REFERENCES TO BEN ASHER AND BEN NAFTALI IN THE
MASSORA MAGNA WRITTEN IN THE MARGINS OF
MS LENINGRAD B 19a.

FERNANDO DÍAZ ESTEBAN

It is a well-known fact that many MSS record in the margins of their Hebrew Bible text observations stating that this or that reading represents a Ben Asher or a Ben Naftali tradition. Perhaps the best-known note of this type is that of folios 40b and 106a of MS Or. 4445 of the British Museum, where "the Great Teacher Ben Asher" is mentioned without the usual eulogy "may he rest in Paradise". C. D. Ginsburg believed that this note was inserted when the famous Massorete was still alive.¹ In spite of the recent acceptance of this theory by G. Weil,² I cannot agree with it. It seems, on the contrary, to be more likely to be contemporary with the note containing the formula "his rest in Paradise" found in the controversial colophon of MS. B 19a, which appears to have been written close to the great teacher's death, when his loss could be felt acutely. This subjective emotion faded with the time, and for the following generations Ben Asher became an authority to whom one referred in an objective manner. It should further be borne in mind that the date of the original redaction of such a note may precede considerably its recurrent copying, and its ultimate inclusion in a datable MS. Of course, I accept the venerable antiquity of MS Or. 4445, but I also think that the Massoretic notes can only serve as a terminus post quem of the completion of a codex (e.g., a MS which mentions Ben Asher in a note certainly is later than BA), but by no means can they prove that the codex is contemporaneous with them, since the Massora was successively accumulated from earlier materials.³

MS B 19a of Leningrad has some references to Ben Asher and Ben Naftali in its Massora Magna written in the upper and lower margins of the Biblical text. It is certain that by the time these notes were composed, Ben Asher

² G. E. Weil, "La nouvelle édition de la Massorah (BHK IV) et l'histoire de la Massorah", Suppl. to VT, Congress Volume, Bonn 1962 (Leiden 1963) 267 n. 6. P. E. Kahle also adhered to this theory in Der hebräische Bibeltext seit Franz Delitzsch (Stuttgart 1961) 77.
³ F. Díaz, "Notas sobre la Masora", Sefarad 14 (1954) 316. This fact was already seen by Ginsburg, op. cit., 444.
and Ben Naftali already were objective data, referred to without any personal emotion. The customary eulogy for the deceased does not follow their names, in contrast to the one used in the colophon “may he rest in Paradise”. This colophon is not necessarily a fabrication.\(^4\) It only reflects the pious desire of an admirer of the Ben Asher School, as is usual in narratives, larger reports and dedications.

The mention of BA or BN in the Massora Magna (hitherto known only from the Massora Parva, as a marginal note) compels us to ask: are these notes related to the official lists of differences between BA and BN? Are the readings attributed to one or another teacher authentic, although not found in these official lists? In which relation to BA and BN stood the other authorities mentioned? Do these notes bear witness to erasures in B 19a intended to bring its text in line with the so-called BA text? Is the Lipschütz edition of the Khilāf\(^5\) reliable?

I found the references to BA and to other Massoretes when I was working on the Massora of B 19a at Professor Kahle’s home (in 1954; at Charlbury nr. Oxford) on the basis of a copy which he had obtained from the trustees of the Leningrad Public Library. My present remarks are written as a humble homage to the memory of the teacher, friend and generous gentleman to whom I showed those notes when I was a beginner in the study of the Massora.

**The Marginal Reference in MS Leningrad B19a**

[1].-- folio 328 recto bottom

(1 Chr. 1: 17) 

(1 Chr. 2: 5) 

(\(\text{ga’ya}\)) 

(\(\text{merkha}\)) 

[2].-- folio 371 r. top

(Ps. 31: 12) 

(Ps. 45: 10) 

(Ps. 45: 5) 

[3].-- folio 374 verso top

(Ps. 45: 10) 

(Ps. 45: 5) 

\(\text{merkha}\)

4 The problem is not yet settled. J. Teicher raised serious doubts as to the authenticity of the colophons, whereas Kahle maintained their authenticity.

5 *Textus* 2 (1962) \(\text{מ–ר}\). Henceforth *Lip*.


7 *Ga’ya*, a vertical stroke later named by the grammarians *meteg*.

