# The Ashkenazic Hebrew of Nathan Nata Hannover's *Yeven Meṣula* (1653)

## LILY KAHN

## University College London

## 1  Introduction[1]

This study will investigate the main grammatical features of *Yeven Meṣula* 'Miry Depths' or 'Abyss of Despair',[2] a 17th century Hebrew historical work describing the events of the Chmielnicki Uprising that swept the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1648–1649. *Yeven Meṣula* was written by the prominent Ashkenazic preacher and kabbalist Nathan Nata Hannover. Hannover was born and raised in Volhynia, a region in Eastern Europe corresponding to parts of present-day Poland, Ukraine and Belarus, but was forced to flee his homeland during the Chmielnicki Uprising and spent the next few years as an itinerant preacher in Poland, Germany and Holland. He wrote his account of the Chmielnicki pogroms during this period, and published it upon arriving in Venice in 1653. He subsequently travelled to Prague, and then settled in Jassy (present-day Iași in eastern Romania), where he became the head of the yeshiva and president of the rabbinical court. He remained in Jassy for approximately ten years, before relocating to Ungarisch Brod in Romania (present-day Uherský Brod in the Czech Republic), where he was killed by raiding Turkish soldiers in 1689.[3]

During his lifetime Hannover published three other works in addition to *Yeven Meṣula*: a homiletic sermon about the festival of Sukkot called *Taʿame Sukka* (Amsterdam, 1652), a Hebrew-German-Latin-Italian phrasebook called *Safa Berura* (Prague, 1660) and a collection of prayers according to the Lurianic kabbalistic rite called *Shaʿare Ṣiyyon* (Prague, 1662). He also wrote a collection of homiletical sermons on the Pentateuch which were never published. Hannover's published writings had a long-lasting impact on Ashkenazic Jewry: his prayer collection *Shaʿare Ṣiyyon* enjoyed widespread popularity in Italy, Holland and Eastern Europe, and was reprinted in more than fifty

[2] A citation of Ps. 69:3.
[3] See Halpern, 2007 for further details of Hannover's life.

editions over the course of the 18th and 19th centuries. Likewise, *Safa Berura* was used among Jews for foreign language instruction until the 19th century.

Hannover's *Yeven Meṣula* is a relatively short work of 20 pages that provides an account of the 1648–1649 mass uprising of Ukrainian and Cossack peasants under the leadership of the Ukrainian Bogdan Chmielnicki against Polish rule in Ukraine. The uprising resulted in the destruction of many Ukrainian and Polish Jewish communities and the deaths of at least an estimated 18,000–20,000 Jews.[4] Hannover's work includes chronicles of the massacres that took place against the Jews in various places over the course of the two-year period between 1648 and 1649 in various locations throughout present-day Poland, Ukraine and Lithuania, such as Tulczyn, Zamość and Lwów/Lviv, as well as an account of the life of the Jews of the Kingdom of Poland. The work contains little information about Hannover's personal experiences during the pogroms, although he did witness some of the events, but rather is based on eyewitness accounts and information gathered from others, both orally and from printed sources.[5]

*Yeven Meṣula* is a unique and ground-breaking piece of early modern Jewish historical writing,[6] and has played a hugely influential role in Ashkenazic society and culture since its publication. The traumatic events of the Chmielnicki Uprising came to assume a central position in the Ashkenazic historical consciousness,[7] and Hannover's work dominated this consciousness well into the 20th century.[8] It was reissued in its Hebrew and Yiddish versions in nearly every generation,[9] and was also translated into a number of other languages, including French, German, Russian, Polish and English.[10] The fact that *Yeven Meṣula* was the only source of information on the events of 1648–1949 told from a Jewish perspective and accessible to readers without knowledge of Hebrew contributed to its authoritative status.[11] Hannover's text was also accepted as a reliable account of the pogroms by pioneering modern Jewish historians such as Heinrich Graetz and Simon Dubnow,[12] and it remains an important historical source today, though it is no longer treated uncritically.

Despite the prominent position which *Yeven Meṣula* has occupied in Central and Eastern European Jewish society and the importance which historians have accorded it as a key witness to the Chmielnicki Uprising, it has never been the subject of linguistic analysis. Given its status as a unique and influ-

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[4] Stampfer, 2003, p. 221.
[5] Halpern, 2007, p. 327.
[6] Bartal, 2005, p. 7.
[7] Stampfer, 2003; Ettinger, 2007; Stampfer, 2010.
[8] Bacon, 2003, pp. 182–186.
[9] Halpern, 2007, p. 327.
[10] This study is based on the first edition of *Yeven Meṣula* (Hannover, 1653).
[11] Bacon, 2003, p. 184.
[12] Bacon, 2003, p. 183.

ential piece of early modern Ashkenazic Hebrew historical writing, examination of the grammatical composition of this text can shed valuable light on the 17th century Eastern European narrative and discursive use of the language. From a diachronic perspective, it can be instructive to analyse the influences of earlier strata of Hebrew on Hannover's narrative and ascertain the extent to which it resembles the biblical, rabbinic and medieval forms of the language. It is also important to establish the relationship between Hannover's 17th century historical writing and other forms of Central and Eastern European Hebrew which have been analysed, namely 19th century Maskilic Hebrew, Hasidic Hebrew and the language of the *Kiṣur Shulḥan ʿAruḵ*,[13] as well as early modern and modern responsa literature.[14] Comparison of Hannover's writing with these other Central and Eastern European types of Hebrew is particularly important as it can help to ascertain the extent to which all of these authors were drawing on a shared Ashkenazic linguistic heritage which has not been adequately mapped. Moreover, in certain cases parallels can be observed between *Yeven Meṣula* and more distant Diaspora Jewish linguistic varieties such as medieval Ashkenazic writings, the Hebrew of Judaeo-Spanish speakers and Judaeo-Arabic, which can tentatively point towards possible broader trends. The present study thus seeks to provide an analysis of the characteristic orthographic, morphosyntactic and syntactic features of Hannover's seminal narrative work and to place it within its diachronic context. Due to space constraints this study cannot provide an exhaustive survey of the linguistic features of *Yeven Meṣula*, but will give an overview of a number of representative features.[15] It is hoped that this analysis will lead to a clearer understanding of the composition and chronological spread of Ashkenazic Hebrew and its relationship to other Diaspora forms of the language.

## 2   Orthography

The orthography in the first edition of *Yeven Meṣula* is largely consistent with that of canonical forms of Hebrew, with a tendency to employ *plene* spelling in accordance with the post-biblical standard. The main area in which the spelling in *Yeven Meṣula* differs from that of earlier convention is in the widespread tendency to employ *yod* following *ṣere* in singular nouns with a 1cpl or 3msg possessive suffix, as illustrated in (1)–(3). This orthographic practice is likely rooted in the fact that in Ashkenazic Hebrew pronunciation, the vowel *ṣere* and the combination *ṣere* plus *yod* in stressed open syllables are both pronounced identically (generally as the diphthong [ej] or [aj]). The use of *yod*

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[13] Kahn, 2009; Kahn, 2012b; Kahn, 2015; Kahn, in press.
[14] Betzer, 2001.
[15] Comparison of Hannover's narrative work with his non-narrative writings is likewise beyond the scope of the present examination.

in these contexts suggests that the author's own pronunciation had more impact on his orthography than the canonical written texts. The same phenomenon is widely attested in 19th century Hasidic Hebrew narrative, for the same reasons.[16] The practice in both Eastern European forms of Hebrew may have been reinforced by the fact that some individual forms with non-standard *yod* are occasionally attested in medieval literature (for example, the form עמינו *ʿamenu*[17] 'our people' shown in (1) below appears several times in the writing of the prominent 15th century biblical commentator Isaac Abarbanel).

