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**The exegetical method of Rabbi Yosef Kara with regard to the Prophetic Books.**

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**The Exegetical Method of Rabbi Yosef Kara  
With Regard to the Prophetic Books**

**by**

**Drori Ganiel**

**A thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the  
degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of Wales.**

**February 1993**



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### Summary

Among the Jewish sages of northern France, the twelfth century saw a shift from Talmudic study and the midrashic exegesis of a few Biblical books to a methodical peshat interpretation of the whole Bible. Rabbi Yosef Kara, a man of wonderfully independent mind, was a leading figure in this movement. He (not Rashi) was the first true peshat commentator, and this thesis demonstrates that his commentary displays many features which have become the cornerstones of modern exegesis, especially in its stress upon context, comparison and realia and its articulation of exegetical principles. Only Kara's commentary on Job has to date received critical attention. This thesis analyses his commentary on the entire Book of Prophets: Joshua, Judges, I-II Samuel, I-II Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the Twelve Minor Prophets. His innovatory emphasis upon peshat and general rejection of derash are discussed in Chapter 1, with his stress upon textual environment (hibbur ha-mikra'oth) and continuous attention to the links between topics. Chapter 2 deals with the style and terminology of his exegetical approach; use of verses and of vernacular languages; literary analyses of Biblical style; manner of resolving contradictions; and interest in realia. Chapter 3 discusses when and how he uses sources like the Aramaic Targumim, and surveys his links with other commentators like Rashi, Helbo, Ben Saruk and Ben Labrat, and his use of their work. His independence of Rashi and the respective conceptions of peshat of Kara, Rashi and Rashbam are established in a long comparison. Some notes on his attitude to the Masoretic text follow. A survey of his works and their scholarly history and a brief account of his life which discusses the epithet kara are provided.



## Introduction

Although Biblical exegesis has interested me from my early student days, several considerations have led to my present focus upon the writings of Yosef Kara. First is his exegetical technique. This is most instructive in that he takes the trouble to justify his points in methodological terms, so that study of his work carries one beyond the passage under discussion to a general interpretative approach of great value in its capacity to delineate the text's literary and conceptual qualities. Secondly, the advanced approach to VWS commentary involved in his grasp of his own method. Finally, the fact that this distinguished figure has been little studied.

In entering more deeply into his commentary and becoming acquainted with his style and language, I became aware of his specific quality as a commentator who could recognise and define features of the text which now form the basis for modern interpretations. He does not appear to struggle for exegetical freedom. In many respects the bonds of the Midrash are behind him, and if here and there he cites Midrashim and grapples with them he acts not out of slavishness but out of a sense of obligation to his exegetical predecessors and respect for the Torah which has enabled him to move so far forward.

Not only does he display exegetical independence, he also deploys his commentary in a fresh manner. Some of his comments are founded not only upon their harmony with the text but also on their incongruity with other hypothetical

interpretations which he rejects. For this purpose he makes use of fixed linguistic structures.

His apprehension of פשט commentary is novel and complex. פשוטו של מקרא is arrived at through a punctilious attention to various points - the order and meaning of the verses, anticipatory passages, juxtaposition of sections, context (which he calls הילוך המקרא), and of course his own declarations on the subject. He displays great sensitivity to Biblical style and (as I hope to show) develops a most advanced literary conception of the text.

The purpose of this study is to examine Kara's exegetical approach in three areas, to each of which a chapter is devoted. (1) פשט and דרש: Kara's view of these exegetical modes is considered and an attempt is made to define his conception of פשט. We shall examine the way in which he selects and makes use of Midrashim, and of what he calls חיבורי המקראות or הילוך הכתובים. (2) Kara's own exegetical approach will then be considered. This will include an examination of his style and principles of interpretation, his use of Biblical verses and of the vernacular, and his notes on the style of the Bible, and in particular on realia and geography. (3) His relation to his predecessors will be the subject of the final chapter. This will include an appreciation of his view of נוסח, מסורה, and טעמי המקרא, and of the Aramaic translations and other rabbis, and his attitude to his contemporaries, especially Rashi and Helbo. An examination of these three areas should enable us to delineate his exegetical approach to the Prophets and to the whole Bible.

Before the various chapters of this study are outlined,

attention must be paid to the scope of Kara's commentaries and to the history of research upon them.

### 1. The Scope of Kara's Commentaries

Kara comments upon most of the Biblical books. We shall begin with the Pentateuch. Here it emerges that he does not provide a full or continuous commentary but merely supplements the commentaries which were already in existence, especially those of Rashi. His comments appear in Tosafist literature and in the glosses preserved within Rashi. A collection of about 100 pieces is included in Berliner's Peletath

Sofrim.<sup>1</sup>

His commentaries on the Early Prophets are extant in the Kirchheim MS, which has been published in a scholarly edition by Shimon Apenstein (Mossad Harav Kook, Jerusalem, 1972); not all the notes are accurate. The commentaries on the Latter Prophets are printed in Mikraoth Gedoloth (pub. Lublin). While the commentaries on Isaiah and Jeremiah in this edition are Kara's,<sup>2</sup> the text in the Kirchheim MS differs slightly; compare the passages cited by Littmann in the Appendix to his monograph on Kara.<sup>3</sup> The commentary on Ezekiel belongs to Kara's 'school', for it was set down by one of his disciples, who notes, for example, כן פירש מורי ר' יוסף ב"ר שמעון לפי פשוטו (see on Ezek. 14:5; 16:27, 30); or ומורי ר' יוסף פירש' (Ezek. 33:27). But Poznanski<sup>4</sup> is right to feel that it should be seen as Kara's work on the basis of its exegetical approach, style and method, and phrases like שלא תתמה, which serve as characteristic signs by which he may be identified. I too make use of it here as a commentary like any of the others.

As to the Twelve Minor Prophets, some of the extant material is by Kara. Apart from the version in Mikraoth Gedoloth, the commentary on Micah is edited by Gad in his edition of Bechor Shor's commentary on the Pentateuch.<sup>5</sup>

In the Hagiographa, Kara comments on Job, the Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, Ruth, Lamentations and Esther, his work on the last three being edited by Jellink<sup>6</sup> in an edition which also contains Rashbam's commentary, among others. The commentary on Lamentations has also been edited by S. Babar on the basis of several MSS,<sup>7</sup> and the commentary on Ecclesiastes by Einstein.<sup>8</sup> A scholarly edition of the commentary on Job has recently been published by Ahrend.<sup>9</sup>

## 2. History of Research on Kara's Commentaries

Zunz and Geiger were among the first to draw attention to Kara's exegetical approach, the first surveys of which then began to appear in addition to selective publication of his commentaries. Geiger's collection Nitei Ne'emanim (Breslau 1847) is marred by the fact that not all the commentaries printed as Kara's are in fact his. At the end of the 1880s two monographs were published on Kara's work: Einstein's Introduction to his edition of the commentary on Ecclesiastes, and Littmann's book. Einstein discusses fundamental issues in connection with Kara's exegesis, including the question of his predecessors (his father, his uncle Menahem b. Helbo, who was his teacher, and others), the name Kara and what is known of his family, and the period of Rashi, Kara and Rashbam and the exegetical links between them. He also provides an introduction to the commentary on Ecclesiastes. This survey, like earlier ones, has helped to

establish the principles for the study of Kara. Einstein stresses his paedagogic quality and points out his characteristic turns of phrase and exegetical principles.

A year later, in 1887, Littmann's monograph was published in Breslau. It differs from Einstein's work in being a study in its own right whose intention is to summarise the findings of previous scholars and Littmann's own examination of the manuscripts. It includes an introduction, a biography, a survey of Kara's writings on the various Biblical books, and an account of his links with other writers (Rashi, Helbo, Rashbam) and of his exegetical approach, etc. The rich Appendix contains selected passages from Kara, taken from the Kirchheim MS in the library of the Theological Seminary in Breslau; Littmann explains how he has made use of them in his different chapters.

In 1913 Poznanski published the monograph Mavo al Hachmei Tzarfath Mefarshei Hamikra as an appendix to an edition of the commentary of Eliezer of Beaugency on Ezekiel and the Minor Prophets.<sup>10</sup> This 'Introduction' contains an ample chapter on Kara, and despite the passage of nearly 80 years, it remains an important study. Poznanski also published a study of Helbo, Kara's uncle,<sup>11</sup> which complements the chapter in his monograph. Since (on the basis of several descriptions in Kara's commentaries) it is accepted that Helbo was Kara's teacher, the little Helbo material extant is of interest in the study of his disciple.

In his chapter on Kara Poznanski surveys the scope of his Biblical commentary - that is, on which books a commentary exists and where it is published - and then sketches out Kara's exegetical characteristics. Thus he deals (for

instance) with Kara's attitude towards שרר, his relation to Rashi, his exegetical principles, his view of Biblical language, and his style. He includes the findings of earlier scholars as to, for example, the extensive use in Kara of מקרא קצר and the phrase שלא תחמה.

The literature contains several more surveys of Kara, like that in Babar's edition of his commentary on Lamentations, etc.,<sup>12</sup> but none offers any arresting new points. Epstein, a student of Berliner's, provides a survey of Kara's life and work which has recently been summarised and translated into Hebrew as an introduction to the edition of Kara's commentary on the Early Prophets published by Mossad Harav Kook (1973).<sup>13</sup> Epstein discusses Kara's cultural context and the geographical circumstances of his activity. He lays stress on the teachings of Helbo and on the exegetical approaches of other contemporaries, but his principal interest is Kara's view of שרר as compared with פשוט. In discussing the Sages of whom Kara makes use in his work, he focusses upon Rashi. The second part of the survey consists of a short discussion of the status of Kara's commentary on each of the Early Prophets. In dealing with questions of realia, chronology, relations to exegetical sources and so on it sketches out his particular approach.<sup>14</sup>

The latest and most comprehensive study of Kara is the Introduction provided by Ahrend to the commentary on Job.<sup>15</sup> It is divided into three parts: a short general introduction to his life and to his exegetical principles, as these are elucidated in previous studies; an account (which constitutes the bulk of the book) of the main lines followed in the commentary on Job; and a discussion by Moshe Katan of French

terms in the commentary. There is also an up-to-date list of indexes and a rich bibliography. Ahrend published this book in preparation for his edition of the commentary on Job, which came out in 1978 and in which he supplies an introduction to Kara's exegesis both in general and in relation to Job. In a private conversation, he expressed his pleasure that I was working on Kara's exegetical approach to the Prophets and approved the line I wished to take.

Some important points about Kara can be found in Twyto's review of Ahrend's book.<sup>16</sup> His main point is that the activity of Jewish commentators in northern France, like Kara and Rashbam, must be understood as the outcome of the contemporary Little Renaissance. More precisely, he holds that there is a link between the ways in which the Bible was studied in Christian circles and the approach of the Jewish Sages. The flowering of *umma* was one result of the contact between the two cultures.<sup>17</sup>

### 3. Topics Discussed in this Study

Chapter 1, 'Between פשט and דרש', deals with Kara's exegetical method. It discusses the terms which he adopts, in particular those used to distinguish between פשט and דרש; his ways of proving or clarifying exegetical points; his innovative reliance upon חנור המקראות; his focussing upon the anticipatory passages that form part of Biblical narrative; and the use he makes of Midrash - how and when he cites the Talmudic Sages.

His intense concern with the subject of פשט, and its own importance, makes it necessary to attempt to sketch out a definition of פשט as he sees it. This endeavour is made easier by the fact that as a paedagogue Kara keeps his students or readers in mind, and frequently explains or justifies his views. His devotion to פשט leads him to give reasons for his comments, which he defines as the plain sense of the text. He appears (as a number of scholars have suggested) to have a mature conception of the nature of פשט, as his use of numerous terms and phrases indicate. For example, he comments on I Kings 8:8, במקרא זה אומר אני יוסף בר' שמעון שזהו פשוטו ומליצתו ובירורו של דבר ולא כפוסח על שתי הסעיפים. The terms מליצתו ובירורו של דבר are used by him (generally in isolation) to designate correct interpretations. The phrase ולא כפוסח על שתי הסעיפים seems to me to be a covert attack on those who hold different opinions or who cannot make up their minds between given interpretations. Another term, הילוך המקרא, connotes attention to the internal dynamic of the text and its continuity. The complementary term חנור המקראות describes the overall work of the commentary and the context and textual



environment.  $\text{טשנ}$  may be achieved, in Kara's opinion, by rigorous precision as to exegetical method. The absence of an abstract definition does not reflect any shortcoming in Kara, since his period was not mature enough to arrive at one. Instead we find combinations of terms and phrases which can in various ways supply what is wanted. Scholars agree that Kara stands out among his contemporaries in northern France both for his striving towards  $\text{טשנ}$  and for his explicit declarations on this subject. He makes a series of references to the priority to be accorded the  $\text{טשנ}$ , and frequently asserts even its exclusive rights. In this he differs vastly from Rashi, for Rashi not merely includes many Midrashim in his commentaries but treats the Midrash as equal if not superior in standing to  $\text{טשנ}$ .

The chapter contains a survey of the places where Kara either gives express preference to the  $\text{טשנ}$ , or rejects a  $\text{שרש}$  and sharply criticises the Midrash. A separate section discusses and illustrates the ways in which he selects a small number of Midrashim which he feels may serve as figurative components of  $\text{טשנ}$ . Following this, three topics are discussed which also reflect his view of  $\text{טשנ}$ . (a)  $\text{חנור}$   $\text{המקראות}$ , that is, the determined and consistent elucidation of the link between topics and the text's continuity. Kara makes his commentary move without a break from one verse to the next by clarifying the context until his discussion becomes a complete whole in which parts of the verses in question are smoothly integrated. (b) Anticipation: that feature of Biblical narrative whereby things are mentioned out of context and explicated by material which appears later. Kara uses the phrases  $\text{קדם ולימודך}$  or  $\text{ואל תתמה}$  to

explain this phenomenon in terms of the text's overall viewpoint, and (as part of his conception of what  $\text{ושנ}$  entails) he provides a literary analysis. (c) Juxtaposition: a further piece of evidence in the overall conception and in analysing the text in formal literary terms. My own conclusions as to Kara's view of  $\text{ושנ}$  appear after a survey of scholarly opinion.

The last part of the chapter examines Kara's handling of his sources. Where does he quote the Midrash precisely, or with slight changes, and where does he summarise it, or even merely cite its central idea? What is his attitude to the Midrash? A number of places in which he is inaccurate, or errs in quoting from the sources, are listed. A list is also supplied of the books and sources available to him.

Chapter 2 describes Kara's exegetical approach as it emerges in the Prophetic Books. There are nine sections. The first describes his exegetical style and terminology. What he says is to be read as a continuous discussion, the commentary forming a paraphrase of the text. It is characterised by longwindedness, appeals to the reader, repetition of arguments and the maintenance of a connection between verses so that a complete picture of the subject under discussion is obtained. An interesting innovation which scholars have not remarked is Kara's use of the second person singular (for the roots  $\text{ע"ד}$  or  $\text{למ"ד}$ ) to give guidance to the reader in various Scriptural principles or textual features which recur in certain contexts. He does not merely direct; he demands that the reader understand what he calls  $\text{נתינות הקריה}$  (I Sam. 1:20), and he warns him against mistaken interpretations. According to contemporary practice, his remarks are worked

into the verses which form an integral part of his commentary. I have found a number of places where he openly acknowledges inability to interpret a passage, whether his difficulty is partial and conditional or whether it emerges in a declaration of complete incomprehension. Another stylistic trait is his great variety of language when he cites an Aramaic translation or offers a translation into ת"ל (the vernacular) of other commentaries or of Scriptural verses. He does not use fixed terms or phrases (as is customary among other mediaeval commentators) but displays the range characteristic of a teacher before his pupils. The next section details the principal ways in which he makes use of Biblical citations. Places where he quotes wrongly are listed in an appendix.

The third section deals with his use of ת"ל. Here too he is innovative, for he was apparently the first (and perhaps the only) commentator to employ the vernacular not merely to explain an isolated word or idea but to translate phrases and entire verses. He formulates rules not only for specific features in the text but also, and principally, for Biblical style: the repetition of words or of themes, מקרא קצר, מקרא מפורש, parables and images, alliteration, and so on. It is interesting to note that where passages are duplicated or repeated, Kara defines the considerations involved in the elliptical style whereby something is stated briefly in one place and repeated and expanded elsewhere. Another discovery is that in his view, the literary elements involved in a rhetorical style or rhythm may serve to establish the order of a prophet's addresses.

A separate section distributes into categories most of the

places where Kara compares the text of the Early Prophets with that of Chronicles. Some of these comparisons are undoubtedly instituted out of Kara's profound belief in the integrity of the text and his strong desire to show his pupils that there are no contradictions in the Bible. For this reason he attempts to settle contradictions and cruxes in <sup>the</sup> Prophets, and here too the essence of his approach is harmonisation. A short discussion then follows of those verses where he offers more than one interpretation (whether his own or someone else's), and of his approach in such cases.

Another feature which is characteristic of Kara, and peculiar to him, has not been noted by scholars: the attention which he pays to the stuff of ordinary life. In this he differs greatly from Rashi and other commentators. While they make the occasional reference, this is not their regular practice. Kara's very concern with realia, not to mention the intensity with which he pursues them, makes him into a precursor of much later exegetical trends. He frequently draws analogies from his life and environment in France, displaying no little expertise as to many concrete matters connected with housekeeping and the kitchen, agriculture, building and shipping, anatomy and medicine, armies and war, and even court etiquette. The last section is devoted to this subject. It also notes his lack of information (as to which he resembles other contemporaries) on the identity of sites in the land of Israel and the surrounding countries, and on the geography of the ancient world in general.

The third chapter examines Kara's relation to his

predecessors, a topic of particular importance inasmuch as no commentator works in an exegetical vacuum. We must not suppose that any commentary can exist which does not draw, consciously or unconsciously, from oral or written exegetical traditions. This is the case with the greatest of exegetes, like Rashi, Rashbam and Saadiah Gaon, and it applies to Kara as well; he too shows the influence of Talmudic literature, various Midrashim, and the commentaries of his predecessors. A few of his explanations are explicitly ascribed to someone else, while others which are in fact taken from another source form an undifferentiated part of his commentary. We therefore consider on what occasions Kara owns to another's authorship, and when he does not; when he notes that a point is disputed; when he cites writers with whom he disagrees (and which ones he selects); and when and how he expresses his own opinion.

After examining his view of נוסח, מסורה and טעמי המקרא, we discuss his attitude towards the Aramaic translations, which means principally Targum Jonathan (he cites Onkelos on only twenty-four occasions, for the purpose merely of reinforcing his own comment or providing a substitute for it). Targum Jonathan is cited sometimes to strengthen Kara's interpretation and sometimes in order to be rejected. It may be seen that the arrangement of material here reflects exegetical preference, for if he places his interpretation before the reference to Targum Jonathan it means that he gives it priority without rejecting the Targum's solution. When his own comment comes after the Targum's interpretation, the latter is rejected because it is insufficiently founded in the טש.

An important central section is devoted to the links between Kara and Rashi, and their commentaries. There is as yet no thoroughgoing study of this topic; although two commentators from the same city and alive at the same time are in question, only one of them has been accorded broad publication. Each mentions the other, and it seems clear that it was Kara who reported Helbo's views to Rashi; it is equally clear that Kara was acquainted with Rashi's grandson Rashbam, a fact which has prompted several scholars to stress the connection between their commentaries on different Biblical books. Some have minimised the significance of Kara's work on the grounds that it is merely an expansion of Rashi, while others claim that it is wholly dependent upon it. Einstein showed at the beginning of this century that these assertions are exaggerated, for Kara not infrequently criticises Rashi, and his commentary is longer and its approach different; but so far no comparative study of their commentaries has probed very deeply or dealt with them in quantitative or qualitative terms. Such an examination in fact establishes considerable differences between them which reflect differences in conception, and so undermines the claim that Kara's work is identical or similar to Rashi's, or a mere copy of it. Kara mentions Sages whom Rashi does not name, makes use of Targumim in many more places than Rashi does, employs the vernacular more extensively, and cites Midrashim which are not to be found in Rashi. He takes a more critical view of נוסח מסורה, טעמי המקרא, and of contradictions between the Early Prophets and Chronicles, and (above all) he displays a more advanced conception of נפש. Moreover, his commentary is built up as a continuous

exegetical composition, where Rashi and other commentators write isolated notes. Rashi offers nothing to match Kara's style, with its fixed principles and appeals to the reader. We must therefore conclude (and this is a point only now established), that Kara's commentary is an independent work which occasionally includes comments from the older Rashi, and in parallel manner Kara's discussions can be found worked into Rashi's.