8 The accent *merkha*.
[4].-- fol. 377 r. top

(Ps. 58: 7) על מותי חסינים עמלים (Ps. 62: 4) על מותי חסינים עמלים

(ib. 58: 7) על מותי חסינים עמלים (Ps. 62: 4) על מותי חסינים עמלים

[5].-- fol. 377 v. bottom

 juegos

(Ps. 62: 4) על מותי חסינים עמלים

(ib. 3: 5) על מותי חסינים עמלים

[6].-- fol. 389 v. bottom

(Ps. 109: 16) גמה ורובה ו싸ה לכל למתה (Ps. 4: 7) אור פלך והוה (Prov. 8: 13) ופי התמך שဏא

(ausz. על מותי חסינים עמלים)

[7].-- fol. 392 r. top

(Ps. 46: 9) על מותי חסינים עמלים (Ps. 116: 17) על מותי חסינים עמלים (Ps. 119: 94) על מותי חסינים עמלים (Ps. 51: 2) בקמע אליי

[in Ps., Prov., Job always smear them with a smear of the Ps. 119: 94, ga’ya, munaḥ, no maqṣef]

(116: 17) על מותי חסינים עמלים

[ga’ya and maqṣef]

[8].-- fol. 393 r. top

(Ps. 122: 4) על מותי חסינים עמלים (Ps. 123: 2) על מותי חסינים עמלים (ib. 122: 4) על מותי חסינים עמלים

The vowel qamas, here /a/, but elsewhere in the Masora it stands for /e/, as known from the Masoret ha-Masorei by Elias Levita.

There is a difference of views. Some place the accent below.” Instead of millemattah, other sources read litethom. There is some controversy about the meaning of these words N. Allony takes it as an injunction to place “the tone on the last syllable”. However, I think that it has a graphic connotation: “under the line of writing”. A graphic change, though, implies also a phonetic one. Cp. Ginsburg, The Massorah I p. 189, where the same note reads:

(Ps. 4: 7) על מותי חסינים עמלים (Ps. 109: 16) על מותי חסינים עמלים (Prov. 8: 13) על מותי חסינים עמלים

No reference is made to “there is a controversy: below”. It is clear from this note that millera’ means here “above” in a graphic sense: Й not Й. I wonder if the ga’ya also is meant to be placed above the words. I did not know references for such a possibility, but reading I. Yeivin’s “A Biblical Fragment with Tiberian Non-Masoretic Vocalisation”, Tarbiz 29 (1960) 355–356, I found that qibbas in some cases is written above the letter (Mann, Texts and Studies p. 110). Yeivin thinks that the ga’ya could be written also above the letter, and thus was confused with the qadmah.

“These and all similar cases in the three (poetical) books always carry a ga’ya and shofar” (named by later grammarians munaḥ).

“These and all the resembling cases have ga’ya.”
As we can see, the authorities recorded besides BA and BN are the Teachers of Tiberias, Rabbi Pinehas and the Mahzor Rabba. Our information about them is rather meager:

*The Teachers of Tiberias* is a rather vague expression. It seems to refer to the school of Tiberian Massoretes as a whole, or to its founders, or else to a group of Tiberian Massoretes who are not to be identified with either the BA or the BN School. I am leaning to the hypothesis that the term refers to a group of Massoretes who had been active even before Moshe ben Asher, Aharon's father. However, I cannot ascertain whether the *Teachers* (ברלין) of Tiberias are identical with the Men of Tiberias quoted in marginal notes of MS B 19a. *Rabbi Pinehas, President of the Academy* is quoted very often in the Massora as a propounder of isolated and original views (at fol. 445 v. top, he alone is

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13 “The first time it has *merkha* (verse 1), the second *munah*”.
14 “Both cases with *munah*”.
16 *Ḥittah* occurs twice in the Bible, in Ezra 7:28 with *ga’ya* according to BN.
quoted). Personal data about him are not yet clearly known. The *Mahzor Rabba* (henceforth MR) is discussed by Ginsburg in his Introduction. A *mahzor* or liturgical cycle is a collection of prayers and hymns for the whole year. Sometimes, the Hebrew Bible text was appended to it. Thus the *mahzor* could become a model codex for Bible copies, to the extent that ultimately the very term underwent a semantic change and became synonymous with a Bible codex (in this sense is used also by the writer of the colophon in MS Leningrad B 19a). The Massora sometimes quotes *Mahzor Rabba* (Ginsburg) or *Mahzor Robah* (MS Leningrad B 19a). Twice (Deut. 31:1; 1 Sam. 22:17) the quotation is in agreement with the BN reading. This induced Ginsburg to assume that the *Mahzor Rabba* followed BN views. The evidence presented here leads me to believe that it was an independent codex which at times paralleled the BA tradition, and at times that of BN, while sometimes it diverged from either.