(1)    עמינו
       *ʿamenu*
       'our people'[18]

(2)    מחניהו
       *maḥanehu*
       'his camp'[19]

(3)    אדונינו המלך
       *ʾadonenu ham-melek*
       'our lord the king'[20]

# 3    Nominal morphosyntax

## 3.1    Definite article with inseparable prepositions

A common feature of *Yeven Meṣula* is the retention of the definite article following the inseparable preposition -ל *lə-* 'to, for', as shown in (4)–(7). This type of construction contrasts with the standard in Biblical and Rabbinic Hebrew, where elision of the definite article following a prefixed preposition is the norm; cf. Biblical Hebrew הָעִיר *haʿir* 'the town'[21] vs לָעִיר *laʿir* 'to the town',[22] and Mishnaic Hebrew הבית *hab-bayit* 'the house'[23] vs לבית *lab-bayit* 'to the house'.[24] In Biblical Hebrew there are only rare exceptions to this rule,[25] and the same is true of Rabbinic Hebrew.[26] However the phenomenon

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[16] See Kahn, 2015, pp. 20–22.
[17] The transcription system used in this study follows the *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics* standard for post-biblical Hebrew; see Khan et al., 2013.
[18] Hannover, 1653, p. 8.
[19] Hannover, 1653, p. 15.
[20] Hannover, 1653, p. 14.
[21] Gen. 19:4.
[22] 1 Sam. 9:12.
[23] Mishnah *Ohalot* 3:2.
[24] Mishnah *Negaʿim* 13:3.
[25] Joüon and Muraoka, 2009, p. 104.
[26] Betzer, 2001, p. 86.

is a characteristic feature of prominent varieties of 19th century Eastern European Hebrew texts composed by Hasidic and Maskilic authors as well as Shlomo Ganzfried's popular work of practical halachah (Jewish law), the *Kiṣur Shulḥan ʿAruḵ*,[27] and is also attested in early modern and modern Ashkenazic and Sephardic responsa literature.[28] The fact that the same phenomenon is commonly attested both in Hannover's work and in these other varieties suggests that all of these Eastern European authors may have been drawing on a common Ashkenazic Hebrew legacy, which may in turn have had links to other forms of Diaspora Hebrew. This point will be discussed further throughout this study.

(4)     להכומרי״
        *lə-hak-komərim*
        'to the priests'[29]

(5)     להדוכסים
        *lə-had-dukkasim*
        'the dukes'[30]

(6)     להשר
        *lə-haś-śar*
        'to the lord'[31]

(7)     להיונים
        *lə-hay-yəwanim*
        'the Ukrainians'[32, 33]

## 3.2    Indefinite article

While Hebrew lacks a true indefinite article, Hannover regularly employs the numeral אחד *ʾeḥad* 'one' in this sense, with the meaning of 'a' or 'a certain', as in (8)–(11). While this use of the numeral has occasional precedent in Biblical Hebrew and other historical varieties of the language,[34] these writings are unlikely to be the sole or chief source for Hannover as he utilises it much more systematically. Rather, any influence from earlier Hebrew texts is likely to

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[27] Kahn, in press.
[28] Betzer, 2001, p. 86.
[29] Hannover, 1653, p. 4.
[30] Hannover, 1653, p. 1.
[31] Hannover, 1653, p. 3.
[32] Hannover, 1653, p. 8.
[33] The Hebrew word יונים *yəwanim* literally means 'Greeks', but Hannover uses it as a label for 'Ukrainians'. This is a metonym based on the Ukrainians' Greek Orthodox faith; see Plokhy, 2015, p. 99.
[34] Rubin, 2013b.

have received synchronic reinforcement from Hannover's native Yiddish, which has a true indefinite article.[35] As in the case of the definite article with prefixed prepositions discussed in section 3.1, the use of אחד *ʾeḥad* 'one' as an indefinite article is also a prominent feature of 19th century Eastern European varieties of Hebrew.[36] Moreover, the existence of a similar use of the numeral 'one' is attested in medieval and later Judaeo-Arabic,[37] which may suggest that there is a more widespread trend towards such a development in Semitic languages generally regardless of influence from a spoken substratum.

(8)  ושם היה מושל ופקיד על העיר הנ״ל יהודי **אחד** ושמו זכרי״ה

*wə-šam haya mošel u-p̄aqid ʿal ha-ʿir hana″l yəhudi ʾeḥad u-šmo zəḵarya*

'and there was a governor and officer over the above-mentioned city, a certain Jew named Zechariah'[38]

(9)  והיה בניה״[39] חזן **א׳** ושמו ר׳ הירש

*wə-haya benehem ḥazzan ʾeḥad u-šmo reb hirš*

'and among them there was a certain cantor whose name was Reb Hirsh'[40]

(10)  והתארח אצל בעל הבית **אחד**[41] כמה ימי׳

*wə-hit ʾareaḥ ʾeṣel baʿal hab-bayit ʾeḥad kama yamim*

'and he stayed with a certain home owner for a number of days'[42]

(11)  לקחו עשיר **אחד** לביתו

*laqḥu ʿašir ʾeḥad lə-ḇeto*

'they took a rich man to his house'[43]

## 3.3    Definiteness discord in noun-adjective phrases

Hannover's writing typically exhibits definiteness concord between a noun and its associated adjective. However, in a significant minority of cases the noun takes the definite article but the associated attributive adjective does not,

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[35] Jacobs, 2005, p. 174.

[36] Kahn, in press.

[37] Blau, 1980, p. 165; Wagner, 2010, p. 191.

[38] Hannover, 1653, p. 2.

[39] *Sic*; = בניה׳.

[40] Hannover, 1653, p. 4.

[41] Note the use of a definite construct chain as an indefinite noun. This is attributable to the fact that the phrase בעל הבית *baʿal hab-bayit* exists in Yiddish as an indefinite noun. The same phenomenon is widely attested in 19th century Hasidic Hebrew; see Kahn, 2015, pp. 62–63 for details. Similar constructions are also found in medieval Judaeo-Arabic; see Blau, 1980, p. 156.

[42] Hannover, 1653, p. 20.

[43] Hannover, 1653, p. 20.

as in (12)–(16). This phenomenon has occasional precedent in Biblical Hebrew,[44] and appears more frequently in rabbinic literature.[45] It is also a widespread feature of responsa literature[46] and of 19th century Hasidic Hebrew.[47] Hannover seems to have tended to employ it when the noun and adjective comprise a common collocation, as in (13) and (14), and therefore may have subconsciously regarded the phrase as a single unit.

(12)   האשה חדשה אשר לקח
       *ha-ʾiša ḥadaša ʾašer laqaḥ*
       'the new wife whom he had taken'[48]

(13)   הגזרה רעה
       *hag-gəzera raʿa*
       'the evil decree'[49]

(14)   הבשורה רעה
       *hab-bəśora raʿa*
       'the evil tidings'[50]

(15)   והנשים יפות לקחו לשפחו׳
       *wə-han-našim yapot laqḥu li-špaḥot*
       'and they took the beautiful women as servant girls'[51]

(16)   החיל גדול של קאזקין
       *haḥayil gadol šel qozaqin*
       'the great army of Cossacks'[52]

## 3.4   Non-standard definiteness of construct chains

Hannover frequently forms definite construct chains by prefixing the definite article to the construct noun, as in (17)–(19). This differs from the biblical standard, in which the definite article in construct chains is prefixed to the absolute noun;[53] this same convention has remained the norm in Mishnaic and

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[44] Waltke and O'Connor, 1990, p. 260; Williams, 2007, p. 31.
[45] Sarfatti, 1989, pp. 161–165; Pérez Fernández, 1999, pp. 26–27; Pat-El, 2009, pp. 35–36; Rubin, 2013a.
[46] Betzer, 2001, p. 90.
[47] Kahn, 2015, pp. 87–88.
[48] Hannover, 1653, p. 2.
[49] Hannover, 1653, p. 2.
[50] Hannover, 1653, p. 4.
[51] Hannover, 1653, p. 4.
[52] Hannover, 1653, p. 8.
[53] Williams, 2007, p. 8.

later varieties of Hebrew. However, Hannover's usage has precedent in medieval and early modern responsa literature.[54] Moreover, as in many of the other phenomena discussed in this study, it has a parallel in 19th century Eastern European forms of Hebrew.[55] It is likely that the non-standard construction in all of these forms of Hebrew is attributable to influence from Yiddish, in which many of the construct chains in question exist independently as set phrases and which are made definite by placing the definite article at the beginning of the phrase.[56] The same type of construction is also attested in the Hebrew writing of Judaeo-Spanish speakers.[57] Because Judaeo-Spanish makes noun phrases definite by placing a definite article at the beginning of the phrase, as in Yiddish, the similarity between Hannover's writing and that of the Judaeo-Spanish speakers suggests that in both cases the syntactic structures of the authors' vernaculars had an influential role in the development of their Hebrew.[58]

(17)  האנשי מקומות
      *ha-ʾanše məqomot*
      'the people of the places'[59]
      (cf. standard Hebrew אנשי המקומות *ʾanše ham-məqomot*)

(18)  הגבורי חיל
      *hag-gibbore ḥayil*
      'the warriors'[60]
      (cf. standard Hebrew גבורי החיל *gibbore ha-ḥayil*)

(19)  הראש ישיבה
      *ha-roš yəšiḇa*
      'the head of the yeshiva'[61]
      (cf. standard Hebrew ראש הישיבה *roš hay-yəšiḇa*)

This phenomenon extends to definite construct chains with a numeral: according to the standard Hebrew convention, the definite article in such constructions is prefixed to the absolute noun, but Hannover often prefixes it to the numeral, as in (20). This type of construction is also attested in medieval and

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[54] Betzer, 2001, p. 91.
[55] Kahn, in press.
[56] See Kahn, 2015, pp. 60–61 and Kahn, in press for further details.
[57] Bunis, 2013, pp. 50*–51*.
[58] Note that a similar phenomenon is occasionally attested in medieval Judaeo-Arabic (see Blau, 1980, p. 157) but this seems to be much more restricted than that found in the Hebrew of Yiddish and Judaeo-Spanish speakers.
[59] Hannover, 1653, p. 8.
[60] Hannover, 1653, p. 8.
[61] Hannover, 1653, p. 18.

later Judaeo-Arabic,[62] which hints at the possibility of a more widespread internal Semitic developmental pattern requiring further investigation.