Another section deals with Kara's relation to his father's brother R. Menahem bar Helbo (the Rambach), who was also known as Kara. Kara admired his uncle and often quotes him, although frequently for the purpose of rejecting his interpretation. Helbo seems to have influenced him greatly and to have aroused his interest in *ḥalakhah*, as Poznanski suggests: 'The first distinguished French commentator on the *ḥalakhah* known to us was Rabbi Menahem bar Helbo'.<sup>18</sup> I then go on to survey the Sages whose interpretations are cited by Kara, generally with approval. The ten sources in question include Rashbam, the grammarians Dunash and Menahem, and R. Shimon. It can be said that Kara endeavours to provide a *ḥalakhah* commentary on the basis of his own understanding, and only after exhausting his abilities does he turn to earlier commentaries. He then quotes them to support his own point or adopts their language as if it were his own, or adduces them as extra opinions when he has not made up his own mind, sometimes adding his own view either in so many words or by implication.

This study seeks to provide a thoroughgoing and comprehensive elucidation of Kara's exegetical approach. I trust the results will reward my efforts.

### Biographical Note

It seems appropriate to title this section in this manner because (most unfortunately) hardly anything is known about Kara's life. Even the little information we possess is insufficiently exact and depends upon indirect evidence.

It is known that Kara lived in Rashi's era, and that on occasion he visited the latter's study hall and was acquainted with Rashbam<sup>1</sup> and Rabbi Yom Tov, who was the son of Riban and Rashi's grandson.<sup>2</sup> Poznanski concludes from this that 'it is a near-certainty that he was born some 20-30 years after Rashi, i.e. about 4820-4830. But neither the year of his death nor details of his life are known...'<sup>3</sup> Thus Yosef Kara was born between 1060 and 1070 in Troyes, Rashi's city, in the Champagne district of northern France. His father's name was Shimon, as Kara himself states in his commentary to Hosea 12:3: ר' שמעון אבי רבינו.

His uncle, Rabbi Menahem ben Helbo, was his principal teacher; he is frequently mentioned in Kara's commentary. Kara spent most of his life in Troyes, although he lived for some time in Worms, and he is known to have taken part in theological disputations with Christians.<sup>4</sup> He apparently wrote commentaries on most of the books of the Bible,<sup>5</sup> and in addition commented extensively on liturgical poems, 'exerting a great influence in this field on his successors, who often referred to him simply as המפרש.'<sup>6</sup> These meagre facts with regard to his life, his family and his activities are all we possess.

Let us now look at his historical background, so that we may understand the aims and methods of the Jewish



commentators of northern France at the beginning of the twelfth century.<sup>7</sup> Some discern in this period a kind of minor Renaissance distinguished by a cultural and religious openness which expressed itself in many forms: 'The fundamental problem which engaged the intellectual world of the twelfth century was the problem of the correct relationship between traditional authority and the demands of reason.'<sup>8</sup>

The Christian world sought an explanation of such phenomena as the creation of the world. An historical consciousness came into being, and a movement towards acquiring general and secular knowledge, especially Latin grammar. This blossoming brought about a renewal of the study of the Bible. 'Spiritual' interpretations were discouraged and a new goal appeared, the achieving of a 'literal' commentary - an aim which received added impetus through the inauguration of religious disputations between Jews and Christians.<sup>9</sup> Parallel developments were occurring among the Jews, such as a more deliberate organisation of education and recognition of its requirements; a search after exact texts of the Bible; immense interest in the grammar and linguistics of the Hebrew Bible (corresponding to the Christian world's concern with Latin); the development of various types of commentary, and so on.<sup>10</sup> All these flowed from the general trend of the period and the reciprocal influence of Jews and Christians upon each other. The 'fundamental problem' which we have mentioned found expression in the commentaries of the Jews of northern France in the fixing of the relationship between the authority of the traditional homiletic approach (דרש) and that of the rational, 'plain sense' approach (פשוט).

Later we shall deal with the position taken by Kara on this subject and assess his relationship to contemporary commentators. But before the principal concerns of this study are taken up, we must examine the appellation of קרא by which Rabbi Yosef ben Shimon is generally known, and attempt to reach a conclusion on the basis of the accounts which have been given by various scholars.

The name or epithet קרא,<sup>11</sup> which literally means 'reader', is attached both to R. Yosef and to his uncle, Helbo. Its precise significance is unknown. Geiger thinks<sup>12</sup> that it denotes someone who reads the Bible out loud, in parallel with the use of the same appellation for Islamic scholars who read the Koran. That the Bible was thus 'read', says Geiger, emerges from Rashi's comment on Shabbath 11a (cf. Kiddushin 49a). The text states ולא יקרא לאור הנר באמת אמרו החזן רואה היכן תינוקות קוראין אבל הוא לא יקרא, and Rashi says, חזן הכנסת המקרא שבעה הקוראים בתורה. Again, we find in Taanith 27b, הקורא בתורה אל יפחות מג' פסוקים... והאמר רבי, שהיה, and Rashi explains that R. Hanina 'read', חנינא קרא, this must mean the synagogue reader. Rashi himself remarks, in discussing the allegorical section of the Song of Songs (7:13), that there are בעלי תלמוד and בעלי משנה, and this reflects the situation in his own time.<sup>14</sup> Jellink<sup>15</sup> thinks that קרא refers to one who explains texts in accordance with the נפש, as opposed to a דרשן, whose approach is homiletic. Epstein<sup>16</sup> holds that two types of expositors were to be found among the various Jewish communities, both of whom sought to teach Scripture and preach morality: the דרשנים, who preached in public and interpreted Aggadoth and

Midrashim, and קראים, who were scholars who sought to explain the Biblical text through the פשט. Evidence for this suggestion is to be found in the Pesikta of Rabbi Kahana: 'ור' נחמיה אמר קחו עמכם דברים, בעלי דברים, קראים טובים, דרשנים טובים כגון לוי בן סיסי וחבריו.<sup>17</sup> This indicates that Kara and Helbo might have been such קראים, commenting on the Scriptures to people assembled in a synagogue or study house. Epstein further points out that Kara plainly enjoyed asking questions and giving answers, and that he attended more to the general continuity of the text than to its details. Nevertheless the theory is untenable since there is no support for the essentially artificial suggestion that there were two types of preachers. Poznanski<sup>18</sup> thinks that קרא means someone concerned with explaining Scripture, giving lectures in synagogue and fulfilling the roles of both קרא and קורא together (in the manner familiar today); this view is based on a phrase used by Kara in his commentary on Isaiah 23:13: בחרונוי הקראים. This thesis approximates that of S. A. Rappaport,<sup>19</sup> who says of Kara's father, Rabbi Shimon, also known as קרא, that 'it is likely that this appellation of קרא was bestowed on him because he made himself well known through his knowledge of Scripture and homiletic commentary, and it somewhat resembles the title of דרשן which he also possessed as a collector of Midrashim on the Biblical text ... but his son, Rabbi Yosef, also called simply קרא, seems to have been given the title because of his father, and perhaps because he too was a very great Scriptural commentator...'

Einstein<sup>20</sup> shares this opinion. Ahrend<sup>21</sup> inclines towards it and the similar views of Einstein and Rappaport,

and rejects Jellink and (more strongly) Epstein for interpreting the Pesikta to suggest that teachers of the Bible were classified according to their exegetical approach. Banitte<sup>22</sup> adds that scholars who specialised in the teaching of Scripture were called פותרים<sup>23</sup> in the plural and in the singular נקדן or קרא, connoting one who read lectures to students on the Bible. Examining Kara's language, Banitte points out that he makes extensive use of the root פת"ר. The פותרים, he suggests, dealt as a rule with the following topics: לע"ז, Targum Jonathan, Scriptural citations, and the explanation of difficult words.<sup>24</sup> The פותר (i.e. קרא) glossed such words with the help of the vernacular word-lists which had become available, while the מפרש set forth the deeper meaning of the text.<sup>25</sup> This is precisely the distinction between פתרון and פרוש:<sup>26</sup> the first relies upon glossaries and the second penetrates into significance.<sup>27</sup>

We may therefore conclude that Kara, like his uncle, was a teacher of Scripture who worked with students. Our evidence with regard to Helbo comes from Kara himself: ועל פרשה זו היה מזהיר ר' מנחם ב"ר חלבו אחי אבא את כל העומדים לפניו ושומעים את דבריו.<sup>28</sup> That the same was true of Kara must be acknowledged not only because the title of קרא became so essentially his but also because of his exegetical method, which is suggestive of lectures to students rather than of a commentary organised in writing. The same point emerges from his style of question-and-answer and appeals to the reader, his continuity of interpretation, his use of the vernacular, and other aspects of his work.<sup>29</sup>

## Chapter 1

### Between פשט and שרר

#### I. פשט: An Appraisal

##### 1. Background

The first scholar to discuss the issue of פשט and שרר in the commentary of Rabbi Joseph Kara was Geiger: 'I have already expressed my opinion as to his general practice, how he toiled most diligently to reveal the פשט, rejoiced when it was found, held fast to it and refused to abandon it.'<sup>1</sup> And again, 'Such was his method, to fasten the פשט with a peg and then secure it with immoveable nails. Yet at times he found that he could not support it, and was not ashamed to admit this' (p. 27). Einstein held a similar view.<sup>2</sup> Apenstein was the first to investigate the subject in depth, and he concluded<sup>3</sup> (a) that although Kara at times cites Midrashim in full, he never does so without giving his own opinion; and where the Midrash is at variance with the פשט he tears into it most vehemently (as in Jud. 5:4; I Sam. 1:17; II Sam. 12:30); (b) that he relies on the Talmud and on Midrashic literature 'in order to arrive at Halachic explanations ... insertions which cast light on the meaning of the text and infuse it with moral points' (p. 11); (c) that he opposes הגדה only on those occasions where the Rabbinic statements run so counter to the פשט 'that they give rise to interpretations far beyond the natural imagination' (p. 11), and distinguishes between Aggadoth which make a moral or didactic point and explanations which border upon the

imaginary world; and (d) that he at times offers his students a Midrash in order to catch their attention and give them enjoyment, and then presents them with a story which he has heard, whose source is unclear (see II Sam. 22:35).

In his study of the French commentators, Poznanski writes as follows on this subject: 'Here we can observe [Kara] progressing a step further than Rashi by stating unequivocally that  $\text{פשוט}$  is of the essence and one may rely only on it; and that  $\text{פירוש}$  is only an ornament, a decoration used to "bestow on the Torah greater grandeur and might", while in truth it is superfluous'. Here he quotes Kara on I Samuel 1:17, and concludes, 'And thus to Kara truth is only to be found in  $\text{פשוט}$ .'<sup>4</sup> Poznanski further concludes that Kara, wherever he was unable to explain a passage through  $\text{פשוט}$  means, was forced to turn to  $\text{פירוש}$ ; but he is at a loss to explain why Kara sometimes invokes the  $\text{פירוש}$  without evident need (p. xxxii). He also emphasises the great difference between Rashi and Kara as to the following points: (a) Kara's far smaller number of Midrashim; (b) the quality of the Midrashim, 'for we do not find Kara taking the view that in a given instance there is room for both  $\text{פשוט}$  and  $\text{פירוש}$ , nor does he ever pursue the  $\text{פירוש}$ , elsewhere he adds that Kara 'most spiritedly sets the  $\text{פירוש}$  at a distance'.<sup>5</sup> In contrast to Kara, Rashbam seeks 'to plumb the  $\text{פשוט}$  to its depths' (p. xliii), as he says of himself<sup>6</sup> and as we shall see below. The inference is that Kara fills a gap somewhere between Rashi and Rashbam.

Poznanski's surprise at Kara's use of Midrashim where they are not absolutely required by the text is expressed in

different terms by B. Smalley,<sup>7</sup> who also offers a different explanation. Following Rabinowitz,<sup>8</sup> she claims that Kara is not consistent in declaring his vehement opposition to Midrashim, since in fact he makes use of a great many.<sup>9</sup>

In Arugath Habosem, E. E. Urbach makes mention of Kara as a commentator upon liturgical poems, and states, 'In the nature of things he was forced to utilize Aggadah when seeking to explain Piyutim ... but here too he blazed a trail for the ש"ס.'<sup>10</sup> This comment again indicates that Kara viewed ש"ס as the most legitimate and essential approach for his commentaries. Recently, Ahrend has claimed that if we really wish to evaluate Kara's importance and his historical position among Scriptural commentators, we must examine his view of ש"ס,<sup>11</sup> noting that his approach to this issue is at odds with Rashi's, and that Kara will oppose a Midrash which is not connected to the Biblical text while he is prepared to accept one which supplements the text.<sup>12</sup> Rashi interpreted the Torah with the aid of Midrashic glosses; Kara introduced a change in this, as we shall see; Rashbam followed the path of הפשוטות המתחדשים בכל יום. Rashi felt one must accept the opinions of the Sages whereas Kara was prepared to disagree with them, and was of the opinion that to arrive at the truth one must free oneself from the explanations earlier offered by the Sages and reflect on matters rationally.<sup>13</sup>

Through an examination of Kara's commentaries, we shall now try to discern his view of ש"ס and his position with regard to ש"ס: whether he feels that ש"ס represents a separate but legitimate exegetical partner of the ש"ס, or that it is simply a variation upon the ש"ס. These and other

questions will engage us as we continue our discussion.

## 2. Kara's Evaluation of נפש: The Superiority of נפש over דרש

In the Song of Deborah, on the passage נצאתך משעיר (Jud. 5:4),<sup>14</sup> Kara cites the Sages' remark that the reference is to the Giving of the Torah, and says, זהו מדרשו. אבל לא ידעתי. הדבר ליישבו על אופניו ואין זה פשוטו. Let us clarify the concepts involved here. נפש is applied to points which are clearly derived from the text by the application of linguistic principles, and which are in harmony with the context. ישובו על אופניו refers to additional glosses which the passage only intimates but which arise from the context and cannot be divorced from it. Kara rejects the Midrashic interpretation here because it deviates from the נפש and is not suggested by anything in the passage; for what connection can there be between the Giving of the Torah and Deborah's victory over Sisera? The comment is not related to the event in question; in addition, שאלין דרך נביא בכל כ"ד ספרים שיסתום.<sup>15</sup> It follows that a prophet does not speak in such a way that we must resort to a homiletic interpretation in order to understand him.<sup>16</sup> In other words, Scriptural passages should be interpreted from the text itself without reliance upon external sources like the Aggada.

We may compare Kara's comment on בגלעד אין הצרי (Jer. 8:22): ואני יוסף ב"ר שמעון ראיתי בפתרוני... ואין הדבר מתיישב: על אופניו כלל כל עיקר לפי פשוטו של מקרא... על כן נתתי את לבי ליישב המקראות על יישובן ועל פשוטן. He rejects the Midrash which interprets the balm of Gilead here as a reference to



the prophet Elijah because this does not sit naturally with the context, and because such a gloss would compel us to explain Jeremiah 46:11 in similar terms, for in speaking of the downfall of Egypt it uses a comparable expression. What connection is there between Egypt and Elijah (who had died many years before)? Kara's own explanation constitutes both the פשט and the ישון of the verse.

Kara reiterates his position as to פשט vis-a-vis דרש in his best-known passage on this point. Commenting on I Samuel 1:17, ואלקי ישראל יתן את שלתך, he cautions us against an incorrect interpretation of the word יתן, which is not to be regarded as a petition but as a prophetic statement about the future. He then brings in and explains the Midrash, through which (he tells the reader) תוכל לדחות המציקים לך; but it is introduced for this purpose alone (he prefaces it with the statement that only if one has no other option על תלחץ ותסמך). What is his purpose here? אך דע לך (המדרש שאמרו רבותינו כשנכתבה הנבואה שלימה נכתבה עם פתרונה וכל הצורך שלא יכשלו בה דורות הבאים וממקומו אין חסר כלום ואין צריך להביא ראיה ממקום אחר ולא מדרש כי תורה תמימה נתנה תמימה נכתבה ולא תחסר כל בה. The text should be regarded as complete and comprehensible, and it need not be clarified by evidence from outside sources. What then is the function of Midrash? This is his answer: ומדרש חכמינו כדי להגדיל תורה ויאדיר, אבל כל מי שאינו יודע פשוטו של מקרא ונוטה לו אחר מדרשו של דבר דומה לזה ששטפתהו, שבולת הנהר ומעמקי מים מציפין ואוחז כל אשר יעלה בידו להינצל ואלו שם לבו אל דבר ה' היה חוקר אחר פשר דבר ופשוטו ומוצא לקיים מה שנאמר אם תבקשנה ככסף וכמטמונים תחפשנה אז תבין יראת ה' ודעת (Proverbs 2:4-5). Hence the Midrash ranks only as

an embellishment to endow the Torah with further glory, but the essence of the text is its פשט. It is worth remarking on Kara's vivid description of those who cling to Midrashim, which was certainly intended both to clarify his own position and render it more acceptable.

Isaiah 4:6 again provides us with an explanation accompanied by a picturesque image: ולפי שמתחילה הענין ועד כאן ראיתי את כל המקראות מחוברות איש לחבירו כי קרסים בלולאות ואילו באתי ליתן מדרש ביניהם הייתי מפריד בין מקרא לחבירו ובין מליצה לחבר רעותה ואפנה לבי לידע כל הענין לפי פשוטו ומדרשו כדי לפרשו לפי פשוטו. The continuity of the text resembles a chain of hooks and rings.

At the beginning of the Book of Samuel, as he comments on I Sam. 1:1, Kara declares that he does not intend to write out even a single Midrash.<sup>17</sup> He explains the phrase רמתיים אך פשוטו כמו שפירשתי, cites a Midrash and concludes, למעלה ואין רצוני לכתוב בספר זה שום מדרש שלפי מדרשו רצוף ספר בפני עצמו והרוצה לקרות בו קורא. Thus his opposition to Midrash comes after he has employed it, and while he refers readers interested in such an approach to Midrash Samuel, he has hardly concluded his note before he introduces a Midrash in connection with the next verse; and plenty more are to be found later on. What then is his real opinion?

Before we answer let us look further at his various statements. When we are told in II Samuel 12:30 that David placed on his own head a heavy gold crown, Kara explains that the function of the passage is to praise David and adds, ובדברי אגדה דורשין פנים אחרות ואין מתיישבין על לב ואשיב ידי. ואחדל שיהו דיותין נשפכין וקולמוסין נשברין בלהג הרבה. He

vehemently condemns the numerous aggadoth (without quoting them) as idle words which do not **מתיישבין על לב**. Despite his great respect for the Sages, he does not hesitate to judge them most harshly. In two places he mentions the principle that one does not question an aggadah, yet he himself does so:

a. He explains the curse laid on Joab<sup>19</sup> (I Kings 2:33) and adds,

ואם לא שאמרו רבותינו אין משיבין על דברי אגדה תשובה גדולה יש [לי] <sup>19</sup> להשיב על שאמרו...  
He then raises several difficulties, and concludes, **על כן**.  
חדלתי לי לפרש מקרא זה אחר מדרשו.

b. In connection with the bull which the false prophets attempted to offer up as a sacrifice on Mount Carmel,<sup>20</sup> Kara writes, without quoting the Midrash, **ומדרש אגדה ראיתי** ושגור בפי הכל, ותמיה אני על כמה פרים שנשחטו לע"ז שלא היה אחד מן הפרים מעכב בדבר וזה מה ראה להשתנות מן כולם, אלא שאין משיבין על דברי אגדה. So here too he encounters a difficulty with the Midrash, the fact that animals offered in pagan sacrifices must often have been 'accepted' in a purely physical sense, and is compelled to rest upon the familiar principle that aggadoth must be accepted as they stand.