It now remains to see whether the contents of the notes from the Leningrad MS are supported by other sources and whether they are found in the Bible text of B 19a itself: I use the Ben 'Uzziel list of differences between BA and BN as published by Lipschütz, and also the as yet unpublished study of my former student Licenciada Maria Josefa Ascárraga, dealing with the same differences and based on the photocopies of several manuscripts put at her disposal by the late Prof. Kahle. I did not make use of the *Digduge ha-Te'amim*, since the editions available at present have evoked much criticism. The perusal of the pertinent material in that work was therefore deferred until after its new edition by A. Dothan who, I hope, in the meantime may make some comments on my paper.

The verses contained in the previous notes are:

Ps. 4:722 [6] MR: אֶדֶרִים קְדוֹשִׁים ('azla and 'illuy accents)

Controversy: accent below.

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17 In his *Introduction* and his *Massorah*, Ginsburg collected several readings of R. Pinehas'. See note 15.
19 The term *mahzor*, meaning "codex", is also used by the copyist of the Cairo Codex of the Prophets, besides *defter* and *sefer*.
21 Henceforth *Azc*. Her work was carried out in Madrid under the supervision of Prof. Pérez Castro. She only deals with the differences and does not refer at all to concurrences. Her conclusions will soon be published.
As seen by Lip., this passage also concerns the BA–BN traditions:

and according to MS C:

But Azc 148

149 (= C)

Ad.

The manuscript readings are vexing. According to Lip., BA agrees with the MR in placing the accent over רוא, but according to 149 it is placed below. Only one thing is sure: BN always has the accent below, and therefore it cannot be said that he follows the MR tradition. The B 19a text agrees with the MR and at the same time, at least in part, with BA (pace Lip.):

Ps. 31: 1223 [2] BA: המכל גזרתי הלשון (azla and hatef) BN: המכל גזרתי הלשון(nullptr, hatef) BN has maqqef and scriptio plena.

According to Lip., BA has maqqef and scriptio plena. In Azc. 149 both have maqqef and scriptio plena.

No reference is made to the last word in the lists of differences (but vide G. 15). The B 19a text follows BA. I am not sure whether originally בורה was written, but was erased to make it conform with the scriptio defectiva בורה; however, it is very likely that a ga’ya (?) was erased between the lamed and the shin, before the hatef-patah (ליעל of G. 15?).


Lip. and Azc. point only to the maqqef (BA) and munah (BN). The text of B 19a follows BA.

Ps. 45: 1025 [3] BA: בכר (shewa under the preposition, and hireq under the yod) BN: בכר (hireq under the preposition, and nothing under the yod).

This rubric follows a well-known rule relating BA–BN differences. All MSS agree here, except for Azc. 149 which adds (גמ) a ga’ya to BN. Ad. adds to BN ד (no mappiq in the yod) according to Lip. note 7. The text of B 19a follows BA and also has a dagesh in the qof גומ, not found in MSS. This resulted possibly from the smallness of the letters in Massorah notes.

Ps. 46:9 [26] BN: המנה (munah and dehi) in accord with the rule that BN has in the poetical books ga’ya and shofar (=munah). Nothing is said of BA, and we may guess that he had here ga’ya and maqqeef. Lip. and Azc. confirm the maqqeef for BA. but Azc. is silent about the ga’ya.

The B 19a text follows BA, with ga’ya and maqqeef as in Lip.: המנה

Ps. 51:2 [27] BN: והוא אליל (with ga’ya and munah), as ruled above. Very likely, BA should have ga’ya and maqqeef, as stated in Lip. p. 66 note f. Ben ’Uzziel places Ps. 51:2 among the concurrences of BA and BN. The B 19a text has ga’ya and maqqeef as may be assumed for BA: הנ Cached

Ps. 58:7 [28] BN: והוא שערית נין (ga’ya or merkha, maqqeef) and (merkha with paseq).

BA: הערית שערית נין (qamas hatuf, maqqeef) and (munah with paseq).

