs in our holy books’ (on Job 3:3); ‘Rabbi Abraham ibn Ezra has already written on the omission of the letters *aleph*, *hey*, *vav* and *yod*’ (on Job 22:1).

32. *Meshiv Davar*, pp. 22–4; *Minchat Zikaron*, p. 10, and many others. See also: ‘the author of this *braitā* listed thirty-two principles for interpreting our holy books and most of them are based on the special properties of the Hebrew language’ (*Meshiv Davar*, p. 65); and afterwards he mentions that ‘there are many more rules in teaching about the roots and letters and the use of the language’ where his intention is to rely upon them in the future in order to use them to clarify the written word.

33. *Meshiv Davar*, p. 25.

34. *Minchat Zikaron*, p. 13.

not want to create trouble',³⁵ and similarly 'and perhaps [the author] did not want to utter a curse'.³⁶ In several places he makes it clear that his suggestions are based on a correct understanding of ancient Hebrew: 'discoveries made by speaking the language'.³⁷ These comments are further indications that the focus of the discussion is on questions of language and style.

The conclusion that Reifmann's proposals belong to the category of biblical exegesis rather than biblical criticism can be inferred also from many of the proposals themselves. I will limit myself to one representative example relating to the meaning of the name 'Esau' from which it is possible to form an impression of Reifmann's unique style of specifying many proof texts for his suggested readings:

'Esau' is similar to *chesav* [*chet-samech-vav*] or *kesav* [*kaf-samech-vav*]. The *chet* and the *kaf* are sometimes interchangeable with the 'ayin. See Psalms [97:11]: or *zaru'a* ['light is sown'] instead of *zaru'ach* [Reifmann cites additional examples of the interchange of letters from the classical Midrashim, the Aramaic and Syriac translations and the Samaritan Bible.] [...] By the way, I will mention that the words *litmon be-chubi* 'avony ['Bury my wrongdoing in my bosom', Job 31:33] include a variant of the word *cheik* ['bosom'] [in other words an interchange of the *beit* and the *quf*]. And also *samech* interchanges with the letter *sin*, as in: *ve-sakoty kapy 'aleicha* ['and shield you with My hand', Exod. 33:22] [written with a *sin*] instead of *ve-sakoty* [with a *samech*] from the root *samech-kaf-kaf*; *be-sury me-hem* ['I turn away from them', Hos. 9:12] [with a *sin*] instead of *be-sury* [with a *samech*], and many more similar examples. On the basis of all of this it is nearly certain, as I wrote above, that 'Esau' is similar to *chesav* [*chet-samech-vav*] or *kesav* [*kaf-samech-vav*], and he was called that because he was 'all over like a hairy mantle' [Gen. 25:25], which was for him as a camouflage and a covering [...] and by means of the aforementioned interchange of the *chet* with the 'ayin is it mentioned above that 'anak [giant] ['ayin-nun-quf] is similar to *chanak* [choked] [*chet-nun-quf*] [...] and just as the 'ayin replaces the *chet*, so the *chet* replaces the 'ayin as in the word *tachamosu* ['you will devise', Job 21:27] [with a *chet*], which is similar to *ta'amosu* [with an 'ayin] [...]. 'Asu written with a *shin* is from the Arabic root k-s-h [*kise*] [...] and it is known that the *shin* in Arabic replaces the *sin* in Hebrew.³⁸

It is clear that Reifmann is not arguing here that the name 'Esau' in the Bible is a corruption and that the name should appear everywhere as *kesav* or *chesav*. His comment does not in any way touch upon the question of textual

35. Ibid., p. 9.

36. Ibid., p. 11.

37. *Meshiv Davar*, p. 25.

38. *Mo'adei Erev*, pp. 15–16.

integrity but rather deals with grammatical and stylistic rules. In this case, as in many others, Reifmann mentions the Syriac translation, the Aramaic translation and brings in material from classical rabbinic sources. These sources are brought in as support for the interpretation he proposes, similar to the support that he brings in from other biblical passages and from the context, not in order to argue that the authors of these sources had before them a different text of the verse.