In other places he shows by persuasive arguments that he is in the right, and therefore dismisses a particular Midrash. Commenting on the phrase **לתקופות הימים** (I Sam. 1:20), he says, **ויודע אני שיליזו על פתרון זה כל בעלי אגדה** ותלמוד שלא יניחו מה שפתרו רבותינו בראש השנה ובכמה מסכתות וילכו אחרי פתרי'. אך המשכילים ישכילו לנתיבות הקרייה להעמיד דבר על האמת. He then vigorously attacks the Rabbinical explanation and proves that it is not logical. Truth (it

emerges from his remarks here) is to be found in פשט, and he pleads with the enlightened to understand the nature of Biblical language. He is quite aware that בעלי אגדה ותלמוד must pursue דרש and cannot distance themselves from what the Sages say. When David reached Nob and sought food, the phrase חלוקת לחם חום ביום הלקחו occurs (I Sam. 21:7). As is his wont, Kara first explains this clause himself; he then quotes the Sages' gloss, ולשום לחם חום ביום הלקחו סילוקו כסידורו and rejects it: אבל פשוטו של מקרא אינו כן מפני שני דברים אחד שתיבת חום מנוקד בזקף ועוד אין כתוב כאן כיום הלקחו אלא ביום הלקחו. He goes on to raise other difficulties, and shows that the Midrash is an impossibility.

In connection with II Kings 14:25, he writes, זהו פשוטו, ומדרש רבותינו... והוקשה להם זה המקרא ותירצו אותו. He explains why the Sages make use of a Midrash to explain the passage, although he himself has suggested a פשט explanation.

His preference for פשט appears even in cases where he does not state his opinion outright. Let us look at some of the expressions which he uses to indicate his position: זהו פשוטו (Jud. 1:3); concerning the פשט, he says, זה עיקר ומצאתי דברי אגדה (Jud. 5:10; II Sam. 19:21; I Sam. 10:22); כך פתרתי (I Sam. 10:22); אך פשוטו של דבר כמו שפירשתי (II Sam. 21:4). When the Midrash is famous but not vital, he may remark, ובלא מדרשו יודעין הכל שחכמת מצרים מרובה היא (I Kings 5:10); and we also find שמעון שזהו (I Kings 8:8).<sup>21</sup>

He expatiates on the topic even more emphatically in

Isaiah 5:9, where he compares himself to King Solomon:

שכל מקרא ומקרא שדרשוהו רבותינו, משאמרו עליו מדרש,  
לסוף אמרו לו אין מקרא יוצא מדי פשוטו, שאין לך מידה  
יתרה במקרא יותר מפשוטו... וכן ששלמה אמר: הט אזנך  
לדברי חכמים ולבך תשית לדעתי, ופת' אע"פ שמצוה עליך  
לשמוע דברי חכמים, לבך תשית לדעתי, לגופו של דבר. לדעתם  
לא נאמר אלא לדעתי.

And Kara's דעת is the פשט.

On occasion, as in II Sam. 8:18, he even prefers an interpretation of which he is uncertain, because it is in line with the פשט, to the introduction of a Midrash: איני יכול לעמוד על בירורו אך דומה... ודומה... ודומה... ומדרש (cf. I Kings 1:38). Sometimes he has difficulty with the פשט, but nevertheless refuses to cite a Midrash.<sup>22</sup> There are places where instead of producing a Midrash he merely hints at it as he rejects it in terms like ובדברי אגדה ובלא ונלא or (in a phrase we have already noted) דורשין פנים אחרות הכל (II Sam. 12:30; I Kings 5:10); or - to direct the reader to the Midrash without quoting it himself - ומדרש אגדה or <sup>23</sup> וכל צורת הכסא מפורשת באגדת מגילת אסתר (I Kings 19:26): the Midrash is too familiar to require quotation.<sup>24</sup>

In this connection two points are worth mentioning. For Kara a passage is never dependent on a Midrash, while Rashi may say, מקרא זה אומר דרשני (Gen. 25:22; 37:20), or otherwise indicate that the text is bound to the Midrash (Lev. 13:55); and there are occasions on which Kara sees a Midrash as being effectively the פשט, as in ומדרש זה מיושב הוא על המקרא (II Sam. 24:15), and still other occasions when a Midrash is the only gloss which he supplies (Jud. 11:26; I Sam. 17:55).

Together with all that has been said, we should note that Kara does bring together Midrashic explanations for short

sections or isolated subjects, after he has first explained them in accordance with the פשט. This practice appears only in Isaiah (in 13 places) and in Ezekiel (3 places).<sup>25</sup>

### 3. The Annotation of פשט and דרש

We shall now look at the language used by Kara to differentiate between the two methods of פשט and דרש:

a. This is his phrasing wherever the Midrash forms his first gloss: ... ומדרש אגדה ... אך פשוטו (I Sam. 10:22); or ... ומדרש חכמינו (I Sam. 1:1); ומדרש רבותינו ... אך פשוטו ורבותינו (II Sam. 24:1);<sup>26</sup> ... ופשוטו של מקרא ויישובו (I Sam. 21:7; cf. Jer. 17:2); זהו (Josh. 10:13); ובבראשית רבא ... ולפי פשוטו של מקרא זהו לפי מדרשו, ופשוטו של (Jud. 5:4); מדרשו ... ואין זה פשוטו דבר (I Kings 20:6, 7; cf. Jer. 3:14).

b. This is his phrasing used when the פשט is introduced first: זהו לפי ... (I Kings 8:66); or זהו פשוטו ומדרשו ... (I Sam. 1:9); ומדרשו זהו לפי פשוטו ויישובו. ומדרש ... (I Sam. 1:14); חכמינו (Jud. 1:3); זהו פשוטו של דבר, אבל אמרו רבותינו <sup>27</sup>רבותינו ולפי ... (I Kings 10:7); כתוב בספר בן סירא זהו (Jud. 6:40; cf. Hos. 1:3); ומדרש רבותינו זהו עיקר. ולפי מדרשו (I Kings 10:7; 17:4); לפי פשוטו. טעם אחר (Jud. 19:21); ומצאתי דברי אגדה ... (II Sam. 19:21); כך פתרתי (I Sam. 10:7); זה פתרונו ופשוטו ואני שמעתי ... (5:10); (II Sam. 21:4; cf. 12:30). On very rare occasions Kara cites the Midrash without either an introduction or a formal conclusion, and juxtaposes the פשט under the following

rubric:...מקרא ופשוטו של (Josh. 24:25; Jer. 11:1). More frequently he offers the פשוט without introduction or conclusions, adding in the Midrash with the formulation ...ומדרש חכמינו (II Sam. 8:18); ...ומדרש אגדה בבראשית רבא (I Kings 17:18); ומדרש בראשית רבא (Josh. 14:15).

On most occasions the פשוט precedes the דרש, but while this is Kara's usual practice the Midrash sometimes takes precedence for various reasons - usually because of some paedagogical value, but also to enable Kara more conveniently to attack it, as in Jud. 5:4.<sup>28</sup>

#### 4. Kara's Selection of Midrashim

In dealing with Kara's handling of Midrashic explanations two questions must be considered. (a) Does he feel that only a פשוט interpretation is legitimate, or is there room for דרש as well? (b) To the extent that Midrashic explanations are valid, what are the constraints which entail the rejection of one Midrash and the acceptance of another?

We have already noted Kara's disclaimers, as if he absolutely rejected all Midrashic glosses (see especially I Sam. 1:1, 17, 20; I Kings 8:8; Isa. 1:18; 4:6; 5:9); but nevertheless they are found in his work. On what occasions does he think it proper to cite Midrashim? We shall try to show his resort to Midrashim beside a פשוט interpretation is a device selectively employed for exegetical and paedagogic purposes. We shall suggest that he regards the Talmudic expression, אין מקרא יוצא מדי פשוטו (Shabbath 63a; Yevamoth 11a; 24a) as pointing to the greater validity of פשוט; but

Midrashic interpretations are not to be completely disregarded since there are Midrashim which contain elements of נפש and which help to resolve exegetical difficulties, and these deserve to be considered legitimate.

a. The דרש resolves problems of grammar and syntax

i. Isaiah 5:24: כאכול קש לשון אש וחשש להבה ירפה. The difficulty here lies in the syntactical construction of the verses; as Kara puts it, מנהג הלשון להקדים הפועל לפעול. Thus here the passive verb precedes the active one, and the verse ought to read חשש ירפה ולהבה אש קש. The Midrash which he cites explains the verses in accordance with common usage: just as stubble, representing the house of Esau, consumes a tongue of fire (the house of Jacob), and dry hay (Esau) weakens the flame (Joseph), so שרשם כמק יהיה, because they have rejected the Torah of God. Despite the fact that the Midrash resolves the difficulty of the verse by invoking accepted linguistic principles, Kara claims that his own previous explanation must be considered the proper נפש because when a point is clear and there is no chance of error, a passive verb may precede the active verb (as Kimchi also remarks), since it is most illogical to have stubble consuming fire.<sup>29</sup>

ii. Isaiah 14:24: נשבע ה' צבאות לאמר אם לא<sup>באשר</sup> דמיתי כן היתה. וכאשר יעצתי היא תקום. Verses 3-23 of this chapter deal with the overthrow of Babylon, and to emphasise the point, we are told of the fall of Sennacherib and his people. Why an oath should be needed here is not clear, nor why God apparently swears with regard to something in the past, when oaths are



normally used to buttress events in the future. Kara notes that the substance of the oath is mentioned in verse 26, but why then is the heading **נשבע ה' צבאות לאמר** not reserved for the beginning of that verse? The text might have spoken first of the destruction of Sennacherib and his people and only afterwards made mention of the oath in accordance with which harm befalls those who injure Israel. Because of this difficulty Kara draws upon the Midrash, which views v. 24 as itself the oath - but not with regard to an event that has already occurred. Its function is rather to prevent Hezekiah from declaring to God, **לא יהיו רצונותיך ולא יהיה שכרך**. God must therefore swear **כאשר דמיתי כן היתה** that is, I will execute My plan to bring Sennacherib, just as I have sworn.

iii. Isaiah 43:22: **ולא אותי קראת יעקב כי יגעת בי ישראל**.

Kara's first explanation here appears to arise from the text itself, and he describes it as **לפי מדרשו**. According to it God formed the people of Israel so that they should declare His praise, but in fact they do not pray (Isa. 58:9; 65:24), and justify themselves by claiming weariness (**כי** has the sense of 'because'). For His part, God asserts that this fatigue is only with regard to His service (**בי**). But the idiom **יגע ב-** in the Bible connotes tiredness from overwork (see Josh.24:13; Isa. 62:8), which would mean that the verb **יגעת** here is not passive but active, and consequently that **כי** functions not to give a reason 'because' but rather to indicate a contrast. Thus 'You did not call upon Me, but so wearied Me as to compel Me to send Nebuchadnezzar to conquer the whole world in punishment. And I the Lord have not caused you [the people of Israel] weariness through exaggerated demands for

worship.' The trouble with this explanation, which Kara calls the פשט, is that the form יגעת בי is not found in the Bible as an active verb in the Kal conjugation; and so Kara cites the Midrash.<sup>30</sup>

iv. Jeremiah 51:1: כה אמר ה' הנני מעיר על בבל ואל ישבי לב קמי רוח משחית. The first explanation is a פשט gloss according to which God will arouse a destroying wind against Israel's enemies.<sup>31</sup> The second interpretation offered, headed יש (it follows the twenty-ninth principle in the Baraitha of the Thirty-Two Principles of Rabbi Eliezer HaGlili), transposes the letters by the AT BaSH method, in which א is read as ת and ב as ש, and so on. לב קמי thus becomes Israel's foes, the כשדים. The פשט interpretation involves the difficulty that ואל ישבי לב קמי is a construct phrase which requires a place name (the 'dwellers of ---'), as does the parallelism with Babylon. Kara consequently employs an approach which solves the syntactical problem.

b. The פירש replaces a unique sense with a more common meaning

1. Isaiah 5:17: ורעו כנשים כדורם. The word כדורם consists of the noun דָּבָר (pasture), with the comparative prefix כ and a suffix for the genitive of the third person plural. In the opinion of Ibn Ezra, Kimchi, Rashi and others (see on Exod. 3:1; I Kings 5:23), the פשט meaning here is כמשפטם (according to their usual practice). Kara quotes the מדרש רבותינו which explains it as a derivative of דבור (speech) - 'as was spoken of concerning them'. But his פשט explanation of מרעה (pasture) explains the word's unusual connotation within this particular context; it relies upon Micah 2:12, כעדר בתוך

הדברו (cf. Josh. 7:21, בתוך האהלי, which also contains the definite article and a genitive suffix).

ii. Isaiah 9:4: כי כל סאון סאן ברעש ושמלה מגוללה בזמים.

Kara offers two interpretations. The first, which is consistent with the Midrash (although he does not say so), asserts that סאון comes from סאה (a measure of quantity), אך the meaning must be derived from the context, for this is a hapax legomenon connoting victory in battle in the midst of tumult (i.e. סאון is equivalent to שאון). The Midrash is rejected since it does not meet the touchstone, which takes grammatical analysis into account, but Kara cites it nevertheless because despite its linguistic failings it represents the most common sense of the word (cf. Jer. 49:19).

c. The דרש accords with the sense

1. Isaiah 14:8: גם ברושים שמחו לך ארזי לבנון. According to the first interpretation, the trees too which suffered under Nebuchadnezzar will enjoy a respite and will not be hewn down. But since the whole chapter is rich in images and rhetoric, Kara adds לפי פשוטו, and explains that the pines represent demons and governors and the cedars kings. In this instance, then, the דרש is more appropriate to the sense of the verse.

ii. Isaiah 14:20: לא תחד אתם בקבורה כי ארצך שחק עמך הרגת. The first explanation, the Midrash, identifies the occasion on which Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the Land and killed its people: when he beseiged Jerusalem he gave instructions that all soldiers who showed weakness in battle should be

executed. This is a difficult interpretation for which no evidence can be adduced, especially as it does not account for ארצך שחת; on the contrary, during Nebuchadnezzar's reign his country was strengthened. The פשט gloss explains the passage as referring to the future, the tense therefore being the prophetic past.

iii. Jeremiah 50:6: צאן אבדות היו עמי רעיהם התעום הרים שונו. In the Midrashic explanation, the mountains represent leaders (as in Micah 6:1); Targum Jonathan too renders הרים as מלכים. According to פשוטו של מקרא וישונו, the nation was thrust out upon the mountains, where idol worship had taken place. If we go by the grammar and the syntax of the passage, Kara is correct, but nevertheless the first explanation accords better with the sense of the passage.

d. The פשט resolves textual and literary difficulties

i. Isaiah 26:15: יספת לגוי ה', יספת לגוי נכבדת, רחקת<sup>כ</sup> קצוי<sup>ל</sup> ארץ. Kara's first gloss is a פשט connection with the preceding verse in view of the contrast between the temporary resurrection of the Gentile dead so that they may be judged, after which they return to the underworld, with the eternal resurrection of the dead of Israel. Why, however, at the end of the verse is the phrase רחקת כל קצוי ארץ repeated? This difficulty leads Kara to produce the Midrashic explanation which claims that our passage is not a contrasting continuation of verse 14 but itself contains a contrast between the conduct of Israel and that of the Gentiles. When God increases the benefits He bestows upon Israel He gains honour thereby. For example, if He gives a person a son, that

son is circumcised; if He supplies a home, a מִזְבֵּחַ is affixed to it. On the other hand, when God seeks to bestow benefits upon the Gentiles they distance themselves even further from Him. If He grants one a son, the child grows forelocks, if He gives one a house, he puts idols in it. The drawback of this explanation is that it does not fit the context or the connections between the passages, nor does the end of the verse contrast linguistically with נִכְבְּדָה (there ought to be some passive verb to express the consequence of the heathen's actions, to match נִכְבְּדָה for Israel.)

ii. Isaiah 23:4: בְּוֹשֵׁי צִדּוֹן כִּי אָמַר יָם. Kara comments, לִפְנֵי הַיָּם: the sea represents Tyre, and when that city is conquered disaster will also befall its protectorates like Sidon. According to the Midrash, the sea itself boasts before Sidon that although it has not been granted children it is willing to remain within the boundaries set for it by God. So much more, therefore, should Sidon, which has been blessed with many children, see to it that they do not sin. (In Jeremiah 5:22 this Midrashic explanation is the sole one given.) This interpretation involves a number of difficulties: (a) If indeed it is the sea itself that is speaking why do we later read מַעֲוֵה הַיָּם לֵאמֹר, which implies that it is the stronghold which speaks? (b) As the whole chapter deals with Tyre and its downfall, it follows logically that the sea-fortress must refer to Tyre. (c) In view of the fact that the chapter is intended to provide Israel with a lesson from what has happened to others, it seems inconsistent to address a plea to Sidon. Nevertheless, the Midrashic explanation is in harmony with the total

context and the content of the verse.

111. Isaiah 8:6: יֵעָן כִּי מֵאֵס הָעַם הַזֶּה אֶת מִי הַשְּׁלוּחַ הַהוּלָכִים. The passage contrasts the rule of the house of David with that of Rezin and Remaliah's son. The latter are specifically named, while the Midrash explains that the הוּלָכִים symbolise the house of David, and that Hezekiah therefore purifies Israel as does a mikveh (ritual bath), which must contain 40 seah - the numerical equivalent of the word לֹאֵט. The פֶּשֶׁט understands the mention of water as indicating the punishment to befall the kingdoms of Aram and Israel, which are mentioned further on: הִנֵּה ה' מַעֲלֶה אֶת מִי הַנָּהָר הָעֲצוּמִים וְהָרָבִים אֶת מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר וְאֶת כְּבוֹדוֹ <sup>עֲלֵיהֶם</sup>. (A similar passage is to be found in Jeremiah 17:2).

e. The פֶּשֶׁט contradicts historical or natural fact

1. Isaiah 10:27: וְהָיָה כִּי־יִסּוֹר יִסּוֹר סָבְלוּ מֵעַל שַׁכְמָךְ וְעָלוּ. Kara opens with a פֶּשֶׁט explanation according to which the yoke around the neck of the animal will be destroyed by the oil there. This is to be understood as a reference to Sennacherib, who will be destroyed in front of Hezekiah; the relative word מִפְּנֵי takes on the sense of 'because of.' Yet we all know that in reality things work just the opposite way: oil cannot destroy a yoke, but will be blotted out by it (Kimchi makes the same point). Kara therefore cites the Midrash, which understands מִפְּנֵי as introducing a reason: why was Israel worthy of having Sennacherib's yoke removed? מִפְּנֵי שֶׁמֶן - on account of the oil which Hezekiah had lit in the houses of worship and study.