Lip. has הערית for BA, but no indication of a ga’ya for BN, which is vocalized as in holom. Azc. 148? and 149 has no maqqeef for BA, but shewa holom and maqqeef for BN, also with no indication of a ga’ya. Lip. has הערית for BA (scriptio plena, munah and paseq), and scriptio plena, תרה and paseq for BN. Azc. has no paseq, scriptio defectiva and munah for BA, and merkha for BN, with the note המראות. The B 19a text follows BA in הערית and הערית

Ps. 62:4 [29] BA: וְאִשְׁתָּחַ הָרְשִׁי (with qamas); BN: וְאֱשֶׁתָּה (with patah). This note is not found in the official lists, either in Lip. or in Azc. It seems that the difference pertains to the verbal form: pu’al for BA and pi’el for BN. This abnormal pu’al with qamas is dealt with in Bauer-Leander, Hebräische Grammatik, paragraph 45z and page 362a. The B 19a text follows BA וְאִשְׁתָּחַ (the dagesh is omitted in the note).

27 Ib. 607: וְאִשְׁתָּחַ for BA and BN, but does not mark the difference; 607* and 15 omit it.
28 Ib. 607 only gives the consonants and נין plene; 607*: BA: וְאִשְׁתָּחַ; BN: וְאִשָּׁה, and omits נין; 15 omits it.
29 Ib. 607: BA: וְאִשְׁתָּחַ; BN: וְאִשֶּׁתָּה; and so 15. In Ginsburg, The Massorah, is found the rare note (vol. I, letter נ, n. 650): וְאִשְׁתָּחַ לוֹ תֶבְּרֹא הָרְשִׁי בֶּמה וְחָרוּ הָרְשִׁי מַהְוָהָה. We learn from here that the MR and the Masters of Hamath read as BN, the Tiberians as BA. In MS Oxford Heb. d 33 fol. 6b I found another note with regard to this word: it is said there that the MR reads וְאִשְׁתָּחַ, against the Tiberians and R. Pinehas, President of the Academy. This notice must be connected to וְאִשָּׁה. L. Lipschütz, Ben Aser-Ben Nafi, (Bonn 1935) 5, read נְוֶיָה מְדַרְשָה by R. Pinehas and Habib ben Pipim. According to Codex Tschufut Kale n. 118 מְדַרְשָה is read both by BA and BN, but the later lists give it as a divergent reading.
Ps. 109: 16\textsuperscript{30} [6] MR: עָזָלָה נַחַל (‘azla and ‘illuy)

Controversy: accent below.

This case also has to do with BA–BN differences, as may be seen from Lip., where נַחַֽל עָזָלָה (‘azla) is given for BA, and דֶּהַי נַחַל for BN, with the accent below. On the other hand, Azc. 148 has BA דֶּהַי adding מָכַּה מַר, and BN דֶּהַי (merkha) without reference to the qamas, adding דֶּהַי מַר. I have not found here a suitable meaning for either מַר or מַר, unless that offered in footnote 30.

_Ad._ has BA דֶּהַי, BN דֶּהַי, without further indications.

It is obvious that, in this case, the MR concurs with BA, at least in דֶּהַי and differs from BN. The B 19a text follows MR and BA. It is not clear whether there are erasures over the ’alef and under the hê, but the MS is slightly erased.

Ps. 116: 17\textsuperscript{31} [7] BN דֶּהַי נַחַֽל (ga’ya, munah and dehi) according to his rules for the three poetical books: always ga’ya with munah. BA: דֶּהַי נַחַֽל (ga’ya, maqef – and dehi).

Lip. records the note דֶּהַי נַחַֽל in the section of concurrences and refers to p. note f.

Azc., omits it because she only deals with the differences and not with the concurrences.

The Leningrad note under discussion here is consistent in stating that all the similar cases have a maqef in BA and a munah in BN. In placing Ps. 116: 17 among the concurrences, Ben ’Uzziel violates this rule, as in Ps. 51: 2. Therefore a conflict arises between the B 19a Massorete and Ben ’Uzziel. Also the placing of the ga’ya is different; to the right according to Lip.: דֶּהַי and to the left in B 19a: דֶּהַי. The text of B 19a follows BA: דֶּהַי נַחַֽל.

Ps. 119: 94\textsuperscript{32} [7] BN: דֶּהַי נַחַֽל, ga’ya munah and dehi, as always in the three poetical books. BA: דֶּהַי נַחַֽל (ga’ya and maqef).