Reifmann's books include around two hundred suggested readings, and in most cases it is clear that his comments relate to exegesis and not to textual criticism. Of all of his comments, I have found the following three notes from which it could be inferred that Reifmann is raising doubts about the traditional text. However, in light of the nature of his research taken as a whole, it is possible that it is not correct to understand them in this way.

- (1) Reifmann comments on the verse *taleh chalav echad va-ya'lehu* [ketiv: *va-ya'aleh*] ['There upon Samuel took a [one] suckling lamb and sacrificed it as a whole burnt offering to the Lord', 1 Sam. 7:9] that 'in the textual versions that lay before some of the sages, *echad* (one) did not appear'.³⁹ This comment clearly implies that some of the sages participating in the discussions in the Talmud had before them a different version of the text. Nonetheless, there is nothing here to indicate that this version, which was not preserved, is preferable and that our text must be emended to conform to it.
- (2) Reifmann comments with regard to the verse *magefah achat le-kulam* ['for the same plague struck all of you and your lords', 1 Sam. 6:4] that the 'Syriac translates *lakon* and this indicates that it reads [the Hebrew word] *lachem* instead of *le-kulam*'.⁴⁰ From his words it is clear that the suggested reading that he proposes is reflected in the translation. However, it is possible that his intention is not to argue that the Hebrew text that lay in front of the translator was different from the traditional version but that the translator, out of exegetical licence, chose not to translate literally. The comprehensive research of Reifmann on the Aramaic translations

39. *Minchat Zikaron*, p. 9. His reference is to the opinion of Rabbi Nachman bar Yitzhak in the Babylonian Talmud, Tractate 'Abodah Zarah (24:b), according to which the ketiv reading of the text as *ve-ya'aleh(a)* makes it possible to understand that the verse speaks of a female lamb, and from this it is possible to conclude that his version of the text did not include the word *echad*, which would indicate that the verse refers to a male lamb.

40. *Minchat Zikaron*, p. 9.

supports this understanding. His book *Darchei ha-Metargemim* contains many examples in which he demonstrates the exegetical considerations that led the translators to reject a literal translation, and there he is clearly not suggesting that a different Hebrew text lay in front of the translators.⁴¹

- (3) Reifmann comments with regard to 2 Chronicles 32:24: ‘the content [of the prayer of Hezekiah] is missing and in the Syriac translation it appears [...]: “And he said you have done many things with me, and I have not been recompensed according to my deeds”.’⁴² Also here it cannot necessarily be inferred from his words that the prayer of Hezekiah was included in the Hebrew copy text used by the Syriac translator. It seems to me that in his opinion it was the Syriac translator who added the prayer, presumably on the basis of parallel verses in 2 Kings 20 and Isaiah 38.⁴³ It is possible to bring in additional indirect support for my thesis. In the context of ‘The Wisdom of the Scriptures’ Reifmann raised the possibility that the Syriac translator had in front of him a different Hebrew copy text: ‘and it is beyond me to understand the reasoning of this translator and to know if the text in front of him was worded like the text in front of us or was a different version’.⁴⁴ The straightforward wording indicates that in the case of the prayer of Hezekiah Reifmann did not wish to lead his readers to a similar conclusion.

The conclusion that in his books Reifmann discusses linguistic and stylistic phenomena rather than textual criticism of the Bible is demonstrated therefore by his method in general and by his proof texts in particular. It is also revealed indirectly by the fact that he repeatedly emphasizes the points of similarity between his method and the methods of the medieval scholars and grammarians who dealt with grammatical and stylistic phenomena rather than the question of the integrity of the biblical text. This conclusion is corroborated by the following three factors:

41. *Ma'amar darchei ha-metargemim ha-arami'im be-be'ureihem* [The Exegetical Methods of the Aramaic Translators' Article] (in Hebrew; St Petersburg: Be'ermann, Rabinovitz, 1891).

42. *Minchat Zikaron*, p. 15.