11. Isaiah 30:32: וְהָיָה כָּל מֵעַבְרַת מִטָּה מִיִּסְדָּהּ אֲשֶׁר יִנִּיחַ ה' עָלֶיהָ

בתופים ובכלרות ובמלחמות תנופה נלחם בם. This verse deals with the inhabitants of various localities who have suffered from the Assyrian conquest; now that they have been delivered, they rejoice with tambourines and harps. The phrase מלחמות תנופה refers to the battles waged by Assyria against those particular places in Israel at God's suggestion, תנופה (tumult, onslaught) connoting God's raising His hand against them. The Midrash, which Kara cites afterwards, explains the downfall of Assyria in the days of Hezekiah by the fact that it occurred on the night of the 16th of Nisan, when Jews make a wave offering of the barley harvest (עומר התנופה). Why does Kara invoke the Midrash? Firstly, because it is surprising that after describing the celebration the text should return to the war (according to Rashi the verse is an instance of (מקרא מסורס). It is also a fact that in that generation there was no offensive onslaught or any other kind of battle between Assyria and Judah (Israel), only a miracle. The first explanation is considered the פשט, since Kara recognises that מקרא מסורס may be found within פשט interpretations, and the war that never was may stand as an image for the magnitude of the redemption, as if bitter fighting had in fact taken place.

iii. Isaiah 31:9: וסלעו ממגור יעבור וחתו מנס שריו נאם ה'. The subject here is the redemption of Israel and the downfall of Assyria during the siege of Jerusalem. According to the פשט, Assyria's forces will be weakened; unable to flee, they will be destroyed by fire in Jerusalem. The Midrash which Kara cites for the end of the verse understands the fire of the furnace as

representing the Gehenna of the distant future which will have its entrance in Jerusalem. Why does he produce a Midrash which has no connection with Sennacherib's overthrow? (a) Because the Assyrian army fell at the hand of an angel of God, by miracle, and not in a fire; and (b) the indirect object לו has two possible references: it may apply to סלעו, representing the power of Assyria, or to God, in description of His greatness. On the level of the נפש, the first difficulty can be solved by recognising in the verse a comparison between the actual punishment inflicted by the angel and a fiery furnace. As to the second difficulty, לו refers to סלעו (and see Isa. 30:26).

iv. Judges 11:26: נשבת ישראל בחשבון ובננותיה... שלש מאות שנה. In the dispute between Jephthah and the Ammonite king as to the land east of the Jordan between the Arnon and the Jabbok, Jephthah asserts that Israel has held the disputed region for some three hundred years and during this whole period Ammon has not concerned itself with it. The problem facing us is how Jephthah arrives at the figure of 300 years. Kara explains that the count begins from the conquest of Joshua, but as he cannot supply a detailed breakdown of the figures he cites a Midrash from Seder Olam which works them out.

v. II Samuel 21:8: ויקח המלך את... ואת חמשת בני מיכל בת למיכל. This verse contradicts the statement in II Samuel 6:23 that למיכל בת למיכל, שאול לא היה לה ילד עד יום מותה, and Kara is therefore compelled to turn to a Talmudic Midrash which tells us that the children were in fact borne by Merab, not Michal, but



since Michal brought them up they were regarded as hers. Thus the Midrash resolves the contradiction.

vi. A difficult problem which has also exercised many scholars is who kills Goliath, David (see I Sam. 17:57) or Elhanan (II Sam. 21:19). In both texts Kara offers a פשט explanation, but on reaching the name אלחנן he states that this is in fact David, שחננו א-ל (Midrash Ruth Rabbah 2:2). This harmonisation solves the problem.

Similarly in I Samuel 17:55, when Saul asks about David, בן מי זה הנער, we must be surprised, since David has been playing for him, and Saul himself has asked Jesse for leave to keep David at his court (I Sam. 16:22). Kara is again forced to rely on the Midrash, and admits אכל על יישוב המקרא בלא מדרשו אינני יכול לעמוד.

f. The פשט stands as the sole explanation

There are some places in which Kara cites the Midrash, even as his sole gloss, apparently to catch the reader's attention and allow him to speak in glowing terms of the heroes and personalities of the Old Testament: David's burying the bodies of his enemies (II Sam. 8:13), Solomon's wisdom (I Kings 10:7), the character of Samuel (I Sam. 2:26), and other topics. He also follows the Sages in identifying unnamed persons in Scripture,<sup>32</sup> such as the angel of Judges 2:1 (Pinchas), the angel of Judges 5:23 (Barak), the man of God of I Samuel 2:27 (Elkanah), and so on.<sup>33</sup>

At times the Midrash is introduced only for the reader to be cautioned against it, as in the case which we have already noted, where יתן (I Sam. 1:17) must be understood as a

statement about the future and not, as in the Midrash, a petition. On other occasions Kara rejects midrashim and aggadoth which attribute unnatural characteristics to objects.<sup>34</sup>

##### 5. חיבור המקראות (Context)

The most characteristic feature of Kara's commentary is his constant clarification of the textual sequence. By explaining the relationship between one verse and another, he establishes a continuity of interpretation in which even the specific words commented upon become part of the whole composition. He himself calls this, as we have seen, חיבור המקראות (I Kings 8:27); or as he writes elsewhere, כך פתרתי (II Sam. 21:4). This feature has of course been noted by scholars like Einstein,<sup>35</sup> Poznanski<sup>36</sup> and Ahrend.<sup>37</sup> We shall now attempt to trace the sources of this approach, and examine the notable advance made in it by Kara.

Poznanski states that Rashi weaves verses into one another, as in Exodus 25:9; Leviticus 11:34; Deuteronomy 4:44.<sup>38</sup> Rashi was apparently the first commentator who thought of handling things in this way. Let us look at Poznanski's citations. In Exodus 25:9, which deals with the Tabernacle, Rashi says on מראה אותך that ... המקרא. and on the phrase וכן תעשו he similarly comments, ואם לא היה המקרא מחובר למעלה לא הי' לו. So also on Leviticus 11:34, מכל, Rashi says, מוסב על מקרא העליון, האוכל אשר יאכל; and on Deuteronomy 4:44, וזאת התורה, he explains, זו שהוא עתיד לסדר

אחרי פרשה זו. Hence Rashi's interpretation of these verses involves their syntax, their content and their relationship with other passages, but it is in no sense the 'interweaving of verses with one another' which Poznanski attributes to Rashi. Poznanski speaks in the same terms of Kara: 'He is most particular about the organization of a section, its development, and the connection between passages';<sup>39</sup> and I am of the opinion that he did not grasp the fundamental difference between the two commentators. Exegesis appears to be for Kara not - as it is with Rashi - a matter of distinct explanations focusing upon parts of verses and various isolated words, but rather the continuous paraphrasing of an entire text. Kara opens his explanations with a particular introductory phrase and explains it in such a way that the next phrase follows on naturally, and continues in this manner until the subject is concluded. At times this may involve only a few verses, and on other occasions whole chapters. In general he uses the same phrases when he connects the phrase to be glossed with the explanation. There are innumerable instances of this, as the most cursory examination of his commentary will demonstrate. Here are a number of examples.

I Kings 1:44 ff (phrases from the text are underlined):

וישלח אתו המלך את צדוק הכהן וגו', ושמא תאמר לא על פי  
 כהן ולא על פי נביא הומלך לכך נאמר ושלח אתו המלך את  
 צדוק הכהן ואת נתן הנביא ובניהו בן יהוידע וגו' ושמא  
 תאמר לא נשתמש בתכסיסי מלכות לכך נאמר וירכיבו אותו על  
 פרדת המלך, ושמא תאמר לא נמשה, לכך נאמר [45] וימשחו  
 אותו [ושמא תאמר] לא ישב על כסא מלכות לכך נאמר [46]  
 וגם ישב שלמה על כסא המלוכה, ושמא תאמר אין יד עבדי  
 המלך אתו לכך נאמר [47] וגם באו עבדי המלך לברך את  
 אדוניו וגו' ושמא תאמר כשהמליכו המלך דוד... לכך נאמר  
 [48] וגם ככה אמר המלך...

We may compare Judges 11:8-9; 18:7-10; and I Kings 1:6-8.

The sequence is not always so lengthy, and it may even be contained within one or two verses. For Judges 10:8, for example, Kara clarifies the point and then in conclusion writes ואחר כך, quoting the next verse.<sup>40</sup> To establish his continuity, he sometimes takes a verse out of order. Thus after explaining Joshua 17:15 he adds, וכן מפרש בסוף הענין; immediately brings verse 18 forward and comments on it; and goes on to create a continuity with verse 16. Similarly in dealing with Judges 13 he explains verse 16, then jumps to verse 19 and returns to verses 17 and 18; at verse 19 he adds a fresh remark not connected with the preceding topic.

Sometimes he will explain a single word from the following text since it is associated with the matter in hand, and to maintain continuity he will include it in the discussion.<sup>41</sup> There are even occasions when, instead of quoting the actual phrase to be glossed, he will simply summarize it in his own words. This happens with the speech of Samuel (I Sam. 12:5) most of which he explains on the basis of a single initial word.

We shall conclude this section with a further characteristic example, his comment on II Samuel 22:6-12:

חבלי שאול אף הוא לשון מכאוב והרגיז גם צבא השמיים כנר  
שפרש והולך [8] ותגעש ותרעש הארץ, אילו יושבי הארץ  
המצירים לו ואף מוסדות הארץ ירגזו מתמת שחרה לו, ומחמת  
[9] שעלה עשן באפו ואש מפיו תאכל ומחמת שראו שגחלים  
בערו ממנו [20] כשהטה שמים וירד וערפל תחת רגליו [11]  
כשרכב על כרוב ויעוף ויצא על כנפי רוח למהר לבוא  
להושיעני מאויבי, ואעפ"י [12] ששת חשך סביבותיו מחשרת  
מים המעקבים את השחקים...

As he writes on Isaiah 4:6, חבלי שאול provides the central criterion for a נפש interpretation: לפי שמתחילת הענין ועד כאן ראיתי את כל המקראות מחוברות איש לחברו כי קרסים בלולאות... ואפנה לבי לידע כל הענין לפי פשוטו ומדרשו כדי לפרשו

לפי פשוטו. There is no doubt that מקרא של פשוטו represents for Kara an exegetical approach in which the text is clarified in accordance with its general content and continuity. Let us look at some examples.

On the subject of David and the Gibeonites (II Sam. 21:4) Kara writes, כך פתרתי אתר הילוך המקראות ועניינם ובמסכת יבמות, מפרש פנים אחרות the פשט, which follows the internal development of the verses.

In response to Hannah's prayer (I Sam. 1:17) Eli says to her that God should grant her request. The word יתן (as we have already noted) can be explained in two ways: as a simple petition and prayer (that God will answer her) or as a prophecy on the part of Eli that God will give her a son. In clarifying the context, Kara shows his preference for the second possibility. (a) In verse 23 it states that God has fulfilled הוטחתו, which must mean that Eli's statement was a prophecy; (b) in verse 27 Hannah makes a similar declaration; (c) following Eli's words to her, Hannah's mood improves and she eats. In Kara's view, to explain יתן as a prayer and not as a prophecy leads to a misunderstanding of the entire incident; and one must seek an interpretation in line with the פשט.

In Isaiah 1:18 we find the phrase 'לכו נא ונוכחה יאמר ה'. The word נוכחה, explains Kara, means to walk נכוחה - in the path of righteousness - and has nothing to do with ויכוח (debate). Similarly יאמר is not directed towards the future, but the present, and this is פשוטו של דבר, which involves the internal coherence of a passage, ואין לנו מידה יתרה מפשוטו של

מקרא שאף במקום המדרש למדונו רבותינו שאין מקרא יוצא מדי פשוטו.

The phrase reappears in his comment on Isaiah 9, where he shows on the basis of the principle that one must attend to the context that verses 8-10 deal with sin and punishments that fit the crime.<sup>42</sup>

Commenting on Isaiah 42:3, he says, ודע כי כל אדם שאינו בקי בסדר והילוך הכתובים יפרש פרשה זו על מלך המשיח... אך חלילה להניח סדר הפרשה והילוכה לדבר המתיישב ולחבר כל הענין, ממה שאוחז שנים ושלושה פסוקים בפרשה והפסיק ביניהם. The problem here is the identity of 'עבד ה'.<sup>43</sup> In Kara's view, if one takes together all the chapter which speak of 'עבד ה', he must be Cyrus, despite the few isolated verses which allow for a different identification. In Ezekiel 30:11 Kara again speaks of the principle of חיבור המקראות, and in its name of this principle he twists verses 10-11 so as to bring out the links between them and the unity of the prophetic chapters on Pharaoh and Egypt (cf. Ezek. 36:13).

Chapter 34 in Jeremiah deals with the release and resubjection of slaves in the time of Zedekiah. Commenting on v. 17, Kara brings a Midrash from Seder Olam according to which there was an initial covenant which set the slaves free and a second covenant, following their re-enslavement, in which a calf was cut in two to suggest the fate of anyone who enfranchised a slave. Kara rejects this interpretation as being contrary to הילוך המקראות: (a) The chapter speaks of a single covenant, whose purpose was to free the slaves. In line with common practice, and as at the covenant with Abraham (Gen. 15:6), a calf was cut up to inaugurate the covenant; (b) verse 18 begins with a menace against anyone

who violates the covenant and afterwards, in a parenthetical clause, reports how it was made (by passing between the pieces) and with whom (the princes of Judah), and states that those who break it will fall into the hands of the enemy.

In some instances חִבּוּרֵי הַמִּקְרָאוֹת involves a few isolated verses,<sup>44</sup> but it may also encompass an entire chapter<sup>45</sup> or even consecutive chapters.<sup>46</sup> Kara makes an illuminating methodological comment at one point in the Book of Job (Job 17:9): כֵּן חִבּוּרִים וּפְתוּרִים שֶׁל מִקְרָאוֹת הֵלְלוּ. וְעַתָּה אֲשׁוּב לִפְרֹשׁ בִּינְתֵימִים דְּבָרִים שֶׁלֹּא פִּירְשְׁתִּי מִחֲמַת שְׁבִיקְשְׁתִּי לְתוֹפֵרִם וּלְחֹבֵר אֶת הָעֵנִין לֵהיוֹת אֶחָד. He first discusses a topic with regard to its general content, and only afterwards its constituent parts. For example, in Isaiah 35:1, יִשׁוּשׁוּם מְדִבֵּר וְצִיָּה, his initial point is the juxtaposition of the sections on the downfall of Edom and Bozrah (chap. 34) and the rejoicing of Zion and Jerusalem (chap. 35). Only afterwards does he explain the complex form of the verb יִשׁוּשׁוּם as meaning יִשְׁיִשׁוּ מֵהֶם (i.e. over Edom and Bozrah).<sup>47</sup>

Sometimes the overall explanation comes after Kara's discussion of separate parts of a verse, as in Isaiah 38:10, יִתֵּר שְׁנוֹתִי פִקְדוֹתִי, where he first explains פִקְדוֹתִי and יִתֵּר and then goes on to deal with the verse as a whole. We may say that he draws his נִשְׁט interpretation from the context, that is, from the sequence of the verses. This operation takes three principal forms:

- a. Deriving something from its context.
- b. Deriving something from a later reference.
- c. Attending to points that are at first unclear but whose meaning is accessible.

a. Deriving something from its context or some other thing

(דבר הלמד מענינו)

This is one of the thirty-two rules formulated by Menahem ben Saruk in his book on grammar. Kara makes a broader use of it. In Joshua 9:4 we are told of the Gibeonites ויצטירו, and Kara explains that ויצטידו הלמד מענינו he prefers the form ויצטידו, for they brought צידה of a sort likely to suggest that they had come from a distant land; ויצטידו is therefore more suited to the context (see also Targum Jonathan). He explains the word צננים in Joshua 23:13 as thorns, and adds, ואין לך (cf. Rashi on Num. 33:55). He deals with the phrase פתרונו ולא כהה במ (I Sam. 3:13) in similar terms: פתרונו ולא גער במ ואין דומה לו אלא לפי הענין root כה"ה usually means weakness (see Deut. 34:7; Zech. 11:17), and this sense is not appropriate here, the word must be explained in association with its context. Hapax legomena like שבץ (II Sam. 1:9), ויחפאו (II Kings 17:9) and others are treated in the same way.<sup>48</sup> In Jeremiah 3:14 we find ולקחתי אחד משפחה; Kara points out that it would be more reasonable to say אחד משפחה ושנים מעיר, since a city contains more than a single family, and explains that as this was a period of dispersion a single family might be spread among many cities. The context, he says, supports this view, והיה כי<sup>49</sup> והענין יורה על פתרונו, שכתב אחריו, תרבו ופריתם בארץ, speaks of the opposite state of affairs at a time of redemption as opposed to dispersal.

An example of a different expression used by Kara to describe this contextual feature is to be found in Nahum 3:6, ונבלתיך ושמתיך כראי. For the word ראי Kara cites his uncle's



commentary for the view that it connotes excrement and filth, like רעי (the letter א being exchanged for ע). He himself prefers to derive it from ראייה (sight), וחברו מוכיח עליו שכן, הוא אומר בסמוך כל רואין. The context thus confirms the meaning, which resembles that of the term found in Job 33:21. Kara's phrase, וחברו מוכיח עליו רעו (Job 36:33), is to be understood as meaning that in the subsequent verse or verses there is a word or root that helps to clarify the word in question (see also Ezek. 17:4). A further instance of this point can be found in the explanation of the word תתגודדי (Jer. 47:5), which might be understood in terms of גודד (troop, gathering), as Kara explains it in Jer. 5:7 and Mic. 4:14, or in terms of baldness or cutting, as in Jer. 16:6; 41:5. In the present case Kara prefers the second possibility, since the verse opens with the words באה קרחה אל עזה.

We have now looked at a number of examples in which context and the coherent movement of a passage aid Kara in explaining and interpreting the text.<sup>50</sup>

b. Deriving something from a later reference (דבר הלמד מסופו)

This principle is invoked by Kara in many different formulations: וסוף מקרא (II Sam. 19:12); וסוף הענין יורה עליו (I Kings 6:5; Jer. 18:18); וסוף העיניין יוכיח (I Kings 8:27); מה שמפורש בסוף הענין (I Kings 9:15). He first mentions it when Joshua commands שמש בגבעון (Josh. 10:12). He rejects the possibility that Joshua commanded the heavenly bodies directly, since in that case it should say that he spoke to them, instead of to God; and in

accordance with the principle of דבר הלמד מסופו we find later in the text לא היה כיום ההוא לפניו ואחריו לשמע ה' בקול איש (v. 14). It is clear from this that Joshua besought God and God charged the sun and moon, and so the initial difficulty is clarified by what comes after.

Similarly in Jeremiah 14:1, which deals with two droughts, Kara notes that generally when Scripture speaks of a drought it informs us during which period it occurred; yet here, where two are in question, we are not told who was the king at the time. Nevertheless, using the principle of דבר הלמד מסופו (v. 12), we can determine that they must have taken place in the reign of King Zedekiah.<sup>51</sup>

c. Dealing with something that is unclear in one place but clarified elsewhere (דבר הסתום במקום אחד ומתפרש במקום אחר)

Kara first mentions this principle in Leviticus 26:43, where he explains that if two points are unclear they are always clarified in the order in which they occur: ראשון ראשון (דבר הסתום במקום אחד ומתפרש במקום אחר). Commenting on ויהומם in Joshua 10:10, he says, בכל מקום סתם לך מהו מהומה ופירש במקום אחד וממנו תלמד לכל ויהומם. המקומות כמו שמפרש בל"ב מידות שאגדה נדרשת בהן וירעם ה' בקול גדול: 7:10 I Samuel must refer to tumult, as in I Samuel 7:10: וירעם ה' בקול גדול (cf. Jud. 4:15). Here again Kara does not employ a single fixed phrase for the principle, but formulates in a number of slightly different ways: וילמד (I Kings 22:21) מה שסתם כאן גילה שם (II Sam. 22:46); הסתום מן המפורש המקראות שסתומים מתחילתם משני דברים ולעולם פתרון<sup>52</sup>; (Jud. 5:24).<sup>53</sup> This last expression also appears in Zechariah 11:17. Verses 16-17 deal with the sins of the

shepherd towards his flock and his consequent punishment, and the exegetical problem is to determine where the list of sins ends and the description of the punishment begins. The first possibility is that verse 16 contains the sins and verse 17 the punishment; the second possibility is that verse 16 and half of verse 17 as well describe the sins, and that the punishment comes later. Kara prefers the first option, since verse 17 opens with הוֹי רוֹעֵי הָאֵלִיל, to warn of the impending punishment, and so it does not make sense to think of it as the continuation of verse 16. In addition, it is constructed as a parallelism:

חרב על זרועו, ועל עין ימינו  
זרועו יבוש תיבש, ועין ימינו כהה תכהה.