There is no reference to this case in Lip. and Azc. but it would fit well into the list of differences between BA and BN, as it follows a general rule. The

\textsuperscript{30} Ib. 607 omits it and also 15. In Ginsburg, The Massorah vol. I letter ב נ. 660 as controversy of MR is given דֶּהַי נַחַֽל תַּלַּשׁ under the rubric “Four cases with accent קינא”, i.e. another term for “above”. On letter ב נ. 189 is given דֶּהַי נַחַֽל (with ‘illuy) as the proper reading of MR; מַר מַר מַר could mean “from uttering”, i.e. “pronouncing”, against [בש] מַר מַר “from missing, omitted”. This is perhaps an allusion to the final he of מַר עָזָלָה, as found in the apparatus of BH מַר עָזָלָה. R. Edelmann (see note 38) already showed that מַר could refer to a missing letter, as in דֶּהַי (Deut. 22: 15–29) “maiden”, for תָּרָג (p. 17 note 3; see our note 38).


\textsuperscript{32} Ib. 607: BA: דֶּהַי נַחַֽל, BN: דֶּהַי נַחַֽל; 15 omits it.
B 19a text follows the reading of BA with regard to the *maqqef* הָלָּ֖ה,*. There is, however, a difficulty in the note: it seems that it has *shewa* under the *kaf*, not *gamash* as should be expected: the related example of [7] does not offer any help here, because it has no vowel at all.


*Lip.* has שֶׁמֶשׁ מַעֲרֶ֣לֶת (‘azla) for BA and שֶׁמֶשׁ מַעֲרֶ֣לֶת (merkhah) for BN; similarly *Azc.* The B 19a text follows the rule of BA: before pazer there is an ‘azla and not a merkhah as in BN: שֶׁמֶשׁ מַעֲרֶ֣לֶת.


*Lip.,* BA: הָלָ֖ה כְּעִנֵ֣ר and BN: הָלָ֖ה כְּעִנֵ֣ר (merkhah), according to the rule quoted in Ps. 122: 4, and the witness of *Azc.* 149. *Ad.,* BA: הָלָ֖ה כְּעִנֵ֣ר (*azla and dagesh*) and 149, BN: הָלָ֖ה כְּעִנֵ֣ר (merkhah, as ruled, and rafeh on the *kaf*).

The B 19a text seems to have been emended to conform with BA. There is an erasure under the *nn*, which most likely eliminated the merkhah, of BN. But the corrector left untouched the rafeh in the *kaf*: הָלָ֖ה. Does this point to a possible BN text underlying our B 19a text?

Ps. 124: 1, 235 [9] BN: מַעֲרֶ֣לֶת (merkhah) in the first versicle, but in the second *shofar* (= *munah*). BA: has both with *shofar* (munah).

*Lip.* and *Azc.* agree: merkhah for BN and munak for BA.

The B 19a text follows BA, giving twice munak: מַעֲרֶ֣לֶת. לְאַלֵּ֣לְוּ הָלוֹֽנָה

Job 3: 536 [5] BA: והשֶׁפֶן הָעָלָ֣י (with *qamas* (*qamas hatuf* and *maqqef*)); BN: והשֶׁפֶן הָעָלָ֣י (with *holem*).

*Lip.* and *Azc.* BA: והשֶׁפֶן הָעָלָ֣י BN: והשֶׁפֶן הָעָלָ֣י but *Ad.* has no *maqqef* for either BN or BA.

The B 19a text follows BA (qamas hatuf and maqqef).


Rabbi Pinehas, President of the Academy: רָעָ֣י (munah and zarqa).

The Teachers of Tiberias: רָעָ֣י (merkhah and ‘azla). Lip. and Azc. omit this case, and so it seems that it has no connection with the BA–BN controversy.

37 *Ib.* omits it.
The B 19a text follows R. Pinehas. If we take for granted that B 19a follows BA as far as possible, then BA and R. Pinehas would have the same accentuation, and BA here would oppose the Teachers of Tiberias.

BA: כ ו את אש ואקי ותיה וצב (merkha and munah).
Lip. gives this case as one of the concurrences between BA and BN, and accordingly it is omitted by Azz.

In this case the Massorete of the note clearly thinks of BA as differing from the Teachers of Tiberias. The B 19a text follows BA: merkha and munah:

Controversy: accent below.
Lip. and Azz. omit this case. As it parallels Ps. 109: 16 and Ps. 4: 7 we may assume also here the sequence 'azla-illuy, as stated by Ginsburg under the heading סְפִּים מִלְּעָרָה (p. 39).