(20) השני שרי צבא
   *hašəne śare ṣaḇa*
   'the two army commanders'[63]
   (cf. standard Hebrew שני שרי הצבא *šəne śare haṣ-ṣaḇa*)

It also extends to construct chains whose second member is a proper noun that would not be expected to take the definite article in any type of Hebrew. This particular usage, which is shown in (21)–(23), does not seem to have a clearly documented precedent in earlier or later forms of the language. Further research is required in order to ascertain whether it is attested in other varieties of Ashkenazic Hebrew.

(21) בכל המקומו׳ רוסי״א
   *bə-ḵol ham-məqomot rusya*
   'in all the places of Russia'[64]
   (cf. standard Hebrew בכל מקומות רוסיה *bə-ḵol məqomot rusya*)

(22) המלך פולי״ן
   *ham-meleḵ polin*
   'the king of Poland'[65]
   (cf. standard Hebrew מלך פולין *meleḵ polin*)

(23) בת המלך צרפת
   *bat ham-meleḵ ṣarp̄at*
   'the daughter of the king of France'[66]
   (cf. standard Hebrew בת מלך צרפת *bat meleḵ ṣarp̄at*)

In addition, Hannover sometimes makes construct chains definite by prefixing the definite article to both the absolute noun and the construct noun, as in (24)–(27). This convention lacks precedent in the canonical forms of Hebrew, but is attested in the writing of the prominent 11th century commentator Rashi[67] as well as in responsa literature.[68] It is also a common feature of 19th century

[62] Blau, 1980, p. 167; Wagner, 2010, pp. 206–210.
[63] Hannover, 1653, p. 16.
[64] Hannover, 1653, p. 2.
[65] Hannover, 1653, p. 17.
[66] Hannover, 1653, p. 1.
[67] Betzer, 2001, p. 108.
[68] Betzer, 2001, p. 91–92.

Eastern European Hebrew,[69] and in the writing of Ashkenazic Jerusalem community leader Joseph Rivlin.[70] Taken together with the phenomena discussed previously in this study, this similarity may suggest that all of these Ashkenazic Hebrew authors were drawing on a shared linguistic heritage.

(24)  הַשַׂר הצבא
      *haś-śar haṣ-ṣaḇa*
      'the army commander'[71]
      (cf. standard Hebrew שר הצבא *śar haṣ-ṣaḇa*)

(25)  על המפתן הבית
      *ʿal ham-mip̄tan hab-bayit*
      'on the threshold of the house'[72]
      (cf. standard Hebrew על מפתן הבית *ʿal mip̄tan hab-bayit*)

(26)  השר העיר
      *haś-śar ha-ʿir*
      'the city commander'[73]
      (cf. standard Hebrew שר העיר *śar ha-ʿir*)

(27)  הבעל הבית
      *hab-baʿal hab-bayit*
      'the house owner'[74]
      (cf. standard Hebrew בעל הבית *baʿal hab-bayit*)

## 3.5   Use of masculine plural ending in *nun*

Hannover typically follows the biblical standard by employing the masculine plural noun ending ים- *-im* on nouns and *qoṭel* forms. However, he sometimes opts for the variant ין- *-in*, which is typical of Rabbinic Hebrew. The rabbinic variant is particularly common with *qoṭel* forms. This is illustrated in (28)–(31). Like many other aspects of Hannover's writing, his fluctuation between the *mem* and *nun* endings has a direct parallel in 19th century Maskilic and Hasidic Hebrew.[75] As in the other cases discussed in this study, this close resemblance between these various forms of Eastern European Hebrew points to the existence of a shared underlying variety of the language spanning several centuries.

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[69] Kahn, 2015, pp. 62–65; Kahn, in press.
[70] Wertheimer, 1975, pp. 159–160.
[71] Hannover, 1653, p. 15.
[72] Hannover, 1653, p. 7.
[73] Hannover, 1653, p. 13.
[74] Hannover, 1653, p. 18.
[75] Kahn, 2012b, p. 185.

(28) צדדין
*ṣədadin*
'sides'[76]

(29) שולחין
*šoləḥin*
'they send'[77]

(30) הולכין
*holəḥin*
'they go'[78]

(31) שותין
*šotin*
'they drink'[79]

The use of the *nun* ending instead of the more frequently attested *mem* variant is not systematic. In some cases Hannover employs both endings on the same form within close proximity to each other, as in (32) and (33), which contain a *nun* and a *mem* respectively and are only five lines apart from each other in the text. This type of fluctuation between the *mem* and *nun* endings is also attested in medieval Ashkenazic copies of Hebrew manuscripts (e.g. the 14th century halachic code *Arba'ah Turim*),[80] which suggests a much earlier origin for the phenomenon.

(32) והם היו **פטורין** מן מס המלך
*wə-hem hayu paṭurin min mas ham-meleḵ*
'and they were exempt from the king's tax'[81]

(33) ולכן היו **פטורים** מן המס
*wə-laḵen hayu paṭurim min ham-mas*
'and therefore they were exempt from the tax'[82]

The *nun* variant is particularly commonly attested on periphrastic verbs (see section 4.4), possibly because such verbs are a typical feature of Rabbinic Hebrew, and commonly appear with a *nun* ending in that form of the language. This is illustrated in (34) and (35):

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[76] Hannover, 1653, p. 3.
[77] Hannover, 1653, p. 3.
[78] Hannover, 1653, p. 9.
[79] Hannover, 1653, p. 12.
[80] N. Vidro, personal communication.
[81] Hannover, 1653, p. 1.
[82] Hannover, 1653, p. 1.

(34) ואם היו רוצים לילך לדרכם **היו נותנין** להם צדה לדרך

wə-ʾim hayu roṣim leleḵ lə-darkam **hayu notənin** lahem ṣeda
lad-dereḵ

'and if they wanted to go on their way, they would give them provisions
for the road'[83]

(35) והמחנה עם פולי״ן לא **היו יודעין** מה השמחה הזאת

wə-ham-maḥane ʿam polin lo **hayu yod ʿin** ma haś-śimḥa haz-zot

'and the Polish camp did not know what this rejoicing was for'[84]

However this is likewise inconsistent, so that periphrastic verbs are not un-
commonly attested with the *mem* ending, as in (36) and (37):

(36) בכל המקומו׳ אשר **היו מגיעים** שמה

bə-ḵol ham-məqomot ʾašer **hayu maggi ʿim** šamma

'in all the places that they reached'[85]

(37) והם היו יושבים בטח

wə-hem **hayu yošəḇim** beṭaḥ

'and they dwelled in safety'[86]

## 3.6    Long form numerals with feminine nouns

Hannover's writing exhibits a blurring of the gender distinction between long
and short form numerals, whereby he frequently employs long form numerals
in conjunction with feminine nouns; see examples (38)–(42). This differs from
the standard convention in the canonical forms of Hebrew, which exhibit gen-
der polarity with numerals (with the long forms employed in conjunction with
masculine nouns, and the short forms employed in conjunction with feminine
nouns). Like many of the other phenomena discussed in this study, this has a
parallel in later Eastern European Hebrew writing.[87] It may be ascribable to
influence from the Yiddish vernacular, which has only one set of numerals
that is used with nouns of all genders.[88] As in several other cases discussed in
this study, the same usage is also found further afield in Judaeo-Arabic,[89] per-
haps suggesting a more widespread tendency to shift away from gender polar-
ity in Semitic languages.