In other words, he will be punished by his arm's being cut off and his eye blinded. Thus Kara consolidates his position by demonstrating that Biblical modes of expression enable us to grasp the meaning of one part of a text by reference to another part.

## 6. הקדמות (Anticipations)

Biblical narrative occasionally introduces points that seem superfluous in their context in order that certain points which appear later may be grasped through our prior information. Kara explains cases of this type in his own characteristic language: קדם or לשבר את האזן or ואל תתמה ובני קיני חתן משה עלו מעיר התמרים: Judges 1:16 states: ואת בני יהודה מדבר יהודה אשר בנגב ערד וילך וישב את העם, and Kara explains:

ולמדך כאן שבנו כאן מעיר התמרים... ובאו להם לשבת עם בני יהודה... שלא תתמה כשאתה קורא ויאמר שאול אל הקיני סורו רדו מתוך עמלקי... (ש"א ט"ו 6) ותתמה לומר מי

הביאם כאן.  
In the same context, in Judges 4:11, we are told וחבר הקיני  
נפרד מקין מבני חב חתן משה ויט אהלו עד אלון בצעננים אשר את  
קדש, and Kara says:

וקדם ולמדך שחבר הקיני נטע לו אהלו באילון בצעננים אשר  
את קדש כדי שלא תתמה כשאתה מגיע לוסיסרא נס ברגליו אל  
אהל יעל אשת חבר הקיני (פס' 17) ותאמר הלא הם יושבים  
במדבר יהודה... ולימדך שמקצתם פונו משם והוא חבר  
הקיני...

In I Samuel 15:6, when Saul asks the Kenites to leave the  
Amalekites, Kara summarizes the whole issue:

מתחילה מביאתן לארץ ישבו להם בדושנה של יריחו ובימי  
עתניאל פינו להם דושנה של יריחו וישבו להם בנגב ערד...  
ובימי דבורה בא חבר הקיני ונפרד מקין מבני חובב חותן  
משה ויט אהלו עד אלון הצעננים... (שופ' ד' 11) שהוא משל  
עמלק וישבו שם עד שבא שאול ונצטוו למחות זכר עמלק ויסר  
מתוך עמלק...<sup>54</sup>

והנער שמואל משרת את ה' לפני, Commenting on I Samuel 3:1,

וכל זה כתוב להשכילך ולהורות לך שכששמע שמואל, Kara says, עלי,  
In his view, then, Samuel's serving God before Eli is mentioned here to prepare  
us for what subsequently appears strange, namely, that Samuel  
does not recognise that God is calling to him.

At times Kara uses shortened forms like קדם ולימדך or  
מקדים הכתוב ומלמדך or הקדים ואמר. A different expression  
is employed in I Samuel 1:3 in connection with שני בני  
עלי חפני ופנחס. First he notes the feature in question, then  
provides an explanation and concludes with a formulation of  
the principle and additional examples:

אלא הוא עומד ומדבר באלקנה... ומפסיק במעשה אלקנה  
ומזכיר בני עלי בינתיים ומשהוא מזכירן חוזר ומדבר במעשה  
אלקנה... אלא לא נכתב כאן אלא לשבר את האוזן מפני שעתיד  
לומר בסוף הענין ובני עלי בני בליעל... (ב' 12) ואם לא  
קדם והזכירם ולימדך שהיו... באותו הזמן שהיית קורא בסוף  
הפרשה שהיו בני עלי נוהגים בזיון בקודשים היית תוהה  
לומר מאין באו אליו היכן למדנו שהיו משמשין בימים ההם,  
לכן קדם ולימדך... וכן דרך מקראות רבים שקודמין ללמדך  
על דבר שאתה עתיד לתהות עליו כמו...

On the phrase (I Sam. 13:22), he ותמצא לשאול וליונתן בנו

remarks,

זה מן הדברים שמשבריו את האוזן שלא תתמה כשאתה מגיע  
למטה בעניין שכת'...  
At times he deals with this feature of the text without  
drawing attention to it through any of his characteristic  
phrases (see Jud. 13:9; 15:1; II Kings 17:1).

On occasion the text 'anticipates' in order לשבר את האוזן  
with regard to a point in the next verse, such as when we are  
told in I Kings 11:29 that Ahijah wore a new garment, for the  
following verse describes how he rends it. At other times a  
piece of information is given several verses early, as when  
the death of Samuel is recorded in I Samuel 25:1 in order  
(says Kara) to explain why David was able to curse and  
threaten Nabal the Carmelite (verse 34).<sup>56</sup> Again, an  
'anticipation' may be provided for a subject that will only  
be mentioned after an interval of several chapters, as in  
Exodus 13:18, where we are told that the children of Israel  
departed from Egypt armed (חמשים), so that we may understand  
how weapons were in their possession for the war against  
Sihon and Og (Exod. 17:8-13).<sup>57</sup> In a few cases Kara even  
discovers anticipatory information to be carried from one  
book to another. The first example in this section is an  
instance of this, for facts given on Heber the Kenite in the  
Book of Judges illuminate a topic discussed in the Book of  
Samuel.

Rashi displays some awareness of the use of anticipatory  
information, for when he comments on וחמשים עלו בני ישראל  
(Exod. 13:18), he says, אין חמושים אלא מזוינים... וכתוב זה לא  
נכתב כי אם לשבר את האוזן שלא תתמקבמלחמת עמלק ובמלחמת סיחון  
<sup>58</sup>ועוג ומציון מהיכן היו להם כלי זין שהכו ישראל בקרב

Elsewhere, in I Samuel 28:3, Rashi points out that ושמאל מת has already been reported (I Sam. 25:1), and explains that לפי שבא לדבר בשאול, his death had to be noted earlier on, שהוא צריך לדורש בבעלת האוב פתח ואמר ושמאל מת שאילו היה קיים Kara, as we have seen, further developed and broadened this view of anticipatory information. In this he was followed and strongly supported by Rashbam, who explains it at length at the beginning of his commentary on the Torah:<sup>60</sup>

אך זהו עיקר פשוטו לפי דרך המקראות שרגיל להקדים ולפרש  
דבר שאין צריך בשביל דבר הנזכר לפניו [כלומר, הבא מיד  
אחריו]. במקום אחר כדכת' שם חם ויפת וכת' וחם הוא אבי  
כנען אלא מפני שכת' לפניו ארור כנען ואילו לא פורש  
תחילה מי כנען לא היינו יודעין למה קללו נוח... לפיכך  
הקדים וישמע ישראל שלא תתמה...<sup>61</sup>

The advances on this approach made by Rashbam are demonstrated by the term with which he defines the feature in question: הקדמה. Rashi alludes to it; Kara opens it to examination and applies to it, as we have seen, several recurrent expressions like קדם ולימדך; and Rashbam defines it.<sup>62</sup>

## 7. סמיכות פרשיות (Juxtaposition)

The term סמיכות פרשיות, which is found in the Sages<sup>63</sup> and in Rashi's commentary,<sup>64</sup> is not found in this form in Kara, who prefers to speak of חיבור or describe a text as הוסמך (i.e. נסמך בכתיבה). There is an example in Joshua 24:32-33, where we are told of the burial of Eleazar and of Joseph's remains. At first sight this seems to have no connection with the preceding verses on the final days of Joshua. Kara explains that the passages are juxtaposed because burial constitutes an associative link between them. Elsewhere he

may account for the proximity of two events in terms of common language, the same phrase appearing in both accounts. An example of this is the juxtaposition of the episode of Micah's idol (Judges 17) with the Samson narrative (Judges 16): the phrase  $\text{אלף ומאה כסף}$  is found in both.

We can distinguish between two types of linkage: (a) a natural and progressive continuity between sections, and (b) a substantive connection between passages which initially seem quite different.

a. Natural continuity between sections

King Solomon asks in his dream for wisdom (I Kings 3), and immediately afterwards comes the narrative of the two women and the child. Kara points out that the two events are juxtaposed in order to leave the reader in no doubt that the dream has been fulfilled. Similarly, the proximity between the war with Moab and Elijah's ascent to Heaven in a fiery chariot (II Kings 3:1) is meant to demonstrate that Elisha's miracles were double Elijah's. There is a further example in Isaiah 56:10-57:1. Chapter 56 deals with the nation's leaders, who sin through over-indulgence and an improper discharge of their duties. Chapter 57 begins with a lament over the plight of the righteous who perish, and goes on to describe the punishment that awaits the sinful leaders. The continuity is unclear. Why should mention of the righteous be interpolated in the progression from sin to punishment? Kara explains that the leaders are too occupied in guzzling food and drink to attend to God's word and warn the people, and so they do not notice the signs which point to the impending

punishment - the deaths of the innocent righteous. In this way he connects the sections together.

b. Substantive but not readily apparent links

This type can be further subdivided:

i. Rebuke and consolation

On many occasions Kara notes the Scriptural practice of inserting some verses of comfort between two passages of rebuke, thus interrupting the continuity of the text. In his view, the segment which offers consolation does not break up the rebuke but forms an integral part of it.

The first chapter of Isaiah is divided up as follows. Verses 2-15 are words of reproach; 16-20 are consolation; 21-25 are reproach; 26-27 are consolation; and 28-31 are again reproach. On verse 18 Kara writes, מדה זו נוהגת בכל הקריה, שנכל מקום שאתה מוצא תוכחה במקרא... והענין של אחרייו מדבר בנחמה, אל ישיאך לבך להפסיק ולהפליג ולהרחיק, שאחר הפסקה מענין... של מעלה לפי שיש שם הפסקה, לא בא אלא לחבוש שבר של מעלה והפסקה שבענינים להפסיק בין תוכחה לנחמה אך סמוכים לעד לעולם עשויים באמת. According to Kara (he returns to the point in v. 26), the chapter is an integrated whole and the consolation functions both to soften the rebukes and to set the condemnation of the wicked against the comfort offered to the righteous. An outstanding example of this can be found in Hosea 2:1-2, where the same terms are used for consolation as for the preceding rebuke. In Jeremiah 12:14 too the same verbal form is used, the root נח"ש being applied to both the reproach and the consolation, so that the relief promised for



the blow to come is given prominence.<sup>65</sup>

#### 11. Reward and punishment

In discussing the reward of the righteous (Isa. 4:2), Kara remarks, וזהו אחת מן המדות מפורשים בו. כל מקום שאתה מוצא שמדבר הכתוב בפורענותן של רשעים אתה מוצא בסמוך מתן שכרן של יסיר ה' את תפארתם. The punishment of the wicked is that תפארתם (Isa. 3:18), and the reward of the righteous, ופרי (Isa. 4:2). הארץ לגאון ולתפארת לפליטת ישראל.

A further example is the prophetic rebuke to Shebna: A further example is the prophetic rebuke to Shebna: מרכבות כבודך קלון בית אדוניך (Isa. 22:18). In verse 23 we find the corresponding piece of comfort for Eliakim: והיה שכל מקום שאתה מוצא פורענותן של רשעים אתה לכסא כבוד לבית אבין. Here again Kara notes the shared linguistic coinage: מוצא דוגמת פורענותן נחמה לצדיקים. It is worth noting that there is one place in which the example is reversed: שכל מקום שאתה מוצא נחמה לישראל אתה מוצא בציזו דוגמת נחמה, הפורענות אין שלום אמר ה' (Isa. 48:22) reads לרשעים. The text itself (Isa. 48:22) reads לרשעים, and Kara notes that it corresponds with verse 18: לוא (cf. Hos. 2:1). הקשבת למצוותי ויהי כנהר שלומך.

To sum up, it can be said that Kara is concerned to clarify the link between topics, and that his commentary establishes the exegetical continuity of the text. He does not explain segments of a verse in isolation from their setting, as the Midrash does, but takes an overall view of the context which is part and parcel of his view of פשט, and the broader the context into which his interpretation is integrated the better. We have seen three forms of linkage between passages, arising from context (ועניניו),

from later information (דבר הלמד מסופו), and from clarifications elsewhere (דבר הסתום בתחילתו ומפורש בצידו). Kara also deals with textual continuity when he explains anticipatory information (הקדמות) and juxtapositions (סמיכות). Throughout his treatment of the entire topic he acts as a teacher blazing a new trail for himself within the general approach of the French commentators on the פשט. He interprets the text from an all-inclusive viewpoint, with the aim of clarifying and organising its various aspects through a continuous explanation which moves with the text and accompanies it like a shadow.

## 8. Summary

Here we return to the question with which we began. What is Kara's conception of פשט and שרש? It will be easier for us to offer a reply now that we have a general picture of his attitude to the subject and what he has to say on it.

Ahrend supplies a basis for the view taken here. He suggests<sup>66</sup> that Kara is opposed to שרש only when it is presented as the sole mode of interpretation. He is willing to accept a Midrash when its purpose is to supplement a text by adding details,<sup>67</sup> or alternatively, it seems to me, when it contains an educational lesson for his students by justifying the actions of the Patriarchs, offering a solution to difficult problems or contradictions, or speaking in praise of Biblical figures, and so on.

The problem can be viewed from a different perspective if we take into account the historical background against which Kara worked. Twyto points out that in the twelfth century

western Europe entered a 'period of renewal'. In this period, as historians have concluded, 'the fundamental problem which engaged the intellectual world' was 'the problem of the correct relationship between traditional authority and the demands of reason.'<sup>68</sup> With regard to exegesis, this meant fixing the relationship between דרש and פשט.<sup>69</sup> This is the period of modernists, the משכילים, as Kara calls them in opposition to נעלי אגדה ותלמוד.<sup>70</sup> He stresses that these latter 'לא יניחו מה שפתרו רבותינו... וילכו אחרי פתרי' whereas the משכילים, he says, 'ישכילו לנתיבות הקרייה'; that is, they emphasise the words as they actually appear. On this point, Ahrend notes that the אוהני השכל (who are the משכילים of Rashbam on Genesis 37:2 and the יודעי שכל of Rashbam on Exodus 21:1)<sup>71</sup> were those who sought rational explanations which were independent of the Midrash, Talmud and Aggadah, and which were based on the plain sense of the text. Their ambivalent attitude to דרש is one of the characteristic traits of the period. Kara followed in the footsteps of Rashi, most of whose explanations are taken from the remarks of the Sages.<sup>72</sup> Kara himself continued to draw from Midrashic sources, while at the same time his commentary abounds in פשט interpretations. He was followed by Rashbam, who adheres almost entirely to פשט although he admits that the Midrash may be of use.<sup>73</sup> He also distinguishes between the two methods of פשט and דרש; both represent legitimate approaches to the Bible,<sup>74</sup> but the search for הפשטות must be given priority. It was indeed the spiritual aim of his generation. The exegetical school of thought which existed in northern France during the twelfth

century, among whose proponents Kara and Rashbam are numbered, attempted, says Twyto, to share in the contemporary spirit 'by offering a Jewish expression for the problems that taxed the minds of the Enlightened [משכילים] of that generation.'<sup>75</sup> Their exegetical approach testifies to this in its attention to the grammar and style of the Bible, search for exact texts, and so forth. Within this school of thought, Kara serves as the connecting link between Rashi and Rashbam. This view is based upon the work of two scholars, Raphael Loewe and Sara Kamin. The first surveys the development of the term פשט in Talmudic literature and states that 'peshat, therefore, means authoritative teaching in two possible senses. Either (as in the case of the verb), teaching propounded by an authoritative teacher, or teaching recognised by the public as obviously authoritative, since familiar and traditional' [italics in original]. He goes on to distinguish פשט and דרש: 'The real distinction between them as nouns seems to be that derash is exegesis naturally, or even experimentally propounded without secondary considerations; if it is popularly received, and transmitted into the body of conventional or "orthodox" opinion, it crystallises into peshat.'<sup>76</sup>

Sara Kamin considers that 'the distinction between פשט and דרש was not fully defined or crystallized in Rashi's mind. Yet in the commentary of Rashbam, Rashi's grandson, we find a conscious, consistent distinction between these exegetical categories. We also find in his commentary an exact use of terminology in everything that pertains to the category of פשט, which Rashbam regarded as his sole field of endeavor.'

She also remarks that 'with regard to the exegetical category which is not פשוט, Rashbam would appear not to have developed a terminology.'<sup>77</sup> We shall now argue that Kara, who wrote between the time of Rashi and that of Rashbam, makes on this point an advance upon Rashi, but fails to distinguish as firmly between פשוט and פשוטו as Rashbam does. For the purposes of this discussion we shall define פשוט as a clarification of the text in accordance with its language, syntactical construction, context and content, literary structure and type, and the effects that these components have upon one another. In other words, a פשוט commentary takes into account all linguistic elements in any given combination and finds the meaning of each as part of a whole.<sup>78</sup> The term פשוט does not appear in Rashi's commentary at all, only פשוטו, in the sense of the literal meaning of a verse.<sup>79</sup> This is not the same thing as the conception of an interpretation based upon a פשוט approach. Despite the fact that the term פשוטו accompanies many explanations 'which follow the פשוט method as we have defined it, no term denoting this exegetical category is contained in Rashi's vocabulary.'<sup>80</sup> The same is true of Kara, in whose work we find such expressions as פשוטו (Isa. 23:4); לפי פשוטו (Isa. 14:18, 20); לפי פשוטו של מקרא (Jer. 8:23; Hos. 4:17); and פשוטו של מקרא (Josh. 24:25; I Sam. 1:17; 21:7).

A difference appears with regard to Midrashim. For Rashi a Midrash which is drawn from the sources does not contradict interpretations כפשוטו, which in general are not based upon Rabbinic sources. Hence Rashi regards the expression מדרשו as synonymous with מדרש אגדה, or simply to מדרש.<sup>81</sup> In Kara we

find a specific view of Midrash which is not in harmony with the פשט of the text, and whose function is one of embellishment: ומדרש חכמינו כדי להגדיל תורה ויאדיר (I Sam. 1:17). As we have seen, he describes anyone who נוטה לו אחר as a man awash in tempestuous waters who grabs at anything that might save him. The Torah was given in a form that is perfect and complete, and requires no Midrash; the messages of the Prophets are lucid and complete, and neither Midrash nor other external sources need be consulted to understand them (Jud. 5:4; I Sam. 1:17). While Kara refers everyone who is interested in Midrashim to the appropriate books, citing them is not his own intention (I Sam. 1:1). rank in his mind as *nonsense* (להג), and, he says, אין מתיישבין על לב (II Sam. 12:30).

Returning now to Rashi: Sara Kamin concludes that the term פשוט and the root דר"ש do not for Rashi denote distinctive exegetical approaches parallel to פשט and דרש in our sense.<sup>82</sup> Furthermore, she points out that in Rashi's usage, 'the term פשוט in itself denotes the text in its literal sense ... so that when Rashi uses the term, it does not bear a variety of value-laden senses with regard to a correct and true interpretation, etc.'<sup>83</sup> By contrast, Kara appears to assess an explanation which is according to פשוט as correct and preferable. This emerges from the following points: (a) his explicit rejection of the Midrash, of which we have noted several instances; and (b) his statement that אך המשכילים ישכילו לנתיבות הקריה להעמיד דבר על האמת (I Sam. 1:20). The word דבר here is equivalent to מקרא.<sup>84</sup> This implies that truth must be the foundation of Scripture, and that he is

aware that his commentary differs from and is antagonistic to the accepted Midrashic interpretations. Similarly, when he uses an expression like *זה פשוטו ומליצתו ובירורו של דבר* (I Kings 8:8), he makes his view of the Midrash quite clear (see II Sam. 14:2). The term *פשוטו* is informed for him with value judgments as to the more correct, more truthful interpretation. To this should be added the fact that he treats the terms *מדרש* or *מדרש אגדה* and the like as the opposite of *פשוטו*.<sup>85</sup> Where Rashi attempts 'not simply to interpret the text, but rather to interpret it in accordance with the sources,'<sup>86</sup> Kara's aim is to interpret it *כפשוטו*, aided by a critical analysis and selection of what the Sages have to offer. Since he understands *פשוט* commentary as a clarification in relation to language, content, context, style and literary structure, his work comes closer to our definition of *פשוט* (a term which now connotes the type of approach adopted by his successor, Rashbam), if only because of Kara's critical and selective treatment of the Midrashim of the Sages. While it is true that both their commentaries are founded upon the principle that *אין מקרא יוצא מידי פשוטו* (I Sam. 17:55), Kara makes more of an issue of it,<sup>87</sup> as when he speaks in such terms as *אחר פשוטו של דבר ואחר מליצתו* (II Sam. 14:2), or *זהו פשוטו ומליצתו ובירורו של דבר* (I Kings 8:8),<sup>88</sup> or *לפי פשוטו ומשמעו של מקרא* (I Kings 5:12);<sup>89</sup> or ascribes great importance to a consistent explanation which follows the textual sequence and the context (*חיבור המקראות*).