43. It is possible that Reifmann was influenced here by the interpretation attributed to Rashi on 2 Chronicles 32:24: ‘He prayed to the Lord – as is delineated in Kings ... and the author of this book [= Ezra] abridged it here [in Chronicles] because it is described in Kings and in Isaiah.’ Reifmann mentions the commentary on Chronicles attributed to Rashi several times in his work and it is clear that he was very familiar with it.

44. ‘Notes’, p. 347, concerning Amos 6:10.

- (1) Alongside Reifmann's comments about the principles *derech qetzara*, *muqdam she-hu me'uchar ba-'inyan*, *notarikon* and *gimatriya* (*grammateia*), he discusses additional principles known from the 'Midrash of the thirty-two principles'. These additional principles have no bearing whatsoever, even indirectly, on the question of the biblical text. Reifmann's research was thus clearly devoted to revealing the principal characteristics that distinguish the Bible from other books. In his words: 'Who is wise and knows their ways [of the books of the Bible] which are different from the ways of secular books?'⁴⁵
- (2) We know of the sayings of scholars of the period, some active before Reifmann, some after him, who used a similar methodology. For example, Mordechai Plongian (Vilna, 1814–1883) in various places in his commentaries to the Five Scrolls comments on grammatical and stylistic phenomena, and his words are a kind of polemic against scholars who assume the existence of corruptions in the text. For example: 'There is missing here the letter *hey* from the word *noheg* as sometimes happens in the Bible'; 'The verb expresses the plural in the singular form as often happens in the Bible'; 'The *aleph* is in place of the *vav* as happens sometimes in the Bible'.⁴⁶ Like Reifmann, Plongian also makes a connection between these comments and the method of the medieval commentators and grammarians.⁴⁷ Eisik Hirsch Weiss (Moravia, 1815–1905) made a similar comment in his review of the commentary of Heinrich Graetz to the Psalms: '[what] the early grammarians [...] called the aspects and customs of the language, the author [Graetz] calls scribal error and corruption.'⁴⁸ Previous to Reifmann, Zvi Hirsch Katzenellenbogen (1796–1868) raised the idea that the 'Midrash of the thirty-two principles' includes rules for understanding the Bible according to its plain meaning [*peshat*].⁴⁹ The points of similarity between comments such as those of Plongian and Weiss and the method of Reifmann, on the one hand, and a certain

45. *Meshiv Davar*, p. 39f.

46. M. Plongian, *Book of the Vineyard, which Gives New and Sufficient Light on the Book of Qohelet* (in Hebrew; Vilna: Re'em, 1857), pp. 33, 65, 72.

47. See in particular his commentary to the Song of Songs: *Book of the Vineyard of Solomon which Gives New Light on Song of Songs* (in Hebrew; Vilna: Re'em, 1878), p. 30.

48. E.H. Weiss, 'Book Review', *Beit Talmud* 3 (1883), p. 349 (in Hebrew). See also Z.H. Shershewsky, 'Scriptural Exegeses', *ha-Shachar* 2 (1871), p. 24 (in Hebrew).

49. Z.H. Katzenellenbogen, *Netivot 'Olam* [Pathways of the World] (in Hebrew; Vilna: Zimel, 1822).

affinity between Reifmann and Katzenellenbogen, on the other hand, indicate, indirectly, that Reifmann was also discussing linguistic and stylistic questions rather than questions of textual criticism of the Bible. Reifmann does not reveal anything specific with regard to his sources. However, he knew Mordechai Plongian personally and considered him a friend.⁵⁰ Reifmann was also very familiar with Katzenellenbogen's book.⁵¹

(3) In his book *Darchei ha-Metargemim* Reifmann notes that, in addition to the literal translation, the translators translated according to several established principles: transposition of letters, interchange of letters having a graphic or tonal similarity, the omission of letters and *notarikon*.⁵² These rules of translation reflect an intentional practice of the translators rather than the existence of a different Hebrew copy text. It is not a coincidence that these methods are identical to the ways of *derech qetzara*, *muqdam she-hu me'uchar ba-'inyan*, *notarikon* and *gimatriya* (*grammateia*) which Reifmann presented in his books and upon which he based his suggested readings. From this comparison it is possible perhaps to infer the assumption that the Bible, like its Aramaic translations, is characterized by many very interesting linguistic and stylistic phenomena which are the work of its authors rather than random textual occurrences.