[83] Hannover, 1653, p. 20.
[84] Hannover, 1653, p. 11.
[85] Hannover, 1653, p. 4.
[86] Hannover, 1653, p. 3.
[87] Wertheimer, 1975, p. 157; Kahn, 2015, pp. 137–139; Kahn, in press.
[88] Katz, 1987, pp. 201–203.
[89] Wagner, 2010, pp. 191–206.

(38) **שׁשׁה מאוʼ** גבורי חיל

*šiššā meʾot gibbore ḥayil*

'six hundred warriors'[90]

(cf. standard Hebrew שׁשׁ מאות גבורי חיל *šeš meʾot gibbore ḥayil*)


(39) ושׁני בנותיו

*u-šne bənotaw*

'and his two daughters'[91]

(cf. standard Hebrew ושׁתי בנותיו *u-šte bənotaw*)


(40) **שׁלשׁה שׁורות** סוסים

*šəloša šurot susim*

'three rows of horses'[92]

(cf. standard Hebrew שׁלשׁ שׁורות סוסים *šaloš šurot susim*)


(41) **חמשׁה מאות** אלף אישׁ

*ḥamiššā meʾot ʾelep̄ ʾiš*

'five hundred thousand men'[93]

(cf. standard Hebrew חמשׁ מאות אלף אישׁ *ḥameš meʾot ʾelep̄ ʾiš*)


(42) יותר מ**שׁבעה מאות** קהילות

*yoter miš-šiḇʿa meʾot qəhillot*

'more than seven hundred communities'[94]

(cf. standard Hebrew יותר משׁבע מאות קהילות *yoter miš-šeḇaʿ/šəḇaʿ meʾot qəhillot*)


## 3.7 Avoidance of the dual

The canonical varieties of Hebrew have a dual form of nouns used with paired body parts, time words and numerals; for example, יומי(י)ם *yomayim* 'two days', ח(ו)דשׁי(י)ם *ḥodšayim* 'two months' and אלפי(י)ם *ʾalpayim* 'two thousand'. Hannover typically avoids the dual with reference to time words and numerals, instead using the numeral שׁני\שׁתי *šəne/šte* 'two' in conjunction with a plural noun, as in (43)–(46). This practice can likewise be seen in 19th century Eastern European Hebrew.[95] As in the case of the later writings, it is likely that Hannover's avoidance of the dual is attributable to the fact that his Yiddish vernacular lacked such a form, instead using the plural in conjunction with the numeral 'two'. Moreover, as in several instances discussed above, the

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[90] Hannover, 1653, p. 6.
[91] Hannover, 1653, p. 7.
[92] Hannover, 1653, p. 9.
[93] Hannover, 1653, p. 10.
[94] Hannover, 1653, p. 14.
[95] Kahn, 2015, pp. 51–53; Kahn, in press.

same phenomenon is also attested in Judaeo-Arabic[96], where there is no clear influence from a substratum lacking the construction; this may hint at a more widespread developmental pattern common to certain Semitic languages.

(43)  כשני אלפי׳ יהודי׳
    *ki-šne ʾalap̄im yəhudim*
    'about two thousand Jews'[97]
    (cf. standard Hebrew כאלפי(י)ם יהודים *kə-ʾalpayim yəhudim*)

(44)  ובשתי שעות ביום
    *u-bi-šte šaʿot bay-yom*
    'and for two hours a day'[98]
    (cf. standard Hebrew ובשעתי(י)ם ביום *u-ḇi-šʿatayim bay-yom*)

(45)  שני ימים
    *šəne yamim*
    'two days'[99]
    (cf. standard Hebrew יומי(י)ם *yomayim*)

(46)  שני חדשים
    *šəne ḥodašim*
    'two months'[100]
    (cf. standard Hebrew חדשי(י)ם *ḥodšayim*)

There is only one example of a dual numeral in *Yeven Meṣula*, shown in (47). Note that this same phrase appears a few pages later in the more common plural construction, as shown in (48).

(47)  מאתים אלף זהובים
    *matayim ʾelep̄ zəhuḇim*
    'two hundred thousand gold pieces'[101]

(48)  שני מאות אלף זהובים
    *šəne meʾot ʾelep̄ zəhuḇim*
    'two hundred thousand gold pieces'[102]

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[96] Blau, 1980, p. 99.
[97] Hannover, 1653, p. 6.
[98] Hannover, 1653, p. 9.
[99] Hannover, 1653, p. 16.
[100] Hannover, 1653, p. 10.
[101] Hannover, 1653, p. 12.
[102] Hannover, 1653, p. 16.

# 4 Verbal morphosyntax

## 4.1 Use of *wayyiqṭol*

Hannover very commonly constructs past narrative sequences by means of the quintessentially biblical *wayyiqṭol* form, as in (49)–(51). In this respect his writing resembles that of later Maskilic and Hasidic narrative literature, which likewise is replete with *wayyiqṭol* forms.[103] Hannover's use of this form, like that of the later Hasidic and Maskilic writers, is likely rooted in a desire to evoke in his readers echoes of the venerable biblical narrative tradition, thereby lending his writing an air of authority and significance.[104] However Hannover employs the *wayyiqṭol* more systematically than his 19th century counterparts: while the Maskilic and Hasidic authors often round off a sequence of *qaṭal* forms with a single *wayyiqṭol*, which serves almost as a decorative flourish rather than an essential element of the verbal system, Hannover tends to employ it much more regularly. This suggests that he may have been more at ease with the function of the *wayyiqṭol* than the later authors were. Further research is required in order to ascertain whether other 17th century authors share this comparative familiarity with the biblical narrative preterite form. (Note, however, that Hannover does not employ the *wayyiqṭol* exclusively in his presentation of past narrative, but rather alternates it with the *qaṭal*; this will be discussed in section 4.2.)

(49) **וישיבו** לו יהיה כדבריך **וילך** חמיל י״מש עם כל חילו אל מלך הקדרי״

*way-yašiḇu lo yihye ki-dḇareḵa way-yeleḵ ḥmil yimaḥ šəmo ʾim kol ḥelo ʾel meleḵ haq-qədarim*

'and they answered him, "may it be as you say", and Chmielnicki – may his name be blotted out – went with his whole army to the king of the Tatars'[105]

(50) **ויכתירו** לפאולוק שם **ויעשו** לו כסא של ברזל והושיבו עליו **ויעש** הסרדיוט כתר של ברזל בראשו

*way-yaḵtiru lə-pawluq šam way-yaʿaśu lo kisse šel barzel wə-hošiḇu ʾalaw way-yaʿaś has-sardioṭ keter šel barzel bə-rošo*

'and they crowned Pawliuk king there and made an iron throne for him and set him upon it and the army officer put an iron crown on his head'[106]

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[103] Kahn, 2009, pp. 241–243; Kahn, 2012b, pp. 181–183; Kahn, 2015, pp. 172–174.
[104] See Kahn, 2012a for further discussion of this suggestion.
[105] Hannover, 1653, p. 3.
[106] Hannover, 1653, p. 2.

(51) **ויקומו וינוסו** כולם **ויעזבו** את אהליהם את סוסיהם ואת חמוריהם **וישליכו** על הדרך
כסף וזהב

*way-yaqumu way-yanusu kulam way-yaʿazḇu ʾet ʾohalehem ʾet
susehem wə-ʾet ḥamorehem way-yašliḵu ʿal had-dereḵ keseṗ
wə-zahaḇ*

'and they all arose and fled, and they abandoned their tents, their horses,
and their donkeys, and they threw silver and gold on the road'[107]

In some cases, Hannover's *wayyiqṭol* sequences may be introduced by the
characteristically biblical construction *wayehi*, as in (52), which begins with
*wayehi* and contains a sequence of another two *wayyiqṭols*.

(52) **ויהי** כשמוע הדוכסי׳ והשרים **ויטב** בעיניהם הדבר **וימליכו** עליהם למלך את קאז״ימר
ירה בן שני של המלך ז״יגמונד

*wa-yhi kišmoaʿ had-dukkasim wə-haś-śarim way-yiṭaḇ bə-ʿenehem
had-daḇar way-yamliḵu ʿalehem lə-meleḵ ʾet qazimer yarum hodo
ben šeni šel ham-meleḵ zigmund*

'and when the dukes and the lords heard, the matter was good in their
eyes, and they made His Majesty Casimir the second son of King
Sigmund, king over them'[108]

## 4.2    Use of *qaṭal* in narrative sequences

While Hannover typically employs the *wayyiqṭol* in past narrative sequences,
he occasionally employs *qaṭal* forms in such cases, as in (53)–(55). This type
of sequence is ultimately traceable to Rabbinic Hebrew.[109] Like many other
features of Hannover's writing, this fusion of biblical and rabbinic past narra-
tive verbal structures is also a standard feature of 19th century Maskilic and
Hasidic Hebrew.[110] This practice of drawing on both the biblical and rabbinic
methods of conveying past narrative in the same text may be a function of the
author's desire to adhere to the biblical historical narrative convention while
simultaneously harbouring an intimate knowledge of the rabbinic model as
well; this is likely to have been compounded by the fact that Hannover's native
Yiddish lacks a construction like the *wayyiqṭol,* rendering the rabbinic use of
the *qaṭal* in past narrative intuitively more familiar.