We can sum up by saying that the very composition of *פשוט* commentaries shows that the French Sages adapted themselves to the spirit of the renaissance of the twelfth century. In

Rashi we find only the beginning of an awareness that *שט* and *שר* should be distinguished from each other,<sup>90</sup> while Kara moves much further forward. The distinction is clearer and more conscious, although he does not always succeed in his effort *לפתור* the text without the aid of Midrash. To his mind, *שט* is of the essence and *שר* is merely a decoration; and he takes refuge in Midrash only when he is at a loss for a *שט* explanation, or when the Midrash offers some special educational benefit. In Rashbam we see even a further development, for he makes a conscious and consistent distinction between *שט* and *שר*, and he is the first person to use the term *שט*,<sup>91</sup> even if it is still accompanied by *שטו*<sup>92</sup> and *מקרא של שטו*.<sup>93</sup> In the history of the development in France of *שט* commentary, then, Kara occupies a place of honour between Rashi and Rashbam.

## II. The Use of Rabbinic Midrashim

In addition to the Talmud, numerous Midrashic works were available to Kara as they had been to his predecessor Rashi.<sup>94</sup> In this section we will deal with the ways in which Kara handles his Rabbinic sources and the terms in which he refers to them in his commentary.

### 1. Parallel Sources

Only at rare intervals does Kara cite Midrashim from two sources; sometimes both are in agreement, sometimes they are at odds with each other. On I Samuel 1:1, on the phrase *מן ומדרש רבותינו מן הרמתיים צופים*, he writes, *ממאתיים צופים שעמדו להם לישראל באותו הדור אלא שלא הוצרכה*



נבואתו לפרסמה לדורות. This Midrash comes from Megillah 14a; Kara goes on to allude to Midrash Samuel: לכתוב בספר זה שום מדרש שלפי מדרשו רצוף ספר בפני עצמו והרוצה לקרות דבר At times a second source will be glossed as בו קורא, as we find in connection with the death of David in I Kings 11:21: כִּי שָׁכַב דָּוִד עִם אֲבוֹתָיו וְכִי מָת יוֹאָב. Kara says, דוד שמת מיתת עצמו נאמרה בו שכיבה ד"א דוד שהניח בן הגון ממלא את then is Midrash Samuel;<sup>97</sup> and this Midrash comes from Baba Bathra 116a (and see II Sam. 14:2). Elsewhere, in I Samuel 17:55, he combines two Midrashim and says, כן הוא מפורש במדרש, הנה הוא נחבא אל, When we are told of Saul, ובמסכת ינמות שאל באורים ותומים (I Sam. 10:22), he remarks that Saul ואם ראוי למלכות כמו ששנינו כהן גדול בשמונה כלים and this is a combination of Midrash Tanhuma<sup>98</sup> and Yoma 72a on the garments of the High Priest. In one place, II Samuel 15:7, he weaves together Midrashim from two tractates, Temurah and Menahoth. However, these occasions on which he presents two possibilities are isolated exceptions.

## 2. Handling of Sources

The following approaches may be noted:

a. The language of the Midrash and that used by Kara are completely identical. This applies to Midrashim taken both from Midrashic works<sup>100</sup> and from the Talmud.<sup>101</sup>

b. The Midrash is quoted with slight changes of no significance, such as the omission or addition of a single word, the substitution of a synonym, or the transposition of a few words.<sup>102</sup>

c. The Midrash is cited in a highly abridged form. We shall note one example from among many. In Judges 6:1 we find  
 הרע, ויעשו בני ישראל,

למעלה כתב ויוסיפו... וכאן כתב ויעשו מדרש חכמים לשעבר  
 עד שלא אמרו שירה היו חוטאין וחוזרין לספות חטאת וכיוון  
 שאמרו שירה נמחל להם. כשחזרו וקלקלו אי אפשר לומר  
 ויוסיפו שכבר נמחל להם על הראשונה לכן כתב ויעשו [הרע].  
 In Kara's text the Midrash contains 29 words, whereas in the  
 original, Midrash on Psalms 18:1, there are 100 words:

אמר ר' סימון לא כל מי שהוא רוצה לומר שירה אומר. לא כל  
 מי שנעשה לו נס ואומר שירה. בידוע שמוחלין לו  
 עוונותיו, ונעשה כבריה חדשה... וכן אתה מוצא בימי ברק  
 ודבורה שנעשה להם נס ואמרו שירה... מניין שנחמלו להן  
 עוונותיהן דסמיך ליה אחר השירה ויעשו בני ישראל [את]  
 הרע. אמר ר' אבהו בכל מקום כתיב ויוסיפו בני ישראל...  
 ואחר שירת דבורה כתיב ויעשו בני ישראל, תחלת עשייתן  
 והיכן מה שעשו לשעבר. אלא שמחל להם הקב"ה בשעה שאמרו  
 שירה וכן הוא אומר כבוד...

Kara emphasises and accounts for the difference between the  
 use of ויוסיפו in Judges 13:1 and ויעשו here (Jud. 6:1). For  
 this purpose he quotes only the relevant part of the Midrash,  
 and even this he shortens so as not to weary the reader with  
 unnecessary details. In Judges 9:13 he gives a brief version  
 (24 words) of a Midrash which occupies in the original, in  
 Midrash Tanhuma,<sup>103</sup> about 70 words. In other places too he  
 feels it proper to quote only the essence of a Midrash.<sup>104</sup>

d. He conveys the central idea of a Midrash in his own  
 words. When Gideon selects men for battle he separates  
 from המלקקים כל אשר יכרע על ברכיו לשתות (Jud. 7:5). These  
 last will not be chosen עו"ז; while the Midrash states, רוצה ולא רוצה היה משתחוה,  
 אותם שכרעו... (Yalkut Shimeoni  
 Judges, sect. 62). In another place we find צור כאלקנו  
 אין בעולם שיכול לצור צורה, and Kara says, (I Sam. 2:2),  
 כאלוקינו כי צורתו יש בה רוח חיים. The Midrash reads

105. אינו יכול לצור צורה בתוך צורה והאדם צר את האדם במעי אמו  
Other examples may be adduced. 106

e. He adds explanatory remarks, or broadens and clarifies a Midrash. In explaining עשויות צאן וחמש צאן (I Sam. 25:18), he says, ושנינו במכילתא, עקיבא קוריהו לפסח מקולס, ר' טרפון קוריהו, and the Midrash reads: ר' שמואל קורא אותו גבי מקולס ר' טרפון קרא אותו תוכבר. When the servants of Hanun, king of Ammon, ask him, המכבד את אביך בעיניך (II Sam. 10:3), Kara writes, כתוב בתורתו לא תדרוש שלום וטובתם וסבור אתה שמניח אלוקיו ובא לדרוש שלומך ולכבוד אביך שלח לה מנחמים. This is based on a Midrash which says,

אל תאמין בדוד למה שהקב"ה מזהירו בשבילנו כתוב [לו]  
בתורתו לא יבוא עמוני ומואבי בקהל ה' וכתוב לא תדרוש  
שלום וטובתם. 107

Kara explains and elucidates the Midrash.

At times his additional clarification is even longer, as when we are told of Shimei, לרדת לקראת אדוני המלך (II Sam. 19:21). The Midrash states: והנה באתי היום ראשון לכל בית יוסף שנאמר אולי יחנן ה' שארית יוסף אמר ליה שמעי לדוד כל ישראל גמלוך רעה ואני יותר מכולם וכל ישראל יושבין ומקוין מה חסד אתה עושה עמי אם קבלת אותי כל ישראל באין ומשלימין אתך. Here is what Kara says: ולפי מדרשו ואני באתי היום ראשון לכל בית יוסף ראשון לעשרת השבטים ואני חטאתי לך יותר מכולם שהם לא עשו כי אם מרדו בך ואני קיללתי וסיקלתי באבנים ועיפרתי בעפר, אם ישמעו עשרת השבטים שתמחול על חטאתי מיד באים ומשלימים לך שיהו דנין קל וחומר בעצמן, ומה שמעי שחטא יותר קיבלו המלך ואני Amplifications like this are found throughout his commentary. 110

f. A quotation from or reference to the Midrash may be

imprecise or mistaken. Let us look at a few examples.

i. Kara asserts that something is present in the Midrash which in fact is not there, as in כל שלא נבחרה שילה הוכשרו כל, for the Mechilta (מכילתא) in fact speaks first of the land of Israel and afterwards of Jerusalem.<sup>111</sup> In I Kings 5:15 Kara talks of Solomon, yet the Midrash (Genesis Rabba 85) deals with David. In another instance his quotation from the Midrash reads משום שחוט' חוץ, while it ought to be וְעוֹרָו; <sup>112</sup> or in explaining the word משישה נהין (II Sam. 6:19) he writes, אחד משישה נהין, yet Pesahim 36b states אחד משישה באיפה.

ii. He ascribes a Midrash to מכילתא when he means מכילתא and at the same time speaks of Rabbi Akiva instead of Rabbi Ishmael.<sup>114</sup> Elsewhere, in Joshua 15:17, he directs us to Kethuvoth when the correct reference is Sanhedrin 29b.

iii. He quotes a passage from a Midrash which does not exist in that particular place,<sup>115</sup> directs us to a Midrash which contains nothing of what he says,<sup>116</sup> or offers a quotation which does not exist in the sources.<sup>117</sup>

iv. He either does not know or does not understand the Talmud. There are two instances of this; as Poznanski writes, 'His astonishing statements in connection with Talmud and Halachah show how little he dealt with these subjects' (Mavo, p. xxiv). On the words ואת נדרו (I Sam. 1:21), Kara says, אלו נדרים ונדבות של כל השנה שנדרין ונדבות קריבין ביום טוב. This runs counter to the Mishnah in Beitzah 19a: אבל נדרים ונדבות. He explains the root נד"ה in נתימא (Jud. 14:9) and concludes in surprise, וירדהו אל כפיו

האיך נזיר יכול לאכול אוכל שנגע בנבלה, although in Nazir 4a-b a comparison is made between two types of Nazirites, ור' יהודה אומר נזיר שמשון מותר להיטמא למתים שכן מצינו שמשון שנטמא.

### 3. Annotation of Sources

Although in general Kara does not note his sources,<sup>11</sup> the number of places in which he supplies the name of a tractate or Midrashic work is not inconsiderable. Rarely does he refer a reader to another source without being moderately specific, as in (I Kings 10:19), וכל צורת הכסא מפורשת באגדת מגילת אסתר (I Kings, 10:19),<sup>11</sup> or מדרש אגדה ראיתי ושגור בפי הכל (I Kings, 18:26). As a rule he quotes the Sages in full. We shall now look at his most common formulations when he quotes from the Midrash: מדרש חכמינו (II Sam. 7:4);<sup>12</sup> מדרש רב (Jud. 6:40);<sup>13</sup> or מדרשו (I Sam. 1:14);<sup>14</sup> There are also some quite different phrases like --- or ---<sup>15</sup> (I Kings 10:19; 16:22; Isa. 28:24; or forms like שמעתי (II Sam. 22:35; Hos. 1:7); ראיתי (I Kings 18:26; II Kings 3:1; Jer. 8:23); or מצאתי (I Kings 5:10; 11:41; Isa. 17:11); and occasionally --- כתוב (I Kings 10:7; Ezek. 30:21); or מצינו (I Kings 14:25; Jer. 44:14). A source may be noted at the beginning of the citation, as in ונבראשית רבא (Josh. 10:13; Isa. 29:17), or at the end: כך שנויה בסדר עולם (I Sam. 2:27; Ezek. 33:24). A quotation from the Midrash may appear quite baldly: ... לוי' (I Sam. 7:9; Jonah 1:15); or at the end of a quoted passage may come something like פרקי דרנ' אלעזר.<sup>16</sup>

The terms in which Kara adduces Midrashim and the Talmud

do not differ in principle, except that with regard to the latter his language is broader and more varied, such phrases being added to his stock as תמהו רבותינו (Josh. 13:3),<sup>126</sup> נחלקו רבותינו בדבר<sup>127</sup> (I Kings 6:1), ופתרון רבותינו (I Sam. 1:11; cf. Hag. 1:8), or כדגרסינן ב--- (Jud. 3:31). We should note that Rashi too employs a variety of terms, but not to the extent that Kara does.<sup>128</sup>

#### 4. Talmudic Literature and Other Works in Kara's Commentary

We shall now review the books of which Kara makes use. He refers to the Mishnah in the following terms: וגם בלשון (I Kings 6:5). References to the Tosefta are always specific, as in בתיספתא זשקלים<sup>129</sup> or בתיספתא דסוטה<sup>130</sup>. We also find נתן דרבי (II Kings 3:1), ברייתא דמ"ט מידות<sup>131</sup>, and מדרשי הלכה (Jud. 11:26).<sup>132</sup> Of סדר עולם (I Sam. 25:18; Isa. 6:13) and ספרי (II Kings 12:22; Hos. 4:19). Among Midrashic works we find תנחומא (Jud. 4:3; Isa. 28:24), סדר עולם רבא<sup>133</sup> (Jud. 1:26), ב"ר (Josh. 10:13), ילקוט שמעוני (II Sam. 5:6-8, etc.), מדרש שוחר טוב (i.e. מדרש תהילים<sup>134</sup> (Jud. 5:5), מדרש אבא גוריון (i.e. מדרש מגילת אסתר (I Kings 10:19), 23:1), מדרש פיי (II Sam. 21:19), רות רבה<sup>135</sup> (Jud. 10:6), איכה רבה (I Kings 14:25), פסיקתא דרב כהנא<sup>136</sup> (I Kings 5:10; Zech. 14:10), פסיקתא רבתי (II Sam. 24:1), ויקרא רבה (II Sam. 22:29; I Kings 17:1; Jonah 1:15), דברים רבה (I Sam. 1:1), זכרונות (Zeph. 2:8), הלכות חנוכה (Joel 1:4) and הלכות גדולות (Zech. 6:3). At times Kara makes use of Midrashic literature without saying so:

אבות דרבי נתן, תנחומא, סדר עולם רבא, מכילתא דרשב"י, איכה רבה, ויקרא רבה and רות רבה. As for the Talmud, most of the tractates are mentioned by name, but here again quotations may be offered without Kara's supplying the source.<sup>140</sup>

In summary it can be said that in general he is inclined to quote Midrashim in full, although at times he gives a shortened version or adds explanatory notes. We have noted the expressions he uses when quoting from the sources, and it is clear that most, if not all, of the works available to Rashi are also used by Kara. Despite his great expertise with regard to Midrashim, we must remark that on occasion he errs either in the phrasing of a quotation or in his understanding of it.

## Chapter 2

### Kara's Exegetical Method

#### I. Style and Terminology

Kara's commentary reads smoothly, for it constitutes a paraphrase of the text. It is notable for its intellectual continuity inasmuch as it does not merely cite the words to be discussed but rather includes them as part of the interpretation. It is also characterised by a long-winded style (in contrast to the stringent brevity of Rashi, for example), appeals to the reader, repetitive assertions and recurrent expressions, and the constant employment of the roots פת"ר, פר"ש and למ"ד. In almost every paragraph פת"ר appears (though at times כלומר is found as a substitute) and למ"ד figures in appeals to the reader to extract new information from a particular place. Through the link which he establishes between different verses, generally by the use of the expression כשם שמפרש והולך, Kara offers a complete and unified picture of each topic.

I will later attempt to describe, by means of examples, Kara's characteristic strategy as it finds expression in his comments. For the moment, let us trace his favourite linguistic collocations, the special form by which he always appeals to the reader as he argues his case, the terms in which he speaks of commentaries which he regards as incorrect, and the peculiar force which he imparts to the root פת"ר. A yet more typical trait is his varied use of language. As we shall see, he draws upon more than twenty different forms when he cites phrases from the Targum, quotes



one verse in order to explain another (see the section on Scriptural style, below), directs himself to other commentaries, or employs foreign terms (לע"י).

Such variety, generally speaking, is more natural to lectures delivered before a congregation than to a systematic commentary employing a set idiom for each subject. Another outstanding characteristic is the great use Kara makes of Scriptural verses. Like any good teacher of the Bible, he weaves these into his commentary to form an integral part of the explanation and produce an enhanced reading, with such skill that they become an indispensable part of the commentary. There is no doubt in my mind that his diffuseness, the repetition of his various assertions, his appeals to the reader, creation of a commentary based on continuity, and use of the roots י"ד"ע and (even more) למ"ד, are all a consequence of his paedagogical bent. He did not see himself merely as an instructor but also, and primarily, as an educator on the basis of the Book of Books.

#### 1. Appeals to the Reader

The primary thrust of Kara's work is an appeal, through the use of the second person singular, to an attentive reader or student. This is accomplished by the insertion of questions or claims nominally posed by the student, to which Kara then responds. At times he opens with a question and answers it, but on other occasions the questions and perplexities appear later in a comment. In this event his favourite expression is ושמא תאמר or ואם תאמר.<sup>2</sup> After the question has been presented he commences his response with the phrase כן

ולמה נכפל <sup>3</sup> He may open with a question and then retort אמר.  
<sup>4</sup> אבל יש עליו תשובה or announce כאן שני פעמים... זה פתר

Generally his method is really that of a conversation and an argument with the student, as in Josh. 16:5:

והמבין בדבר יפלא בעיניו לומר שרצועה זו אפרים ומנשה  
נחלוה מפני מה אינו מזכיר מנשה... כשם שהזכיר אפרים...  
יבין בדבר שגורל זה צר הוא כלפי מזרח.

[A perceptive person might here wonder why... He should understand that...]

On Isaiah 1:18 Kara explains the connection between the rebuke (up to this verse and from verse 21 onwards) and the consolation (in this and the following verse), and in his appeal to the reader (Isa. 7:17; 15:1) he says,

ואל תשיבני במה שאמרו חכמים ז"ל... ואל ישיאך לבך  
להפסיק ולהפליג ולהרחיק... ואפרש לך מקצתו... וזע, אע"פ  
שתמצא שם הפסקה מחובר הוא לענין של מעלה... דע והבן...  
לבך אל יפנה...

He begs the reader to follow neither the Sages nor his own feeling in the matter, but to read what he himself has to say, which proves that the topics in question are interconnected. All this is done through a direct appeal to the reader.

Let us move on to another example where the appeal is more forceful. When he explains Joshua's command that the sun and the moon should stand still (Josh. 10:12), he writes:

ולא יעלה בדעתך שתאמר שיהושע בעצמו ציווה לחמה שתעמוד  
מכמה תשובות שיש בדבר אחת שאם כדברך שהוא בעצמו שלט בה  
לצוותה... היה לו למקרא לומר... ואם הוא כדברך... היה  
למקרא זה לומר... אלא על כורחך יהושע ביקש רחמים לפני  
הקב"ה שיעמיד את השמש.