Reifmann's position between tradition and critical analysis

Modern scholarship emphasizes that it is not always possible to establish with certainty if a given textual phenomenon is the product of the long period of the formation of one of the books of the Bible or of a later stage in which the complete book is copied over and over, as a result of which corruptions develop within it.⁵³ However, it would appear that the works of Reifmann

50. In one of his letters, he notes that 'my friend Rabbi R.M. Plongian pointed out to me' and so forth; The National Library, Jerusalem, Arc. Schwad, 01 20 295 (§18b).

51. See *Meshiv Davar*, pp. 25, 32. In this context, see also the words of Eisik Hirsch Weiss written about a year before Reifmann published his book *Meshiv Davar*: 'if you examine the thirty-two principles of interpretation listed by Rabbi Eliezer the son of Rabbi Yossi ha-Glili you will find that most ... are useful in understanding the Scriptures according to their plain meaning' ('A Verse Never Departs from Its Plain Meaning', *Beit ha-Miderash* 1 [1865], p. 51 [in Hebrew]), and after the publication of *Meshiv Davar*, Weiss published a favourable review of the book, from which it is apparent that he did not connect the proposals of Reifmann to textual criticism of the Bible: 'this method [of Reifmann] protects the honour [of the sages] by silencing the slander of many' ('Book Review', *ha-Magid* 11:18 (1867), pp. 142-3 [in Hebrew]).

52. *Darchei ha-Metargemim*.

53. The most thorough introduction to the field of biblical criticism is E. Tov, *Textual Criticism of*

reveal a clear distinction between these two stages: the examples cited in his books deal with the intentional activity of authors and belong to the drawn-out developmental stage of biblical literature. These suggested readings must be distinguished from the few suggestions he made in ‘The Wisdom of the Scriptures’ which belong to the stage of the transmission of the books of the Bible and reveal his recognition that the biblical text contains corruptions.

The distinction proposed here between the suggestions for textual emendation raised by Reifmann in the context of ‘The Wisdom of the Scriptures’ and the rest of his works, which were devoted to normative grammatical and stylistic phenomena, indicates a lack of methodological consistency in his work. It is impossible to shake off the impression that Reifmann could have without difficulty explained the examples that he raised in the context of ‘The Wisdom of the Scriptures’ as an intentional act of the authors of the Bible and alternatively could have presented at least part of the examples that he brought in his books as suggestions for emending corrupted text. This lack of methodological consistency was not uncommon in nineteenth-century Jewish biblical research. We know of other scholars who proposed suggestions for emendations of the biblical text in the context of specific studies or in letters, while at the same time presenting in other works a different, more traditional position. Among others, Isaac Samuel Reggio (‘Yashar’; Gorizia, 1784–1855) acknowledged in several places the possibility that corruptions had developed in the biblical text.⁵⁴ However, in his major works he maintained that the text of the Bible does not contain corruptions at all.⁵⁵ Similarly, Solomon Judah Rapoport (‘Shir’; Lemberg, 1790–1867) suggested moderate emendations to the text in the spirit of ‘The Wisdom of the Scriptures’, although in other places he repeatedly declared his adherence to the traditional text and expressed outright concern that a challenge to the integrity of the text would place the Holy Scriptures in danger.⁵⁶

It would appear therefore that the scholars of the period expressed their opinions in accordance with the format and principles of the literary genre in

the Hebrew Bible (Minneapolis MN: Fortress Press, 2001).

54. See *Yashar Epistles* (in Hebrew; Vienna: Anton Lohr von Schmidt, 1836), pp. 29–37 (letter 5); *Yalqut Yashar* (Gorizia: Jon. Bap. Seitz, 1854), pp. 41–3, 134–7.