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[107] Hannover, 1653, p. 11.
[108] Hannover, 1653, p. 14.
[109] Pérez Fernández, 1999, pp. 115–116.
[110] Kahn, 2009, pp. 87–89 and Kahn, 2015, p. 146 respectively.

(53) וכן עשה אסף כל חילו רכבו ופרשיו **והלך** עם אשתו אל מקומות שיש לו אחורי הנהר ניפ״ור

*wə-ḵen ʾaśa ʾasaf̄ kol ḥelo riḵbo u-p̄arašaw wə-**halaḵ** ʾim ʾišto ʾel məqomot šey-yeš lo ʾaḥore han-nahar niper*

'and thus he did; he gathered all his forces, his chariots and his horsemen, and he went with his wife to the places that he had behind the river Dnieper'[111]

(54) ומשם נסעו לק״ק סטארי״דוב **והרגו** ביהודי׳ הרג רב

*u-miš-šam nasʿu lə-qəhilla qədoša staridub wə-**hargu** bay-yəhudim hereg raḇ*

'and from there they travelled to the holy community of Starodub and killed many Jews'[112]

(55) חתרו חתירה תחת העיר **והכניסו** הפוחזים בעיר בלילה **והתחילו** להרוג בעם

*ḥatru ḥatira taḥat ha-ʿir wə-**hiḵnisu** hap-poḥazim ba-ʿir bal-layla wə-**hithilu** la-harog ba-ʿam*

'they tunnelled under the city and let the scoundrels into the city at night, and they started to kill the people'[113]

In many cases, Hannover's *qaṭal* forms are preceded or followed by a *way-yiqṭol*, as in (56) and (57) respectively.

(56) <u>ויערוך</u> המלך מערכה גדולה **ותקע** אהלו בבית הכומרים

*<u>way-yaʿaroḵ</u> ham-meleḵ maʿaraḵa gədola wə-**taqa**ʿ ʾohalo bə-ḇet hak-komarim*

'and the king waged a large battle, and pitched his tent in the priest's house'[114]

(57) והיהודי הנ״ל **ישב** בשלחן אחר **וחשב** חשבונותיו **ושמע** הדבר **וגילה** הדבר להשר <u>וישם</u> השר לחמיל י״מש בבית האסורים

*wə-ha-yəhudi hanaʾl **yašaḇ** bə-šulḥan ʾaḥer wə-**ḥašaḇ** ḥešbonotaw wə-**šama**ʿ had-daḇar wə-**gila** had-daḇar lə-haś-śar <u>way-yaśem</u> haś-śar lə-ḥmil yimaḥ šəmo bə-ḇet ha-ʾasurim*

'and the above-mentioned Jew sat at another table and made his calculations, and heard the matter and revealed the matter to the minister, and the minister put Chmielnicki – may his name be blotted out – in prison'[115]

Hannover also frequently initiates past narrative sequences with the typically biblical temporal construction *wayehi* plus a prefixed infinitive construct, and

[111] Hannover, 1653, p. 2.
[112] Hannover, 1653, p. 11.
[113] Hannover, 1653, p. 12.
[114] Hannover, 1653, p. 17.
[115] Hannover, 1653, p. 3.

then continues them with *qaṭal* forms, as in (58)–(60). This contrasts with Biblical Hebrew, in which *wayehi* is followed by *wayyiqṭol*s.[116] As in many other cases discussed in this study, this fusion of biblical and rabbinic usages has a direct parallel in 19th century Hasidic Hebrew.[117]

(58)  **ויהי** כשמוע הצורר חמי״ל י״ש **עשה** תחבולה **ושלח** ספרים אל השר הצבא
   ***wa-yhi*** *ki-šmoaʿ haṣ-ṣorer ḥmil yimaḥ šǝmo* ***ʿaśa taḥbula wǝ-šalaḥ*** *sǝp̄arim ʾel haś-śar haṣ-ṣaḇa*
   'and when the enemy Chmielnicki – may his name be blotted out – heard, he concocted a plot, and sent letters to the army commander'[118]

(59)  **ויהי** כשמוע אנשי העיר הדבר הזה **הקדימו** נעשה לנשמע
   ***wa-yhi*** *ki-šmoaʿ ʾanše ha-ʿir had-daḇar haz-ze* ***hiqdimu*** *naʿaśe lan-nišmaʿ*
   'and when they heard this matter, they acted quickly'[119]

(60)  **ויהי** אחר הדברים האלה **חזרו** הקדרים והיונים לביתם
   ***wa-yhi*** *ʾaḥar had-dǝḇarim ha-ʾelle* ***ḥazru*** *haq-qǝdarim wǝ-hay-yǝwanim lǝ-ḇetam*
   'and after these things, the Tatars and Ukrainians went home'[120]

Only rarely is a new narrative sequence introduced by a *qaṭal* of the root ה.י.ה *h.y.h.* instead of *wayehi*:

(61)  **והיה** בתוכם איש אחד חכם ונבון
   *wǝ-haya bǝ-toḵam ʾiš ʾeḥad ḥaḵam wǝ-naḇon*
   'and there was a clever and wise man among them'[121]

Often Hannover alternates between the *wayyiqṭol* and the *qaṭal* seemingly interchangeably in the same sequence, as illustrated in the following example:

(62)  **ונסעו** משם **ויצורו** על ק״ק זאלקווי״א **ובקשו** לגשת אל החומה להעמיד סולמות **וישפכו** עליהם מים רותחין מן החומה **וינוסו** הפוחזים מפניהם
   *wǝ-nasʿu miš-šam* ***way-yaṣuru*** *ʿal qǝhilla qǝdoša zolqiewa u-ḇiqqǝšu lag-gešet ʾel ha-ḥoma lǝ-haʿamid sulamot* ***way-yišpǝḵu*** *ʿalehem mayim rotḥin min ha-ḥoma* ***way-yanusu*** *hap-poḥazim mip-pǝnehem*
   'and they travelled from there and besieged the city of Żółkiew, and they tried to approach the wall in order to put up ladders, and they poured boiling water on them from the walls and the scoundrels fled from them'[122]

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[116] van der Merwe, Naudé and Kroeze, 1999, pp. 166–167.
[117] Kahn, 2015, pp. 176–177.
[118] Hannover, 1653, p. 11.
[119] Hannover, 1653, p. 14.
[120] Hannover, 1653, p. 16.
[121] Hannover, 1653, p. 9.
[122] Hannover, 1653, p. 13.

## 4.3 Use of *qaṭal* with present reference

Hannover occasionally employs the *qaṭal* form of stative *qal* root .ע.ד.י *y.d.ʿ.* with present reference, as in (63) and (64). This is a characteristic feature of Biblical Hebrew,[123] in contrast to Rabbinic Hebrew, which uses the *qoṭel* in such cases.[124] Hannover's usage has an exact parallel in later Maskilic Hebrew,[125] as well as in Hasidic Hebrew, in which its use is likewise restricted to the root .ע.ד.י *y.d.ʿ.*[126] Further research is required in order to ascertain whether other 17th century Eastern European writers of Hebrew narrative employed this type of construction with a wider variety of roots, and that the lack of examples in Hannover's text is due to its restricted size.