There we are informed that this is an abnormal accentuation, not followed by R. Pinehas or the Teachers of Tiberias. In Ginsburg's edition of the Bible, he collated the following divergences from Biblical manuscripts: כי with tifha and לא with munah, and יצ with rebia mugrash and והמקב with merkha, that is, והמקב with munah or merkha which are written below, not over the letter as does MR.

In the B 19a text something seems to have been erased here. The erasure is under the ו. Did it do away with an original munah or merkha? BH3 prints illuy, but I cannot see it in the photocopy. Now, we have here the same association: MR-Pinehas-Tiberias as in Job 32: 3. Can we add also the case of Prov. 3: 12: MR-Tiberias-BA?

Lip. gives this case as a concurrence of BA and BN; Azz. omits it. Only the maqqef is indicated: ר יי אתית וירחא.

The B 19a text has an erasure under the nun of the last word, perhaps deleting a ga’ya, most likely to make it conform with the BA accentuation. On the


39 See note 10.
40 G. omits it.
other hand, the bet has hatef segol ה, a rather strange vocalization. On the strength of the note one would expect segol without ga’ya for BA, or simple shewa ש. Is the hatef segol a mixed pointing?

Ezra 7: 2841 [13] BN: נֶֽפּוֹתָּן ga’ya (therefore has BA no ga’ya?).

According to Lip., BA and BN agree in this case, which is given with ga’ya and maqef. Acz. omits the case.

There is a slight difference between our note and Lip.: the note has the ga’ya after the hiriq, Lip. has it following the qamas and adds a maqef. The B 19a text has the ga’ya after the qamas, as in the Lip. reading נֶֽפּוֹתָּן.

1 Chr. 1: 1742 [1] MR: נֶֽפּוֹתָּן

The Men of Tiberias and BN: נֶֽפּוֹתָּן with ga’ya (and tifḥa).

This case is not adduced either by Lip. or by Azc. Here also BN disagrees with MR. If the B 19a text here follows BA, as usual, then BA agrees with the MR, because the B 19a text has no ga’ya, but munah and zaqef: נֶֽפּוֹתָּן.

1 Chr. 2: 543 [1] MR: נֶֽפּוֹתָּן

The Men of Tiberias and BN: נֶֽפּוֹתָּן with ga’ya (and tifḥa).

Lip. cites this case as a concurrence of BA and BN; it is therefore omitted by Azc. The concurrence is based on the maqef נֶֽפּוֹתָּן. The B 19a text has a maqef, as stated in Lip., and no ga’ya, as may be deduced from the note for MR. But the original reading seems to have been erased below the mun, and the manuscript has something which looks like a segol (the remainder of a sere and a ga’ya or tifḥa?) נֶֽפּוֹתָּן?

Conclusions

1. The Massora Magna of B 19a has some scattered references to the Ben Asher — Ben Naftali differences, but they do not constitute a list, nor are they part of a list (see notes [2] [3] [4] [5] [7] [8] [9] [12]).

2. Besides BA and BN, there are quotations from the MR ([1] [6] [11]), the Men of Tiberias [1], the Teachers of Tiberias ([10] [11]) and Rabbi Pinehas, President of the Academy [10], more or less related to BA or BN readings.

3. In certain cases BA or BN alone are quoted, ignoring the tradition of the opponent ([1] [11] [13]).

4. BN is independent of the MR [1].

5. BA is independent of the MR [11].

6. The Teachers of Tiberias differ from BA [11], and therefore do not represent

41 G. omits it.
42 G. omits it.
the Tiberian Masoretes as a whole, but only a group of them. The *Men of Tiberias* have not the same tradition as the MR [1], which is different from BA and BN, as seen above, as well as from Rabbi Pinehas [10] and has its own readings [6].

7. The *Lip.* list of differences between BA and BN does not show the actual state of the MSS of the *Khilaf* according to Maria Josefa Azcárraga’s revision. Moreover there are internal divergences in the Ben ’Uzziel records of differences as they have been handed down to us (see also notes 24 to 46).