55. See I.S. Reggio, ‘Heavenly Torah’, in idem, *The Book of the Divine Torah Containing the Five Books of Moses Translated to Italian with a New Commentary* (Vienna: Strauss, 1821), pp. 9a–10b (in Hebrew).

56. See Soloveitchik and Rubashov, *The History of Bible Criticism*, pp. 145–6; Shelly, *Bible Study*, p. 69.

which they wrote (in addition to other factors). A specific study of a verse in the forum of ‘The Wisdom of the Scriptures’ is not similar to comprehensive and inclusive research which received wide distribution.⁵⁷ It would appear that the lack of methodological consistency is the result of the encounter between traditional, long-established approaches and new scholarly insights. The struggle between tradition and critical analysis led many scholars to an internal indecision, reflected in both careful wording and a tendency to speak in two voices.

If so, lack of methodological consistency was not an unusual phenomenon in the context of the scholarly literature of the period. It is definitely possible that Reifmann too, like Yashar and Shir, felt that the question of textual criticism of the Bible touched upon very important principles of faith. Nonetheless, he is different from the other scholars in that he did not present in any place a conservative or dogmatic position. His approach is an alternative both to those scholars who suggested textual emendations, foremost among them Shadal,⁵⁸ and conservative scholars who fearlessly defended the biblical text.⁵⁹ It might seem that this approach is a kind of middle way representing the concept of *ha-derech ha-memutza’at* (‘the middle way’), well known and widely accepted in the thought and literature of the nineteenth century.⁶⁰ However, in actuality his approach is very radical because it implies that the Bible contains hundreds of verses that until then had remained unclear and had been interpreted and understood incorrectly. It is clear that Reifmann was well aware of this revolutionary and provocative message, intrinsic to his suggested readings. For this reason he prefaced his books with introductions

57. On this very interesting phenomenon of ‘speaking in two voices’ in accordance with the literary genre and the various target audiences, see T. Ganzel, ‘“He Who Restrains his Lips is Wise” (Proverbs 10:19): Is That Really True?’, D.J. Lasker (ed.), *Jewish Thought and Jewish Believe* (in Hebrew; Beer Sheva: Ben Gurion University Press, 2012), pp. 129–41.

58. Shadal is known for his moderate and reasonable textual emendations, while in the course of the nineteenth century very radical emendators were also active, among them Shneur Sachs, known as ‘Or Shani’ (Lithuania, 1816–92), with whom Reifmann corresponded; see The National Library, Jerusalem, Arc. Schwad, 01 20 295 (§22). On radical emendators, see my article ‘Radical Jewish Study of the Masoretic Text during the Enlightenment Period: Joshua Heschel Schorr, Abraham Krochmal, and Elimelech Bezredki’, *European Journal of Jewish Studies* 10 (2016), pp. 50–78.

59. David Kahana (Odessa, 1838–1915) is one of the most prominent examples of the conservative position; see E. Viezel, ‘The Composition of the Torah and the Consolidation of Its Text in the Writings of David Kahana: A Chapter in the History of Orthodox Jewish Biblical Criticism in the Eastern European Enlightenment’, in E. Viezel and S. Japhet (eds), ‘To Settle the Plain Meaning of the Verse’: *Studies in Biblical Exegesis* (in Hebrew; Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2011), p. 271.

60. E. Chamiel, *The Middle Way: The Emergence of Modern-Religious Trends in 19th Century Judaism* (in Hebrew; Jerusalem: Carmel, 2011).

which proclaimed the need for openness and critical analysis and encouraged his readers to be original and to free themselves from the traditional reading, which he called ‘habit’ (*hergel*).⁶¹ According to my assessment, it was his awareness of the radicalism of his method which led him to limit himself to suggest readings of the verses from the Prophets and Writings and to refrain from similar suggestions for the verses from the Torah. In this also Reifmann reveals a tendency common to scholars of the period. We know of other scholars who studied the Prophets and Writings in an innovative way yet refrained from applying similar analytical tools to the Torah.⁶²