(63) אתה **ידעת** את האיש חמי״ל י״מש ואת מעשהו

ʾatta **yadaʿta** ʾet ha-ʾiš ḥmil yimaḥ šəmo wə-et maʿaśehu

'you know the man Chmielnicki – may his name be blotted out – and his deed'[127]

(64) אתם **ידעתם** שעם פולין הם חזקים יותר ממנו

ʾattem **yədaʿtem** še-ʿam polin hem ḥazaqim yoter mimmennu

'you know that the Polish people are stronger than us'[128]

## 4.4 Periphrastic verbal constructions for past progressive and habitual

Hannover frequently employs a periphrastic verbal construction consisting of a *qaṭal* of the root .ה.י.ה *h.y.h.* followed by a *qoṭel* to convey past progressive actions, as in (65)–(68). In some cases, the construction is used with stative verbs whose progressive sense is not evident in the English translation, as in (67) and (68). This type of construction is a characteristically post-biblical phenomenon; it appears frequently in Mishnaic Hebrew[129] and in various types of medieval Hebrew texts.[130] Hannover's use of this construction can be contrasted with his use of the typically biblical *wayyiqṭol* discussed above. Like other elements of the verbal system in *Yeven Meṣula*, the use of the periphrastic construction has a direct parallel in 19th century Maskilic and Hasidic Hebrew.[131]

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[123] Waltke and O'Connor, 1990, pp. 364–373.
[124] Pérez Fernández, 1999, p. 133.
[125] Kahn, 2009, pp. 90–91.
[126] Kahn, 2015, pp. 151–152.
[127] Hannover, 1653, p. 2.
[128] Hannover, 1653, p. 3.
[129] Pérez Fernández, 1999, pp. 108–109; Sharvit, 2004, p. 50; Mishor, 2013.
[130] Rabin, 1968, p. 115; Sarfatti, 2003, p. 87; Rand, 2006, pp. 341–342.
[131] Kahn, 2009, pp. 178–181; Kahn, 2015, p. 190.

(65) ויהי היום **היו יושבי׳** קאזקין חמי״ל י״מש ואוהביו במשתה היין [...] וסיפר חמי״ל
י״מש לפני אוהביו

wa-yhi hay-yom **hayu yošəḇim** qozaqin ḥmil yimaḥ šəmo wə-ʾohaḇaw
bə-mište hay-yayin […] wə-sipper ḥmil yimaḥ šəmo li-p̄ne ʾohaḇaw

'and one day the Cossacks were sitting, Chmielnicki – may his name be
blotted out – and his friends, at the wine banquet […] Chmielnicki –
may his name be blotted out – said to his friends'[132]

(66) בכל מקומו׳ **שהיו יהודי׳ דרים** שם ובמקומות הקאזקין שלא **היו יהודים דרים** שם

bə-ḵol məqomot še-**hayu yəhudim darim** šam u-ḇi-mqomot
haq-qozakin šel-lo **hayu yəhudim darim** šam

'in all the places where Jews were living, and in the places of the
Cossacks, where Jews were not living'[133]

(67) ויהי כשמוע הצורר חמי״ל י״מש את הדב׳ **היה מתירא** לנפשו

wa-yhi ki-šmoaʿ haṣ-ṣorer ḥmil yimaḥ šəmo ʾet had-daḇar **haya
mityare** lə-nap̄šo

'and when the enemy Chmielnicki heard the matter, he feared for his
life'[134]

(68) והשר ההו׳ **היה מכיר** את האיש

wə-haś-śar ha-hu **haya makkir** ʾet ha-ʾiš

'and that lord knew the man'[135]

The construction can also be used to convey a habitual sense, as in (69) and
(70). This is likewise a feature of Rabbinic Hebrew[136] in addition to medieval
forms of the language such as the *piyyuṭim*.[137] Again, this is also a feature of
19th century Maskilic and Hasidic Hebrew.[138]

(69) **והיו נותנים** לנערים אכיל׳ מקופה של צדקה

wə-**hayu notənim** lan-nəʿarim ʾaḵila miq-quppa šel ṣədaqa

'and they would give the boys food from the charity fund'[139]

[132] Hannover, 1653, p. 3.
[133] Hannover, 1653, p. 16.
[134] Hannover, 1653, p. 17.
[135] Hannover, 1653, p. 2.
[136] Pérez Fernández, 1999, pp. 108–109; Mishor, 2013.
[137] Sáenz-Badillos, 1993, p. 210.
[138] Kahn, 2009, pp. 181–182; Kahn, 2015, p. 189.
[139] Hannover, 1653, p. 18.

(70)  ופרנסים דארבע הארצות **היו בוררין** להם דיינים

*u-p̄arnesim də-ʾarbaʿ ha-ʾaraṣot **hayu borərin** lahem dayyanim*

'and community leaders of the Four Lands would choose judges for themselves'[140]

## 4.5 Verb-subject gender discord

Hannover has a strong tendency to use the 3msg form of a *qaṭal* verb in conjunction with a feminine noun if the verb precedes the noun, as in (71)–(74). This has direct precedent in the Hebrew Bible.[141] However, the fact that there are numerous instances of this phenomenon in the relatively short text of *Yeven Meṣula* suggests that, though the phenomenon is ultimately traceable to the Hebrew Bible, Hannover was not inspired solely by its occasional attestation there. This usage is not exhibited to the same extent in later Eastern European Hebrew writing, though it is sometimes found in Hasidic narrative literature.[142] Further research on other types of early modern Eastern European Hebrew is needed in order to ascertain whether it was part of a more widespread tradition.

(71)  **והיה דירתו** בעיר טשהארי״ן

*wə-**haya dirato** bə-ʿir tšehirin*

'and he lived in the town of Czehryń'[143]

(72)  ומעולם **היה שנאה גדולה** בין הקדרים והיונים

*u-me-ʿolam **haya śinʾa gədola** ben haq-qədarim wə-hay-yəwanim*

'and there had always been a great hatred between the Tatars and the Ukrainians'[144]

(73)  ואם **היה קהילה** של חמישי׳ בעלי בתים היו מחזיקין לא פחות משלשים בחורים ונערים

*wə-ʾim **haya qəhilla** šel ḥamišša baʿale battim hayu maḥaziqin lo paḥot miš-šəloša baḥurim u-nəʿarim*

'and if there was a community of fifty house owners, they would maintain no less than thirty young men and boys'[145]

(74)  בא לפעמים עשיר אחד **שהיה לו בת** קטנה

*ba li-p̄ʿamim ʿašir ʾeḥad še-**haya lo bat** qətanna*

'there came sometimes a rich man who had a small daughter'[146]

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[140] Hannover, 1653, p. 20.
[141] Waltke and O'Connor, 1990, p. 109; Williams, 2007, p. 92.
[142] Kahn, 2015, pp. 254–255.
[143] Hannover, 1653, p. 2.
[144] Hannover, 1653, p. 1.
[145] Hannover, 1653, p. 18.
[146] Hannover, 1653, p. 20.

# 5 Syntax

## 5.1 Temporal constructions

Hannover employs two different methods of forming temporal constructions. In some cases he uses the temporal conjunction כאשר *kaʾašer* 'when' or its prefixed variant -כש *kə-še-* followed by a finite verb. The temporal construction may be introduced by *wayehi*. The following examples illustrate this.

(75) ויהי **כאשר נסע** הצורר חמיי״ל י״מש עם מחניהו לכבוש ק״ק לובלי״ן הבירה ולא היה רק ארבע פרסאות מק״ק לובלי״ן בא אליו כתב המלך

    *wa-yhi **kaʾašer nasaʿ** haṣ-ṣorer ḥmil yimaḥ šəmo ʿim maḥanehu li-ḵboš qəhilla qədoša lublin hab-bira wə-lo haya raq 4 parsaʾot miq-qəhilla qədoša lublin baʾelaw kətaḇ ham-meleḵ*

    'and when the enemy Chmielnicki – may his name be blotted out – travelled with his camp to conquer the holy city of Lublin, the capital, and he was no more than four parsas from the holy city of Lublin, the king's edict reached him'[147]

(76) אבל הם לא חמלו עליהם **כשנפלו** עם פולין בידם

    *ʾaḇal hem lo ḥamlu ʿalehem **kə-šen-nap̄lu** ʿam polin bə-yadam*

    'but they did not have pity on them when the Poles fell into their hands'[148]

(77) ויהי **כאשר בא** השר הנ״ל עם אשתו לעיר טש״הרין קבלו אותו אנשי המקום בשמחה גדולה

    *wa-yhi **kaʾašer ba** haś-śar hana″l ʿim ʾišto lə-ʾir tšehirin qibbəlu ʾoto ʾanše ham-maqom bə-śimḥa gədola*

    'and when the above-mentioned lord came with his wife to the town of Czehryń, the local people received him with great joy'[149]

However he also forms temporal constructions by means of an inseparable preposition prefixed to an infinitive construct, as in Biblical Hebrew, as in (78)–(80). Such temporal constructions are typically preceded by *wayehi*. The inseparable preposition -כ *kə-* is used to denote the sense of 'just after', as in Biblical Hebrew. This type of construction is quite common, but is most frequently attested with the root ש.מ.ע *š.m.ʿ* 'hear', as in the first two examples. This may suggest that the construction was not extremely productive for Hannover but rather that this particular collocation was an almost fossilised expression with which he was particularly familiar. Alternatively, it may simply