Ps. 4: 7 *Lip.* BA רָאָה (without special reference to יֵשָׁנָה)

*Lip.* C BA רָאָה (in agreement with note [6] recording a special variant of רָאָה יֵשָׁנָה)

*Lip.* BN רָאָה = Azc. 148; *Lip.* C BN רָאָה = Azc. 149

Ad. BN רָאָה (Azc.). Another variant in this case is the *ga’ya* placed at the right in Azc.: נֶפֶשְׁנָה and at the left in *Lip.*:

Ps. 31: 12 *Lip.* BN without *maqqef*; Azc. BA and BN with *maqqef*

Ps. 45: 10 *Lip.* BN nothing; Azc. BN with *ga’ya* נֶפֶשְׁנָה

Ps. 46: 9 *Lip.* BA *maqqef* and *ga’ya*; Azc. omits the *ga’ya*

Ps. 58: 7 *Lip.* BA *maqqef*; Azc. omits the *maqqef*

*Lip.* BN נֶפֶשְׁנָה; Azc. BN נֶפֶשְׁנָה and no *paseq*

Ps. 109: 16 *Lip.* BA נֶפֶשְׁנָה; Ad. (*pace* Azc.) נֶפֶשְׁנָה

Job. 3: 5 *Lip.* BA and BN with *maqqef*; Ad. (*pace* Azc.) most likely without *maqqef* for BN

From these few examples, we learn how very poor a tool are the lists of variants between BA and BN at our disposal. Only a statement uttered explicitly as a rule can be considered to be firmly established. Therefore the rules of the grammarians who state that they follow Ben Asher must be judged to be of the same value, and the question of the Ben Asher–Ben Naftali controversy must be reconsidered against the background of all the available data found in the grammatical treatises of the Middle Ages.44

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44 A comparison of the notes taken from Ginsburg with the materials embodied in this paper is convincing. Moreover, Ginsburg himself is compelled to say (*Massorah* vol. IV p. 414 at the end of the list of BA – BN differences): “Even in the Pentateuch, where the greatest care has been taken to transmit these variations, the Lists are not infrequently in dire conflict with each other, as will be seen from the Table I have given in the Introduction to the massoretico-critical edition of the Hebrew Bible, p. 274–277. It is therefore useless to attempt to reduce these variants into a system or to formulate rules from these conflicting Lists”.

The only explanation I could offer for these divergent manuscripts of Ben ’Uzziel’s list is that the copyist did not always find the difference in his original source, and then
8. The contents of the notes and the Ben 'Uzziel list have different views on some Ben Asher–Ben Naftali divergences:
   a. Where Ben 'Uzziel records a concurrence of BA and BN, the note gives a divergence: Ps. 51: 2; Ps. 116: 17; Dan. 4: 7.
   b. Where the note says that there is a divergence between BA and BN, the Ben 'Uzziel list ignores it: Ps. 62: 4; Ps. 119: 94.
   c. Where the note deals with BA or BN alone, Ben 'Uzziel mentions both: Prov. 3: 12; Ezra 7: 28; 1 Chr. 2: 5 (1 Chr. 1: 17 is omitted by Ben 'Uzziel).
   d. Other cases: the note mentions the ga'ya and Ben 'Uzziel ignores it (Ps. 58: 7); scripto defectiva in the note, plena in Ben 'Uzziel (Ps. 31: 12; 58: 7).

The contents of the notes, therefore, certainly are not taken from a Ben 'Uzziel list. The references to Ben Asher and Ben Naftali in the MM of B 19a have no special emphasis; they seem to be copied as a matter of routine from the notebook of a Massorete or from a copy of another MM.

9. In addition to the cases recorded by Pérez Castro and I. Yeivin (and Yalon), the notes show other possible erasures in the original text of B 19a in order to make it conform with the so-called Ben Asher text: Ps. 31: 12; Ps. 109: 16(?) ; Ps. 123: 8; Prov. 8: 13; Dan. 4: 7; 1 Chr. 2: 5(?) .

attempted to restore or to guess it from any current Bible manuscript at his disposal or from some grammatical statement which he took as exhibiting a BA rule. It must be stated, however, that the skeleton of the list is the same in the several manuscripts and so, at least, we know where the differences come in, though not how they arose. From this starting point only we can make an “attempt to reduce these variants into a system”.

45 I. Yeivin, Textus I (1960) 191; H. Yalon, Kiryat Sepher 30 (1954/5) 259; F. Pérez Castro Sefarad 15 (1955) 27. Many years ago P. Kahle was searching for the list of erasures made by Gottfried Quell in 1926, covering the whole manuscript, but without success.