Reifmann’s awareness of the innovativeness of his method can be inferred indirectly also from the fact that he was careful to present his way as the direct continuation of the work of the medieval grammarians, who like him called attention to the various types of linguistic abnormalities. Apparently Reifmann assumed that his readers would accept his approach more readily if he presented it as a natural stage in the history of Jewish biblical research. On this point as well Reifmann is representative of the scholars of his period: critical scholars tended to present their innovative positions as the continuation of the methodology of the medieval scholars, while on the other side conservative scholars also relied upon accepted and authoritative scholars in order to reject innovative positions. Sometimes the same sources were used to present both innovative and conservative positions.⁶³

Conclusion

Until this point I have argued that we must distinguish between, on the one hand, the limited activity of Reifmann in the context of ‘The Wisdom of the Scriptures’, one article in which he proposed a few isolated textual emendations, and, on the other hand, his books in which he presented a systematic methodology directed to grammatical and stylistic phenomena appearing in the Bible. A comparison between the textual emendations

61. For example: ‘it is known that habit will blind the eyes of wise men’ (*Ma’amar Or Boqer*, p. 16, and *Meshiv Davar*, pp. 4, 56–60, 64, 67).

62. So too Shadal, who proposed many textual emendations to the books of the Prophets and Writings, while the few emendations he proposed to the Torah he softened with repeated declarations that the text of the Torah was not corrupted at all; Vargon, *S.D. Luzzato*, pp. 95–108.

63. See, for example, the controversy about the opinion of Rabbi Abraham ibn Ezra that certain verses in the Torah were not written by Moses; Vargon, *S.D. Luzzato*, pp. 402–25.

proposed by Reifmann in his article and the methodology presented in his books indicates the absence of a coherent methodology, and I have already noted that this lack of coherent methodology, not uncommon in the world of Jewish biblical research of the nineteenth century, reflects the tension between criticism and tradition. My conclusion raises fundamental questions about the true connection of Reifmann to his methodology. Did he really believe that the principles by which the Torah is interpreted are the key to correct understanding of the Bible? Did he really assume sincerely that the hundreds of examples that he cited in his books are the intentional actions of authors? Did he connect his methods to the works of the medieval scholars and grammarians for rhetorical reasons only or did he honestly believe that his method represented a natural development of Jewish biblical research?

I cannot provide an unequivocal answer to these questions. Simple logic leads to the conclusion that a man does not build a comprehensive philosophical and methodological oeuvre, the product of long years of effort, which consists entirely of empty rhetoric and illusion. Moreover, from the fact that Reifmann continued to adhere to his method and to refine it even though it brought him criticism which caused him distress, it is possible to deduce that this method reflects a profound inner truth and that he was certain of its rectitude.⁶⁴ In truth, there is at least one good example of a scholar of textual criticism of the Bible who created a magnificent oeuvre which was entirely illusory. I refer to the book of Abraham Krochmal (Zhovkva [Żólkiew]; Galicia 1821–Frankfurt 1888) *ha-Ketab ve-ha-Mikhtab* (The Writ and the Letter), which includes around a thousand suggestions for emending the biblical text.⁶⁵ Krochmal constructed a cover story for his book according to which Moses himself transmitted to Joshua lists of textual emendations. The lists were lost but the students of Abraham Ibn Ezra rewrote them from their own knowledge. They were again lost until

64. Reifmann's distress at the criticism directed against his works is directly expressed in his writings; thus, among other things, he writes, as a paraphrase on Song of Songs 5: 'Not only one or two of the watchmen of vain speech found me, they smote me, they wounded me and took my honour from me'; *Meshiv Davar*, p. 57.

65. The full title of the book is: *The Writ and the Letter to the Torah Nebi'im and Ketubim, the Writ is the Writing of Man and the Letter Is the Word of God, This Book Is the Manuscript That Was Found Hidden Under a Rock Near the City of Międzybóž in the Podolia Region of the Country of Ruthenia, to Which Is Added a Commentary and Brief Explanation in German* (Lemberg: Budweiser, 1874). The German title is different: *Haksaw Wehamichtow oder Schrift und Urschrift: Eine zur Bibelerklärung wichtige alte Handschrift, welche der Sage nach identificirt wird, mit dem von Herder erwähnten Bibelkommentare des Baruch Benedict Spinoza*.