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[147] Hannover, 1653, p. 14.
[148] Hannover, 1653, p. 11.
[149] Hannover, 1653, p. 2.

indicate that the expression 'and when X heard' is a high-frequency expression for a historical narrative such as *Yeven Meṣula.*

(78)   ויהי **כשמוע** הדוכוס[150] הנ״ל הדב׳ הזה ויחרד

wa-yhi **ki-šmoaʿ** had-dukkas hana″l had-daḇar haz-ze way-yeḥerad

'and when the aforementioned duke heard this matter, he was afraid'[151]

(79)   ויהי **כשמוע** חמיל י״מש שהדוכוס[152] ווישני״עצקי הולך וקרב אל מחניהו [...] שלח
לנגדו שר הצבא שלו

wa-yhi **ki-šmoaʿ** ḥmil yimaḥ šəmo še-had-dukkas wišniyeṣqi holeḵ
wə-qareḇ ʾel maḥanehu […] šalaḥ lə-negdo śar haṣ-ṣaḇa šello

'and when Chmielnicki – may his name be blotted out – heard that Duke Wiśniowiecki was approaching his camp […] he sent out his general'[153]

(80)   ויהי **כשבת** המלך על כסא מלכותו כתב מיד ספרים אל הצורר חמיל י״מש שילך וישוב
לביתו

wa-yhi **kə-šeḇet** ham-meleḵ ʾal kisse malḵuto kataḇ miy-yad səp̄arim
ʾel haṣ-ṣorer ḥmil yimaḥ šəmo šey-yeleḵ wə-yašuḇ lə-ḇeto

'and as soon as the king was sitting on his royal throne, he immediately wrote letters to the enemy Chmielnicki – may his name be blotted out – telling him to go home'[154]

## 5.2   Conditional clauses

There are several real conditional clauses attested in *Yeven Meṣula*. Some have a future sense, as shown in (81) and (82), and the others have a past habitual sense, shown in (83) and (84). All protases are introduced by the subordinator אם *ʾim* 'if'. The future conditionals have *yiqṭol* verbs in both the protasis and apodosis. Of the past habitual conditionals, the first is comprised of a periphrastic construction in both the protasis and apodosis, while the other has a *qaṭal* in the protasis and a periphrastic construction in the apodosis. All of these constructions are traceable to Mishnaic Hebrew.[155]

(81)   אם אנו נמתין עד שיבואו היונים לעיר יעשו בנו כלה ונחרצה

ʾim ʾanu namtin ʿad šey-yaḇoʾu hay-yəwanim la-ʿir yaʿaśu banu kalla
wə-neḥraṣa

'if we wait until the Ukrainians arrive in the city, they will destroy us completely'[156]

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[150] *Sic*; = דוכס.
[151] Hannover, 1653, p. 8.
[152] *Sic*; = דוכס.
[153] Hannover, 1653, p. 8.
[154] Hannover, 1653, p. 14.
[155] Pérez Fernández, 1999, pp. 213–216.
[156] Hannover, 1653, p. 4.

(82)  אם תשלחו יד בשרים ושמעו כל מלכי אדום וינקמו נקמתם מכל אחינו שבגולה

’im tišləḥu yad baś-śarim wə-šamʿu kol malke ʾedom wə-yinqəmu
niqmatam mik-kol ʾaḥenu šeb-bag-gola

'if you lay a hand on the lords and all the Catholic kings hear of it, they
will take revenge on all our brethren in exile'[157]

(83)  ואם היו רוצים לילך לדרכם היו נותנין להם צדה לדרך

wə-ʾim hayu roṣim lelek lə-darkam hayu notənin lahem ṣeda lad-derek

'and if they wanted to go on their way, they would give them provisions
for the road'[158]

(84)  ואם באו מארץ מרחקי' או ממקומו' אחרי' [...] היו מלבישים אותם

wə-ʾim baʾu me ʾereṣ merḥaqim ʾo mim-məqomot ʾaḥerim [...] hayu
malbišim ʾotam

'and if they came from a faraway land or from other places [...] they
would provide them with clothes'[159]

In one case, Hannover employs a fusion of biblical and post-biblical construc-
tions in his real conditional: the apodosis is introduced by a *yiqṭol*, but this is
prefixed by the *waw*-conjunctive, which echoes the biblical use of the *waw*-
consecutive in real conditional apodoses.[160] As discussed elsewhere in this
study, this mix of biblical and rabbinic elements is a common feature of Han-
nover's writing, and is also a common feature of 19th century Eastern Euro-
pean Hebrew, though this precise feature is not attested in Maskilic or Hasidic
narrative literature. Further research is needed in order to ascertain whether it
is an element of other types of Ashkenazic Hebrew.

(85)  אם אנו הורגים לכולם **ויחמלו** עם פולי״ן על היונים

’im ʾanu horəgim lə-kulam **wə-yaḥməlu** ʿam polin ʿal hay-yəwanim

'if we kill them all, the people of Poland will have pity for the
Ukrainians'[161]

There is also an irreal conditional, with a verbless protasis introduced by לולא
*lule* 'if not' and an apodosis with a *qaṭal* of the root ה.י.ה *h.y.h.*, shown in (86).
Interestingly, in contrast to the real past habitual conditionals shown above,
this construction most closely resembles biblical irreal conditionals, which are
likewise introduced by לולא *lule* 'if not'.[162] This is further evidence of the fu-
sion of biblical and post-biblical elements present throughout Hannover's text.

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[157] Hannover, 1653, p. 7.
[158] Hannover, 1653, p. 20.
[159] Hannover, 1653, p. 20.
[160] See Waltke and O'Connor, 1990, pp. 526–527.
[161] Hannover, 1653, p. 11.
[162] Waltke and O'Connor, 1990, 637–638.

(86) כי לולא זאת לא היה תקומה חלילה לשארית ישר׳

*ki lule zot lo haya təquma ḥalila li-šeʾerit yiśraʾel*

'and were it not for that, there would, God forbid, have been no survival for the remnant of Israel'[163]

## 5.3    Inconsistent use of the accusative marker את ʾ*et*

A characteristic feature of Hannover's syntax is the inconsistent use of the accusative marker את ʾ*et*. This marker is a standard feature of the biblical and rabbinic strata of Hebrew.[164] However, it is commonly omitted in a variety of medieval Hebrew texts, including Rashi's commentaries, the *Sefer Ḥasidim*, Spanish-Provençal Hebrew prose[165] and Arabic translations.[166] Rabin[167] suggests that the medieval tendency to omit the particle is rooted in Paytanic Hebrew,[168] and that this is itself based on Biblical Hebrew poetry, in which את ʾ*et* is much less common than in biblical prose. Any such tendencies are likely to have been compounded by the fact that the medieval authors, like Hannover, spoke vernaculars lacking such a particle. As in the case of most other features discussed in this study, 19th century Hasidic Hebrew authors also frequently omit the particle.[169] There are no clear patterns governing Hannover's employment of the marker. It is likely that, as in the case of other varieties such as Hasidic Hebrew, which make use of the marker in a similarly inconsistent manner, Hannover consciously recognised it as an intrinsic element of the Hebrew prose style, but often unintentionally omitted it because such a form was not a feature of his Yiddish vernacular and therefore did not come naturally to him. Examples (87)–(89) illustrate cases where Hannover did employ the marker:

(87) ויהי כשמוע המלך והשרים **את** הדבר הזה היה כמצחק בעיניהם

*wa-yhi ki-šmoaʿ ham-meleḵ wə-haś-śarim ʾet had-daḇar haz-ze haya kə-miṣḥaq bə-ʿenehem*

'and when the king and the minister heard this matter, it was like a joke to them'[170]

(88) ולֹאבד **את** כל היהודי׳ ו**את** כל חיל עם פולין

*u-lə-ʾabbed ʾet kol ha-yhudim wə-ʾet kol ḥel ʿam polin*

'and to destroy all the Jews and all the might of the people of Poland'[171]

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[163] Hannover, 1653, p. 5.
[164] Rabin, 2000, p. 117.
[165] Rosén, 1995, pp. 64–66; Rabin, 2000, p. 117.
[166] Goshen-Gottstein, 2006, p. 111.
[167] Rabin, 2000, p. 117.
[168] See Rand, 2006, pp. 258–259.
[169] Kahn, 2015, pp. 280–282.
[170] Hannover, 1653, p. 3.
[171] Hannover, 1653, p. 5.