[If you contend..., the text should have said so... and if you maintain..., the text should have said so...; but you are forced to conclude...] We also find this (Josh. 17:16):

מעתה אל יתמה המשכיל לומר היאך היה לו למנשה בית שאן  
בנותיה וכי אדם שמשליך חבל בגורל מעקם הוא את החבל לכאן  
ולכאן או מי שרוכמין יתאזרוכה על כורחך הוא משליכו בקו

המשקולת ונוטה לו... ושמה תאמר... וכי אפשר דבר זה לומר  
 והלא כבר נאמר... אלא על כורחך...  
 The expression (of necessity) is extensively used by  
 Kara when he feels that the reader is compelled to draw a  
 certain conclusion from the text, even if it is not  
 immediately apparent, since such is the clear demand of the  
 passage. In some instances he appeals to the reader when in  
 essence he is offering an adverse criticism of an erroneous  
 explanation. When we are told of the Gibeonites, ויעשו גם המה  
 (Josh. 9:4), he picks up the word גם:

אם מצאת שלכך יהושע את שניהם בערמה יריחו ועי אז היה  
 הדבר נשמע לאוזן ומתקבל אבל כשאתה מפרידם זו מזו שיחתה  
 את בעצמך את דבריך, לכן טול לך טעם שווה בשניהם...  
 [This only makes sense if Joshua captured both Jericho and Ai  
 through a ruse, but if you separate the two events, you fall  
 into difficulties. Therefore seek a reason common to both...]  
 Similarly, when the phrase וישבו כל העם אל המחנה appears  
 after the battle between Joshua and the Kings of the South  
 (Josh. 10:21), he says:

אבל אל יעלה על דעתך שלאחר ששבו יהושע וכל ישראל...  
 הוגד לו ליהושע לומר נמצאו חמשת המלכים, אם אתה אומר כן  
 נוקשת באמרי פיך... אלא על כורחך הכתוב חוזר לו לענין  
 הראשון ומלמדך היאך אירע מעשה...<sup>6</sup>  
 [Don't think for a moment... because if you do, you entangle  
 yourself... Rather we are forced to conclude...]

When Kara appeals to the reader he usually does so by  
 means of the root יד"ע, and even more frequently through the  
 root למ"ד. Both normally appear in the second person singular  
 in order to draw the attention of the reader to whatever is  
 particularly important.

יד"ע appears in the following forms: ידע<sup>7</sup>, ידע<sup>8</sup>, ידע<sup>9</sup>  
 ידע<sup>10</sup>, ידע<sup>11</sup> and ידע<sup>12</sup>. ידע<sup>13</sup> שכן הוא ידע<sup>14</sup>, ידע<sup>15</sup> שכן הוא ידע<sup>16</sup>,  
 We should not accept Apenstein's view that ידע is Kara's

typical word for introducing a point',<sup>13</sup> since this form appears no more than ten times in his commentary. The second root, למ"ד, appears scores of times in various forms, always with the same basic idea: that the reader is being asked to learn from a particular instance something relevant to other passages, or to apply a given important topic to the instance in question. The following forms are the most common:

<sup>17</sup> מיכן אתה למד <sup>16</sup> מכאן יש ללמוד <sup>15</sup> למדת <sup>14</sup> ללמדך

מכאן <sup>20</sup> מעצמך אתה למד <sup>19</sup> נמצאת למד <sup>18</sup> הכתוב בא ללמדך

and so on.<sup>22</sup> With this root he seeks not only to involve the reader but also to make statements about himself: דברי הימים מלמדני פירונו <sup>23</sup> In connection

with his uncle, Helbo, he says, למדני <sup>24</sup> or המלמד להועיל

כאדם המלמד' (I Sam. 10:22); and even of God he says, ידריכני

... כך (II Sam. 22:35). Whenever he speaks of deriving

something from the Midrashim or the Talmud he uses the

expression שנינו <sup>25</sup> or כך שנויה <sup>26</sup> and so on.<sup>27</sup>

At times, Kara turns to the reader and instructs him in principles, demands of him an understanding of the נתיבות (I Sam. 1:20), which are also המקרא (I Sam. 3:3), or cautions him to be careful: to adhere to the best explanation and withdraw from mistaken glosses. When he quotes ויתעללו (Jud. 19:25) he distinguishes between clear and faltering speech and formulates a general principle:

ומסורת זה תפוס בידך אם תמצא תי"ו, באמצע התיבה... דע  
שהוא לשון לעג ואם אין בו תי"ו... דע שהוא לשון מעשה.

Or in another formulation, (Jud. 5:30): a

student must learn to put a given principle into practice elsewhere, as he says explicitly in a number of places:

ובמקצת (Josh. 10:21), or ויסיף לקח

ומכאן תלמד בכל המקומות (Josh. 15:19), or שפרשתי תבין את רובם (I Sam. 7:10), or ...וכן בכל מקום שתמצא (Josh. 15:2-3; Isa. 5:11).

On several occasions Kara reiterates that comprehension of the language and style of Scripture on the part of the reader is a precondition to the understanding of the written word.

He does this twice in general terms, as in ויש מקומות הרבה שקיצרו הכתובים את לשונם ולא ביחנו את דבריהם באר היטב וסמכו על (Josh. 10:21; Isa. 5:11),

and twice in a direct appeal to the reader: ורצונך לידע

ולעמוד על סוף הדבר ועל עיקרו כוף את עצמך והבן בלשון

When he explains the boundaries of the tribe of

Benjamin, ויצא הגבול ימה (Josh. 18:15), he appeals to the

reader in interesting terms:

אי אפשר שימה זה ים הגדול... אלא על כורחך ים זה ים אחר  
שעמד בין... ודע שכן הוא שאף בגבול יהודה... מונה כל  
המקומות המנויין כאן... למדתה ממה שכתוב... שים אחד  
עומד בין שניהם וגין בדבר ושים לבך... שכשתדקק בדבר  
תמצא מקומות הרבה...

He demonstrates that only one possibility exists here,

supporting his position with a glance at another instance,

and then uses the word למדתה (you have deduced) to demand of

the student that he thoroughly consider the point and then

prove to himself the correctness of the interpretation by

examining additional cases. There are instances where Kara

actually warns the reader: כל תיבה ותיבה שבפרשה זו השמר לך

(not a word of this

passage should be put into the past tense). At the conclusion

of an explanation he may say, ומפתרון זה על תט ימין ושמאל (I

Sam. 11:3; Isa. 11:11), or ...אל יהא לב אדם מגמגם על פתרון זה (I

Kings 6:34).

Somewhat different in nature are those appeals which warn against an incorrect or an erroneous explanation, for in these instances he speaks in unequivocal terms which leave no room for ambiguity. We shall begin with examples in which the appeal is made in a delicate manner. Following an explanation he adds, כך שמעתי (Jud. 3:26; Isa. 22:24). Elsewhere he offers two explanations and points out עיקר<sup>30</sup> ופתרון ראשון thereby indicating his own preference; or after citing a midrash he says, יב.איפשר כך אתמהא אלא זה

וראיתי בפתרונים אחרים ש... ולא ישר. More bluntly, he says, פתרונות רבות ראיתי למקרא זה ואינן (Jud. 6:26), or בעיני (Isa. 16:1). These are direct but not as yet critical rejections, and the same is true for this example: ואל ישיאך שום אדם שתפתור צופים ממשפחת צוף (I Sam. 1:1), or ראיתי בפתרונני הפותרים... ואין הדבר מתיישב על אופניו (Jer. 8:23). In rejecting a wrong view of the ambiguous passage on the death of Gideon's brothers at Tabor his manner is aggressive: כך פותרין רוב העולם, ופתרון זה לאבן נגף ולצור: מכשול לכל שומעיו (Jud. 8:18). He may offer a warning in advance: כאן השמר לך פן תנקש אחרי הסומים הפותרים... ונמצאו עוקרין בפתרון תיבה זה כל הפרשה... בדבר זה תוכל לדחות המציקים לך...<sup>32</sup>; or he may conclude by rejecting a mistaken explanation. Thus he explains that י in the word יזעק (Isa. 15:5) is a root letter; warns us, with examples from other commentators, against a different explanation; and adds: אך (Isa. 18:6) and nearby לא הדומה שדימו ולא הפתרון כאשר יזמו he writes on another topic, אבל הפותרים טועים הם. Again, he may say warningly, לבן אל יפנה ורעה אליך לא תאונה (Isa. 1:18). Elsewhere his language is much more blunt:

הישרה לכל שתורת אלקיו בקרבו ומהפך דברי אלקים חיים ומטעה כל  
ישראל אחריו בפתרונו.<sup>33</sup> It is Rashi whom he has in mind  
here, although he does not name him.

Let us look at some other places where he is persuaded of  
the justness of his own interpretation. In general he uses a  
fixed phrase, ואמר אני,<sup>34</sup> while on several occasions he is  
even more emphatic: ואני יוסף בר שמעון אומר לי ליבי,<sup>35</sup> or  
ואני המפרש יוסף בר' שמעון אומר.<sup>36</sup> In another instance he  
goes even further when after he has given a פשוט explanation  
he rejects a midrash from the Sages and quotes Proverbs  
22:17: וכן שלמה אמר: הט אזנך לדברי חכמים ולבך תשית לדעתי:  
דברי (Isa. 5:9). Here he identifies דברי חכמים  
with what the Sages say, while דעתי means his own  
opinion within his פשוט commentary.

In defending his interpretation he speaks in these terms:  
וידוע אני שיליזו על פתרון זה כל בעלי אגדה ותלמוד שלא יניחו מה  
שפתרו רבותינו בראש השנה ובכמה מסכתות וילכו אחרי פתר' אך  
(I Sam. המשכילים ישכילו לנתיבות הקריה להעמיד דבר על האמת  
כך פתרתי אחר הילוך המקראות, Elsewhere we read, 1:20).  
At the same time, he does occasionally employ an  
expression indicating doubt whenever he is not sure of the  
explanation, as in ופתרון זה אני מפקפק אם האמת עמו והנדרש  
גם בדבר זה,<sup>37</sup> לשואלין יישר לפני דרכו להעמידני על האמת  
איני,<sup>38</sup> Sometimes he says, זה אין לברר הנכוחה זולת אלקינו  
כמדומה שזה or ... יכול לעמוד על בירורו אך דומה ש  
כמדומה שזו היא... ובשני הלשונות הללו אני or ...  
כמדומה שזו היא... or ... יש גמגום בדבר or ...

In one place (Isa. 63:19), Kara gives us his own gloss  
first and then a second one from R. Yitzhak bar R. Asher,

saying of the latter, ובראשון שגיתי, thus actually acknowledging that his own explanation is erroneous. When he is completely in the dark he does not hesitate to say so, as in ואשר דברו אמת ישים מחשך לאור ומעקשים למישור<sup>44</sup> or המלמד להועיל ידריכני נתיבות לא ידעתי במקרא זה שאיני יודע פשר זה לא הייתי יודע<sup>45</sup> In one instance we find, אלא שדברי הימים מלמדני פתרונו (II Sam. 7:23).<sup>46</sup> Twice he not only admits that he is at a loss but appeals to the reader to find a solution to the mystery. In Jeremiah 28:1 he attempts to determine in which year of Zedekiah's reign occurred the contest with Hananiah the son of Azzur, and since he can provide only a partial explanation he says, ואיני כותב פתרון זה כדי שיסמוך איש עליו שרפה הוא בידי והנא אחרי לתקן יתקן ויטול שכר. In Ezekiel 22:5, after admitting that he is unable to supply a gloss, he requests that מי שיוזע פתרונו כל זה הפסוק יורני פתרונו של זה.

## 2. Textual Embellishment

One of the most distinctive qualities of Kara's commentary is his extensive use of Scriptural verses. Into a continuous discussion he weaves fragments of verses, short (one or two words) or long (four to six words), which then become an integral part of the commentary without which the subject cannot be understood. Only someone who is an expert in the Bible could identify them all without difficulty, for the commentary is saturated with verses from everywhere in Scripture. Let us look at some typical examples, since it must be noted that some expressions appear on fixed occasions while others are simply interwoven into his gloss to become a



finished mosaic.

In the event that he does not know which of the various explanations which he offers is the correct one, or is completely at a loss as to the meaning of a verse, he quotes from Isaiah 42:16, ואשר דברו אמת ישים מחשך לאור ומעקשים למישור (Josh. 17:5). Elsewhere he prefers another appellation for God: ואור ישראל ישים מחשך לאור ומעקשים למישור (Jud. 8:18), while we also find המאיר לארץ ישים מחשך (I Sam. 9:9). Alternatively, he employs one of the following phrases:

a. והנדרש לשואלין יישר לפני דרכו להעמידני על האמת (I Sam. 13:21), which comes from Psalm 5:9, הישר לפני דרכך.

b. נעו מעגלותיה של פרשה זו ולא תדע (I Sam. 1:17); from Proverbs 5:6, נעו מעגלותיה ולא תדע.

c. אין לברר הנכחה זולת אלקינו (Josh. 9:4; cf. I Kings 8:8; Zech. 14:5); the word נכחה appears in Amos 3:10 and Isaiah 59:14.

d. המלמד להועיל ידריכני נתיבות לא ידעתי (I Sam. 10:22), a phrase combining fragments from Isaiah 48, v. 17, 'אני ה' בנתיבות לא ידעתי אדריכם, and v. 16, אלקיך מלמדך להועיל.

When he charges ומפתרון זה אל תט ימין ושמאל (I Sam. 1:3), this is a quotation from Proverbs 4:27, אל תט ימין ושמאל, while ופתרון זה לאבן נגף ולצור מכשול (Jud. 8:18) comes from Isaiah 8:14, and כאן השמר לך פן תנקש אחרי (I Sam. 10:17) is taken from Deuteronomy 12:30. In an adjuration to those who are inclined to follow the Midrash (I Sam. 1:17), he says, דומה לזה ששטפתו שבולת הנהר, a reference to Isaiah 27:12 and Psalms 69:15, 16. On the same subject he points out that the purpose of the Midrash is להגדיל תורה ויאדיר, in a phrase from Isaiah 42:21.

If a student of Kara's adopts a plausible but mistaken explanation, he writes, *אם אתה אומר כן נוקשת באמרי פ"ך* (Josh. 10:21; see Proverbs 6:2), or *שיחתה את בעצמך את דבריך* (Josh. 9:4), in which *שיחתה* comes from Exodus 12:26, in connection with the putting out of a slave's eye by his master. When he wishes a student to continue in the line he has laid down for him he says, *ובמקום שפירשתי ישמע חכם ויוסף לקח* (Josh. 10:21), in a phrase taken from Proverbs 1:5.

Up to this point we have looked at instances of various contingencies in which Kara uses fixed expressions. We shall now offer a short list of cases where he works citations from the Bible into his commentary to impart dignity to his text and make it more eloquent:

i. *אין לי מעצור להושיע ברב או במעט* (Jud. 6:16) - a resounding declaration from I Samuel 14:6.

ii. *שאמרו אבותינו אין רצוננו לצאת על ידיכם אם לא יוסיף* (I Sam. 12:5); a striking phrase from Numbers 22:15.

iii. *כך סמוכים לעולם ונפתרים באמת ויושר* (I Sam. 12:20-21; Isa. 1:18), from Psalm 111:8, *סמוכים לעד לעולם עשויים באמת, ויושר*.

iv. *בנוהג שנעולם כשישא גוי אל גוי חרב* (I Sam. 14:16; Hos. 2:20), from Isaiah 2:4.

v. *הלא משפט האיש המתחתן במלך שירבו עליו מאד מהר ומתן* (I Sam. 18:23), from Genesis 34:12, *הרבו אלי מאד מהר ומתן*.

vi. *כל אחד ואחד סבור לומר שאבא... והיה כל מוצאי יהרגני* (II Sam. 14:32), from Genesis 4:14, *והיה כל מוצאי יהרגני*.

vii. *בשעה שהשמש יוצא בגבורתו* (II Sam. 23:6-7), from Judges 5:31, *כצאת השמש בגבורתו*.

viii. כמו כן יהיו עמים משרפות שיד קוצים כסוחים באש יצתו (II Sam. 23:6-7), from Isaiah 33:12.

ix. צריך לבנותו בעת חום צח עלי אור ולא מעונן (I Kings 6:1), from Isaiah 18:4, כחם צח עלי אור.

x. לא ערך אלי מלים ואף על פי כן הרימותי ידי אל ה' שלא... (I Kings 7:33): this remark is made up of phrases from Job 32:14, הרימותי ידי אל, ולא ערך אלי מילין, and Genesis 14:22, ה.

xi. אתם פוסחים על שתי הסעיפים (I Kings 8:8), from I Kings 18:21, ולא יפסח על שתי הסעיפים.

xii. קרא בקול גדול כי אלהים הוא (Jer. 11:13), from I Kings 18:27.

xiii. ואף אתה הקהה את שיניו והשיב לו (Jer. 23:33): this comes from the reply made to the wicked son in the Haggada: ואף אתה הקהה את שיניו ואמור לו.

xiv. הוציאו כל שמן וכל איש חיל (Jer. 50:26), from Judges 3:29.

xv. ויחתרו השיטים אותה להשיבה אל היבשה ולא יכולו (Ezek. 27:26), from Jonah 1:13.

All these are examples of the wide range of words, phrases and verse fragments which Kara knew by heart and used to embellish his commentary.

### 3. Stylistic Qualities

One characteristic which we shall note is the great variety in Kara's phras.eology when he employs the vernacular or cites something from the Targum, from other commentators, or even from the Bible itself. As against the practice of some of the mediaeval commentators, he does not use set phrases or

recurrent expressions, and his style is suggestive of a teacher standing before his pupils without an organized lesson, but with a strong urge to express his ideas. It is characteristic of him, as we have seen above, that even when he uses the same expression he changes it somewhat and never repeats himself exactly.

Another stylistic trait which is in fact a function of his exegetical method is the creation of a running commentary between one verse and another so that the whole is like a continuous interpretative composition which is not constantly interrupted by introductory remarks. He generally employs similar phrases to connect the verses, or converts the new *דבור המתחיל* (introductory words) of the next verse to some part of the comment upon the foregoing verse, such as the conclusion (Jud. 2:20; II Sam. 4:2-8) or - where there is no connection - into part of the ongoing topic (Jud. 13:8; Isa. 1:4, 25). The terms which he deploys near each *דבור המתחיל* to convert it into a part of the total explanation, without being separated from earlier remarks, are *לכך נאמר* (Jud. 18:7; Jer. 2:6), *הה"ד* (in the same way: Jud. 11:8-9; Jer. 4:9), *ואחר*<sup>47</sup> (Josh. 17:15; Isa. 2:22), *למעלה פירש לך*... *ועכשיו מפרש לך*... *ומפרש והולך*<sup>47</sup>, *כך* (Josh. 16:6; Isa. 30:19; Jer. 3:18), *כמו שמפרש והולך*<sup>48</sup> and *לפיכך*<sup>49</sup>.

The terms in which Kara introduces his comments upon the text constitute a further characteristic of his style. He seldom uses the word *פירוש* in the sense of explanation, clarification or solution; in his work, the root *פר"ש* most commonly signifies a citation. When he quotes another verse,

הרי פירשתי לך <sup>א</sup>, פירש לך (Josh. 15:2-3), פירש (Josh. 15:4, 5, 12), or מפרש והולך (Josh. 18:11; Isa. 37:31). When he cites another commentator, we find <sup>ב</sup>ופירש דונש (Jud. 5:21; Ezek. 21:20), or פירש יונתן בתרגומו (Josh. 10:21; Isa. 25:10), while he says of Helbo, היה מפרשו (I Kings 1:37; Isa. 1:8). Citations from the Talmud are introduced with מפרש (I Sam. 10:22; Hos. 5:2) or רבותינו פרשו (I Sam. 21:7; Hos. 7:5), and from the Midrash with במדרש (I Sam. 17:55; Isa. 7:8). On the very rare occasions on which the root פ"ר is used to connote explanation, it invariably appears in the past tense: פשוטו של דבר כמו שפירשתי (I Sam. 1:22; Isa. 4:6), שכבר פירשתינו בספר שופטים, כמו (II Sam. 7:23) or כמו שפירשתי במקומות הרבה <sup>א</sup>, פירשתי (I Kings 9:23). Frequently Kara makes use of the expression כלומר <sup>א</sup>, usually in order to introduce an explanation or broader clarification of an interpretation already given. For example, in I Samuel 14:33-34, which begins with כמו במקום זה... שפתר' במקום זה, he says, כלומר. It appears that he regarded כלומר as equivalent to דהיינו (that is to say, meaning), whenever he did not wish to use the word פתרון.