Baruch Spinoza rewrote them from his own knowledge. The lists ended up in the hands of the Baal Shem Tov (Rabbi Israel ben Eliezer), who hid them under a rock. The hundreds of suggested textual emendations published by Krochmal are therefore (as it were) suggestions raised by previous scholars and not his own original proposals.⁶⁶ In constructing this convoluted cover story, Krochmal was apparently influenced by the genre of parody used by other contemporary writers in order to attack conservative opinions.⁶⁷ The same cannot be said about Reifmann's books, which appear to be very serious.

If so, Reifmann's books themselves reveal that his method reflects a profound inner truth. Nonetheless, we cannot ignore the aforementioned article in which he presents isolated examples of textual corruptions. The fact that these are insignificant numerically in comparison to the many examples that he includes in his books is irrelevant – his article forces us to acknowledge that he did not reject the possibility that corruptions developed in the text of the Bible. It is possible to resolve this difficulty by hypothesizing that the examples brought in by Reifmann in his books comprise two groups unequal in size: on the one hand, many tens of examples reflecting linguistic and stylistic phenomena, which are the work of the authors of the Bible, and, on the other hand, examples with regard to which it is not possible to determine with certainty if they reflect the intentional work of the authors or corruptions of the text. Reifmann's systematic methodology and the way in which he presents the proof texts do not allow us to distinguish

66. Krochmal devoted the Hebrew introduction to the book to a description of this wondrous chain of events and worked diligently to lend credibility to the story: he added two introductions which he had supposedly found, an introduction by Spinoza and an introduction by the students of Abraham Ibn Ezra. He organized the book in such a way that it was easy to distinguish between the original lists of emendations which the Baal Shem Tov had hidden and the notes of Krochmal himself. In his own original comments he was careful to disguise the fact that he had thought of the emendations himself or borrowed them from contemporary works. For some of the sources from which Krochmal gathered his proposed emendations, see J.H. Schorr, *he-Halutz* 10 (1878), pp. 70–108 (in Hebrew); and for additional proposed emendations of Krochmal, see A. Ben Ezra, 'Additions to *The Writ and the Letter* of Abraham Krochmal', in idem, *Studies in Hebrew Language* (in Hebrew; Tel Aviv: Aqad, 1990), pp. 121–50.

67. On this supposition, see A.L. Nadler, 'The Besht as Spinozist – Abraham Krochmal's Preface to "*Ha-Ketav ve-ha-Mikhtav*": Introduction and Translation', in D. Frank and M. Goldish (eds), *Rabbinic Culture and Its Critics: Jewish Authority, Dissent, and Heresy in Medieval and Early Modern Times* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2008), pp. 359–89. There is good reason to consider the possibility that Krochmal was influenced to some extent by the biting satires against the Hasidim written by Joseph Perl (Ternopil, 1773–1839) in the first half of the nineteenth century. On parody in Jewish literature, see I. Davidson, *Parody in Jewish Literature* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1907), esp. pp. 61–72, 237 §206.

which of them, in his opinion, might reflect textual corruptions. If there is substance to this hypothesis, it implies that Reifmann intentionally chose not to present anywhere explicit deliberations about whether it was correct to solve the questions raised in the examples on a grammatical-stylistic level or on a textual level.⁶⁸ In this he reflects the tendencies of other contemporary scholars who, as we have seen, felt obligated to express themselves very cautiously with regard to anything that touched upon the question of textual criticism of the Bible.

If the hypothesis that I have suggested here is correct, the many examples that Reifmann employs in his books include cases in which it is impossible to determine if they are the deliberate work of the authors or corruptions of the text. However, whether there is truth in my theory or not, I see no reason to continue to simply regard the hundreds of examples brought in by Reifmann as suggestions for emending the text of the Bible, as most of the previous scholars have done.

68. As he did in the aforementioned article with regard to his deliberations on whether the translator added material of his own or had in front of him a different Hebrew copy text; see text following note 40 above.