(89) וּבֵין כָּךְ וּבֵין כָּךְ שָׁלַח הַמֶּלֶךְ **אֶת** הַשַּׂר אוֹסְלִי״נְסְקִי מִשְׁנֶה שֶׁלּוֹ אֶל הַמֶּלֶךְ הַקְּדָרִים

u-ḇen kaḵ u-ḇen kaḵ šalaḥ ham-meleḵ **ʾet** haś-śar oslinsqi mišne šello ʾel ham-meleḵ haq-qədarim

'and meanwhile, the king sent his aide, the Lord Ossoliński, to the Tatar king'[172]

By contrast, (90)–(92) exemplify cases where he neglected to include it:

(90) וַיְהִי כְּשְׁמוֹעַ הַדּוּכּוֹס[173] הַדָּב׳ הַזֶּה וַיֶּחֱרַד

wa-yhi ki-šmoaʿ had-duḵkas had-daḇar haz-ze way-yeḥerad

'and when the duke heard this matter, he was afraid'[174]

(91) לִשְׁמוֹר הָעִיר מִן הַשּׂוֹנֵא

li-šmor ha-ʿir min haś-śone

'to guard the town from the enemy'[175]

(92) עַד שֶׁלָּכְדוּ הַמִּבְצָר וַיַּהַרְגוּ כֹּל הַיְּהוּדִים

ʿad šel-laḵdu ham-miḇṣar way-yahargu kol ha-yhudim

'until they captured the fortress and killed all the Jews'[176]

## 5.4   Use of -ל ləʹ- as accusative marker

A striking and very common feature of Hannover's writing is the use of the inseparable preposition -ל ləʹ- 'to, for' as a direct object marker. The preposition is attested with this function in conjunction with a variety of verbs and seems to be relatively productive, though its use is not uniform. A noteworthy aspect of this construction is that it seems to be used only with reference to animate objects and cities (which can be regarded as a sort of collective concentration of animate objects). Examples (93)–(96) illustrate this noteworthy construction. The phenomenon extends to the employment of -ל ləʹ- in conjunction with a pronominal suffix, as in (97).

This feature has some precedent in Late Biblical Hebrew and Rabbinic Hebrew;[177] in both cases it is thought to be ascribable to influence from Aramaic, in which -ל ləʹ- is a standard accusative marker.[178] However, it does not appear to be a feature of medieval forms of Hebrew, which use the accusative marker את ʾet or leave direct objects unmarked.[179] Notably, it also appears to be absent

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[172] Hannover, 1653, p. 16.
[173] *Sic*; = דוכס.
[174] Hannover, 1653, p. 8.
[175] Hannover, 1653, p. 8.
[176] Hannover, 1653, p. 12.
[177] Gesenius, 2006, p. 366; Segal, 1927, p. 168.
[178] Rabin, 2000, p. 117–118; see also Nicolae and Tropper, 2010, pp. 30–31 and Bar-Asher Siegal, 2013, pp. 201–202 for details of the particle in Aramaic.
[179] Rabin, 2000, pp. 117–118.

from 19th century Eastern European forms of Hebrew, in contrast to many of the other constructions discussed in this study. The fact that *Yeven Meṣula* does not exhibit any direct grammatical influence from Aramaic[180] suggests that the historical basis for Hannover's use of this construction is its appearance in Biblical and Rabbinic Hebrew. However, the fact that the use of -ל *lə-* as an accusative marker is not a prominent feature of either of these strata of Hebrew, combined with the fact that Hannover's restriction of the construction to animate objects lacks clear precedent in biblical or rabbinic literature, raise the possibility that the canonical strata are not the sole source of the phenomenon in *Yeven Meṣula*. Perhaps unexpectedly, the most direct parallel for Hannover's usage can be found in the pre-modern Hebrew writing of Judaeo-Spanish speakers from the Ottoman Empire, which exhibits precisely the same phenomenon, including the restriction to animate objects.[181] This intriguingly specific apparent link between Hannover's text and that of Ottoman Judaeo-Spanish-speaking writers requires further investigation in order to ascertain the extent of the similarities between these two forms of Diaspora Hebrew. Likewise, further research needs to be done into the language of other early modern and modern Ashkenazic Hebrew textual sources in order to determine whether this phenomenon was rooted in a more widespread usage in Eastern Europe as well.

(93)  והיה משפיל להדוכסים והשרים שהיו מדת היונים

*wə-haya mašpil lə-had-dukkasim wə-haś-śarim še-hayu mid-dat hay-yəwanim*

'and he would bring down the dukes who were of the Greek Orthodox religion'[182]

(94)  ויכתירו לפאולוק שם

*way-yaḵtiru lə-pawluq šam*

'and they crowned Pawliuk king there'[183]

(95)  וחרב בתי תפלותם והרג לכומרי׳ שבהם

*wə-ḥaraḇ batte təp̄illotam wə-harag lak-komərim/lə-ḵomərim šeb-bahem*

'and he destroyed their churches and killed (the) priests that were in them'[184]

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[180] Aramaic features in *Yeven Meṣula* are limited to a number of set phrases such as נטורי קרתא *naṭore qarta* 'guardians of the city' (Hannover, 1653, p. 8) and the use of the possessive particle ד- *də-* 'of' on one occasion, חילו רכב ופרשים דעם פולי״ן *ḥelo reḵeḇ u-p̄arašim də-ʿam polin* 'his Polish army, chariots and horsemen' (Hannover, 1653, p. 10).
[181] Bunis, 2013, p. 60*.
[182] Hannover, 1653, p. 1.
[183] Hannover, 1653, p. 2.
[184] Hannover, 1653, p. 5.

(96)  ונתן לו העצה שאוהביו יוציאו לחמיל י״מש מבי׳ האסורי׳

    *wə-natan lo ha-ˈeṣa še-ˈohaḇaw yoṣiˈu li-ḥmil yimaḥ šəmo mib-bet*
    *ha-ˈasurim*

    'and gave him the advice that his friends should take Chmielnicki – may
    his name be blotted out – out of prison'[185]

(97)  ומהר אנו מביאים לכם אל אחיכם שבקוסטנטי״נא

    *u-maher ˈanu məḇiˈim laḵem ˈel ˈaḥeḵem šeb-bə-qostantina*

    'and we shall quickly take you to your brothers who are in
    Constantinople'[186]


## 6 Conclusion

The Hebrew of *Yeven Meṣula* exhibits a fusion of characteristically biblical
features (the *wayyiqṭol*, stative *qaṭals* with present reference and temporal
constructions composed of a prefixed infinitive construct) and typically rab-
binic elements (the masculine plural in *nun,* the *qaṭal* in past narrative se-
quences and periphrastic verbal constructions), in many cases employing the
biblical and rabbinic features alongside each other. It also contains a number
of features without clear precedent in Biblical or Rabbinic Hebrew (the reten-
tion of the definite article with inseparable prepositions, the indefinite article,
definiteness of construct nouns and doubly definite construct chains, the
avoidance of the dual, and erratic use of the definite direct object marker), but
which are attested in other Eastern European forms of the language, specifi-
cally the writings of 19th century Maskilic and Hasidic authors as well as the
*Kiṣur Shulḥan ˈAruḵ* and rabbinic responsa literature. Moreover, at least one
of these features (fluctuation between the *nun* and *mem* plural endings) is
found in medieval Ashkenazic Hebrew. Some of them also have parallels in
the Hebrew composed by Judaeo-Spanish speakers and, more distantly, in Ju-
daeo-Arabic. Finally, *Yeven Meṣula* exhibits a single feature (the use of the
prefixed preposition -ל *lə-* 'to, for' as a definite direct object marker in addition
to the standard את *ˈet*) whose closest parallel seems to be in the Hebrew of
Ottoman Judaeo-Spanish speakers. The overall similarity between *Yeven
Meṣula* and other Eastern European forms of Hebrew, particularly those com-
posed by 19th century adherents of the Maskilic and Hasidic movements, sug-
gests that all of these authors may have been heirs to a shared Ashkenazic
variety of Hebrew whose roots stretch back to at least the 17th century and
possibly much earlier. Further research is needed to determine the geograph-
ical and chronological boundaries of this form of Hebrew and establish its
links with other types of early modern and modern Diaspora Hebrew, as well
as more broadly with Judaeo-Arabic and other Semitic languages.

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[185] Hannover, 1653, p. 3.
[186] Hannover, 1653, p. 5.

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