An exceptional and interesting case is presented by the word פשר in מלמדני in פשר זה לא הייתי יודע אלא שדבה"י מלמדני in פשר here. In Scripture it can be found in Ecclesiastes 8:1, מי כהתכם ומי, while in the Aramaic of the Book of Daniel (5:15) it appears with the common signification of the interpretation of dreams and riddles; Ibn Janach thinks that there it is simply an inversion of the letters פ"ש <sup>א</sup>.

Another anomaly is presented by the word יסוד in the sense of 'explanation', but generally speaking this is found only in connection with liturgical poems.<sup>56</sup>

Overall, then, Kara prefers the root פת"ר to the root פ"ר, and the word פתרון seems to him broader and more profound than פרוש. M. Bannitte<sup>57</sup> suggests that the professionals who were known as פותרים (interpreters) had the individual title of קרא, and that their commentaries were written down in books known as ספרי הפתרונות. Rashi attests as much in his note on Ezekiel 21:18, while Kara says on Jeremiah 8:23, ראייתי בפתרונני הפותרים. (A topic of particular interest is the פתרונני הקראים, as Kara calls them in Isaiah 23:13. In Ezekiel 47:19 Rashi speaks of the קראים טועים.) Similarly, Kara refers to his uncle's commentary as פתרוני הרמב"ח (I Kings 16:9), and mentions Rashi in the same terms (I Kings 2:5). This is the reason why he so constantly employs the root פת"ר and the word פתרון, which differs from פרוש inasmuch as the latter deals more with the general meaning of a verse. It does not draw upon the books of לעזים (vernacular terms) which were available to the פותרים, and which were an important instrument in explaining the texts to French-speaking students.<sup>58</sup> Thus Kara uses פת"ר for all his explanations, and also when he quotes from others, as in the following cases: Targum Jonathan;<sup>59</sup> פתר בו דונש (II Sam. 13:20; Isa. 19:7); פתרוני רבנא שלמה<sup>60</sup>; פתרוני הרמב"ח<sup>61</sup> and so on.<sup>62</sup> He glosses terms from other languages with פתרונם (I Kings 1:5; Ezek. 11:11). His most common expressions are פתרונו (Josh. 9:8; Isa. 17:11), or the shortened פתר<sup>63</sup> or פתרון (Josh. 13:13; Ezek. 11:1), while

we often find פתרון ופשוטו (I Sam. 10:7; Isa. 17:11), זה פתרון (Josh. 13:7; Jer. 46:12), פתרון (Jud. 5:24; Hos. 2:7), תפתור,<sup>64</sup> or פתתי (II Sam. 21:4; Isa. 51:9).

Citations from others are glossed with הפותרים,<sup>65</sup> רבותינו פותרים,<sup>66</sup> or יש פותרים.<sup>67</sup> It is worth noting that the root פת"ר appears in the Bible only in the story of Joseph,<sup>68</sup> in the sense of imparting meaning to a dream, while פר"ש occurs more frequently in various Biblical books and denotes 'explanation' (Lev. 24:12; Num. 15:34; Neh. 8:8).

The term יש"ב (solution, resolution, explanation), as applied to verses from the Bible, has been dealt with at length by Glass and Kamin.<sup>69</sup> Glass provides an extensive survey of the development in the use of the root יש"ב and its adoption by Rashi. In his opinion, it expresses the general idea of solving a problem in the text. Sarah Kamin notes that יש"ב appears more widely in Rashi's works than the term פשוטו, and that the tenor of the root is to create 'commentary having internal unity and an intellectual continuity appropriate to the language of the text as a syntactical and conceptual unit'. As we have noted above, in the chapter dealing with פשט and דרש, investigation of the places where Kara uses יש"ב makes it clear that these remarks also apply to him, despite the fact that in contradistinction to Rashi, who employs it dozens of times (in the Early Prophets alone some 60 times), יש"ב occurs in Kara a total of only eight times. In Jeremiah 8:23, having rejected another explanation, he writes, ואין הדבר מתיישב על אופניו כלל כל, עיקר לפי פשוטו של מקרא... על כן נתתי את ליבי ליישב המקראות על ומדרש זה (compare Judges 5:4); or we read,

מיושב הוא על המקרא (II Samuel 24:15; cf. I Sam. 17:55 and II Sam. 12:30, where he rejects the Midrash), or פשוטו של מקרא (II Sam. 1:14; 24:1; Jer. 50:6).

Up to this point we have reviewed the exegetical terms used by Kara and the methodology which underlies his style. As we proceed we shall frequently refer back to this subject when we discuss the language he employs in connection with different topics.<sup>70</sup>

## II. Biblical Citations

Kara draws upon Biblical verses for a great variety of reasons. There is no particular system in his deployment of quotations, but the very extensive use he makes of them itself represents a distinguishing characteristic of his commentary. He hardly discusses a single chapter without the use of several quotations, whether from the same chapter or from other books of the Bible. The language with which he introduces such quotations (which he calls מקראות<sup>71</sup>) is equally varied. The most widespread forms are the words כמו (Josh. 8:13; Jer. 2:33) and כהו<sup>72</sup>, but he uses many additional forms.<sup>73</sup> I note below some of his principal usages for citing verses, together with one or two examples for clarification. His extensive resort to quotation makes it clear that his expertise in the Bible was greater than might be supposed at first glance, even if at times he quotes incorrectly.



# 1. Citations in Connection with Grammar

Most of the relevant verses have already been cited in our discussion of grammar, although of course the context there is different. Generally speaking and with few exceptions, Kara offers examples to clarify his grammatical principles and explanations of particular forms. When he says המשמשות (Jud. 14:9; Isa. 10:33; Job 11:6) he provides the illustration

כמו ושרשיך מארץ חיים (תהילים נ"ב 7) שפתרון ויעקרב  
וְבוֹ בִלְשׁוֹן הוּא אוֹמֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל יַעֲקֹב (ישע' כ"ז 6).<sup>74</sup>  
Elsewhere (Jud. 15:4) he explains the difference in meaning  
between the הַפְעִיל (causative) conjugations (וַיִּפְּן /  
(וַיִּפְּן) and illustrates each form with many examples from  
Exodus, Samuel, Kings and Lamentations. When explaining the  
meaning of a word or a special form he always provides at  
least one example. For instance, he explains that צוֹדָה (I  
Sam. 24:11) connotes ambush and not hunting (ציד), and cites  
examples to prove his thesis:

כמו לצוד ציד להביא (בר' כ"ז 5) והוא הצד ציד (שם 33)  
ואשר יצוד ציד חיה (ויק' י"ז 13) ידע ציד איש שדה (בר'  
כ"ה 27) אבל כל מקום שכתב בו ה' לשון אורב הוא כמו ואשר  
לא צדה (שם' כ"א 13).

In other instances he supplies a quotation to show that the  
verb in question is in fact known to us from other passages.  
In such cases he uses the word מגזרת (derivative), as in Jud.  
6:38:

ואני אומר ויזר מגזרת ויזר על פני המים (שם' ל"ב 20),  
ואתכם אזרה בגויים (ויק' כ"ו 33).

It can be said that in most instances in which Kara must  
gloss a verb in some conjugated form,<sup>75</sup> or a noun, he  
juxtaposes at least one example from another source to assist  
in proving his argument, and this is also his practice in  
connection with any unusual feature.

## 2. Embellishments

I have no intention of repeating here what is said in the section on Kara's style, but wish rather to point out again that, like other members of his generation, he so works Biblical verses into the fabric of his commentary that one cannot distinguish quotation from comment, an achievement made possible by his great expertise and the beauty of his own language. Sometimes he repeats a particular verse when situations recur (as when he is not certain of a gloss), or in any other place where verse fragments may embellish his text.

## 3. Parallel Citations from Chronicles to Resolve Contradictions

This topic too is discussed at more length elsewhere, but it should be mentioned here for its relevance to the present context. On occasion Kara sets the reading found in the Early Prophets against that in Chronicles in order to supply further information, point out differences or resolve contradictions. The issue is stated in a single word, or even in whole verses, and then he generally says, <sup>76</sup>וְדִנָּה"י כְּתוּב, and quotes the pertinent passage. Such quotations are also to be found when he explains a contradiction within the Early Prophets themselves; for example, the question of the conquest of Jerusalem.<sup>77</sup>

#### 4. Legal Rulings

Legal rulings are cited when they may help to make a point clear. The corpse of the king of Ai was taken down from the tree, says Kara, משום שלא תטמא את אדמתך.<sup>78</sup> He cites the law in Deuteronomy which states that a corpse must not be left hanging, but interred the same day; and in this way he explains Joshua's action. Elsewhere he explains how Joshua erred by making a peace treaty with the Gibeonites, and thereby transgressed an explicit adjuration, ועובר על מה On the same issue, we are told that כן תעשה לכל הערים הרחוקות ממך מאד (Deut. 20:14). Since the Gibeonites had professedly come from a distant land, this commandment ought to have applied to them (Josh. 9:7). Kara also quotes the gloss which the children of Israel supply to their own question, אולי בקרבי אתה יושב, which reads,

מאותם שכת' בהן לא תכרות להם ברית ולא תחנם  
לא ישבו בארצך וגו' [Exod. 23:33].  
On Solomon's multiplying of horses he says, ועבר על מה שכתוב, With regard to the fact that the horses were imported from Egypt he states, בתורה לא ירבה לו סוסים ועבר על לא תוסיפון, Other examples may also be found.<sup>79</sup>

#### 5. 'To Fulfil That Which Was Said' (לקיים מה שנאמר)

When Kara quotes verses which represent the fulfilment of promises or the coming to pass of things which it had been said God would perform, his usual expression is לקיים מה שנאמר. When we are told that Joshua left Ai לתל עולם, Kara writes, לקיים מה שנאמר ועשית לעי ולמלכה כאשר עשית ליריחו, (Josh. 8:28). Near the conclusion of the Book of Joshua it says, ולא עמד איש בפניהם, (Josh. 21:42), and Kara

adds, לקיים מה שנ' לא יתייצב איש בפניכם. So also when he explains the heritage of the tribe of Simeon, of which we are told ויהי נחלתם בתוך נחלת בני יהודה (Josh. 19:1). These are the terms in which Kara comments: לקיים מה שנאמר אחלקם ביעקב (Gen. 49:7). On another occasion, Caleb makes a request of Joshua and concludes, אולי ה' אותי והורשתי (Josh. 14:12), and Kara puts further words into Caleb's mouth, ונתקיים בי המקרא שכת' ויהי ה' את יהודה ויורש את ההר. Here, however, it is a quotation from a later text, Judges 1:10, which comes to the aid of an earlier verse.

At the conclusion of the war with the Kings of the South (Josh. 10:24), when Joshua orders the officers of his army to place their feet on the necks of the kings, Kara explains his reason: לקיים מה שנאמר ואתה על נמותימו תדרוך (Deut. 33:29). When Isaiah speaks of the capture of Ashdod by the king of Assyria (Isa. 20:1), Kara adds that we are also told at this point of the defeat of Ammon and Moab, which had joined with Assyria in the conquest of Samaria, in order לקיים מה שנאמר... ונקלה כבוד מואב (Isa. 16:14). Many other instances might be cited.<sup>23</sup> It may be seen that the quotation is not adduced as a necessary element in the commentary as such; its purpose is rather to demonstrate the importance of faith and the truth of Scripture.

## 6. Quoting for Miscellaneous Reasons

Quite frequently Kara cites verses in order to provide further relevant details. When the land was divided up we are told that Manasseh received ten shares (Josh. 17:5). Kara explains how and why these were apportioned, and in order to clarify the issue lists the names of the various families

which belonged to the tribe (Num. 26:29-32). He does the same for the tribe of Levi (Josh. 21:5). Elsewhere, when it is said of Joshua that לא הסיר דבר מכל אשר ציוה ה' את משה (Josh. 11:15), Kara writes, באותו לשון שהזהירו הקב"ה בתחילת הספר... These and many other such additions are characteristic of his exegetical method inasmuch as they clarify the commentary and help to generate its continuity.

At times Kara fetches a verse from a remote place in order to explain a difficult text (Josh. 10:10), or supplements a brief passage with material from elsewhere. At the end of Joshua's battle against the Kings of the South, for example, we are told that לא חרץ לבני ישראל לאיש את לשונו (Josh. 10:21). In clarification, Kara quotes a complete verse from Exodus 11:7; and so in other instances (I Sam. 15:2). On a few isolated occasions he cites a verse in order to produce its Aramaic translation, as in Joshua 8:13: תרגומו ויתכמניה (Josh. 8:13). A phrase in the Song of Deborah, כמו ויעקבני (Gen. 27:33). A phrase in the Song of Deborah, מקול מחצצים, is explicated by a citation from Targum Jonathan followed by Targum Onkelos, שתרגם אונקלוס בעלי חיצים בעלי פלוגתא.<sup>4</sup>

## 7. Errors in Quotations

We have already observed that Kara quotes verses on a great variety of occasions and that such quotations are to be found in every chapter which he discusses. The quality of the citations ought now to be examined. Generally speaking he quotes with precision, but there are many exceptions which can be explained as due to a faulty memory. Some examples are presented in the table on the next page.

The Original Text

Kara's Citation

Mistakes in the introductory phrase

Jud. 11:40:	בנות ישראל	בנות שילה
I Sam. 1:5:	ולחנה יתן	ולחנה נתן
I Sam. 14:30:	אף כי לוא אכל אכל היום העם	אילו אכל העם היום <sup>55</sup>
Isa. 10:14:	ותמצא כקן ידי	ותמצא ידי
Isa. 16:1:	אל הר בת ציון	על הר בת ציון

Mistakes in one word

Josh. 17:15:	וברא אותהן (Ezek. 23:47)	וברא אותם
Jud. 5:13:	ורדו בדגת הים (Gen. 1:28)	וירדו בדגת הים <sup>56</sup>

Omission of one or more words

Josh. 10:13:	ונתנם ה' אלקיך לפניך (Deut. 7:23)	ונתנם ה' לפניכם
Josh. 14:4:	ערי ממלכות עוג (Josh. 13:31)	ממלכת עוג
Jud. 5:4:	עלי באר ענו לה באר חפרוה שרים (Num. 21:17, 18)	עלי באר חפרוה שרים
Jud. 5:13:	קדמה מזרח השמש על גבול כסלות תבור (Jos. 19:12)	קדמה על גבול כסלות תבור
Isa. 5:9:	הט אזנך ושמע דברי חכמים (Prov. 22:17)	הט אזנך לדברי חכמים
Jer. 2:33:	כי ייטיב אל אבי (I Sam. 20:13)	כי ייטיב אבי
Jer. 50:5:	נלכה הלוד לחלות (Zech. 8:21)	נלכה לחלות <sup>57</sup>

Conflation of two passages

I Kings 7:33:	ולא ערך אלי מילין (Job 32:14)	לא ערך אלי מילים ואף על פי
	הרימותי ידי אל ה' (Gen. 14:22)	כן הרימותי ידי אל ה'
Isa. 43:6:	וביד אדם אל אפלה (I Sam. 24:14)	אפלה נא ביד ה' ... וביד אדם
	אפלה נא ביד ה' (I Chron. 21:13)	אל אפלה

In two instances Kara simply reverses the order of the words in the verse, putting a later phrase first<sup>88</sup> or an earlier phrase last.<sup>89</sup> In three places he errs grossly by quoting verses which do not exist. I Samuel 6:6 the root על"ל is illustrated by לשון מעללים הוא כמו גנר ומעלליו, but no such phrase is to be found in the Bible. Similarly, in II Samuel 5:20 he offers what is alleged to be a quotation, כמו ותעל משאת העיר השמימה,<sup>90</sup> and in Ezekiel 33:21 he writes, כמה שנאמר ויבא הפליט לאמר חרבה ירושלים; but there are no such verses. Another anomaly occurs when he presents us with the wrong source for a quotation, for in Isaiah 16:4 he says ובדברי הימים, when the citation is actually from Nehemiah 13:2.

These, then, are some of the instances in which Kara is imprecise or even mistaken as to a quotation, but (as we have already noted) such errors result most probably from a faulty memory, and are certainly not the product of design. In principle we can state that he turns quotations from Scripture into an integral part of his commentary because of the assistance they provide in clarifying linguistic forms, presenting parallel texts, demonstrating the fulfilment of promises, and enriching his own text with resounding phrases; but that his preeminent knowledge of the Scriptures and great expertise are occasionally betrayed by a want of care.

### III. Use of Foreign Languages

#### 1. Introduction

M. Bannitte, who has studied the glossaries and vernacular expressions found in Biblical discussion in France during the Middle Ages, writes, 'In every instance where a rabbi of the Middle Ages who spoke one of the Romance languages relies on the vernacular to explain a Scriptural or Talmudic word or expression, he introduces it with the term בלע"ז (in the vernacular).'<sup>1</sup> According to the Talmud (Megillah 17a; Sotah 49b), לדבר בלשון נוכריה means לע"ז; and Rashi explains in connection with Psalm 114:1 that this refers to any language which is not the Holy Tongue. When Kara glosses the phrase עם נועז (Isa. 33:19) he says that when the Israelite exiles reached the various places of their dispersion they did not understand the vernacular spoken there, and so had להיות לועזים להם דברים מחזש (to produce foreign language lexicons). בלע"ז is customarily explained today as an abbreviation of בלשון עם זר.

At that period, ספרי פירונו were composed containing hundreds or even thousands of words which were vernacular equivalents of words from the Bible. Bannitte suggests<sup>2</sup> that the Jews who lived in northern France and the Rhine region translated the Scriptures into the local language, but that this translation was transmitted orally rather than in writing.<sup>3</sup> At any rate it is clear that rabbis and those who had to read out the weekly portion in synagogue possessed lists of vernacular equivalents for difficult words,<sup>4</sup> and that teachers used these lexicons when they instructed children in Scripture and Talmud. Rashi calls their compilers



הפותרים (Lev. 14:14) when he invokes their aid to clarify a word or a concept.

It should be kept in mind that a לע"ז is not always a precise rendition of the Hebrew word, but it does suggest its approximate sense within the total framework of the translation. Some of the לעזים used by Rashi take their origin from the work of Helbo, Kara being the intermediary between them. Helbo must be credited for the presence in Rashi's commentary of some Arabic words, which he had brought from Narbonne - from the house of Rabbi Yehuda, the heir of Rabbi Moshe הורשן - and of several provincial forms. Kara himself uses לעזים derived from Helbo, of whom Poznanski says, 'He was the first to use the vernacular in his interpretations in order to explain difficult and poorly understood words in the Holy Writings, and such foreign terms are to be found in him in profusion.'<sup>95</sup> Let us look at some of them, as they are recorded in the commentary of his nephew Kara:

<sup>96</sup> אדאייודימ"ט אל"ש בלע"ז: (Judges 2:15) ויושיעם

ורב' מנחם ב' ר' חלבו היה לועז... (Judges 6:2) את המנהרות  
המנהרות קבר"ש

ור' מנחם בר חלבו פירש מקולעות... (I Kings 6:18) ציצים  
פקעים... ולועזין טריצד

פתר' בלע"ז אדשואפרושמת, כלו' הסיר: (II Kings 16:14) ויקרב  
והרחיק... כך פירש ר' מנחם בר חלבו אחי אבא

These examples are from French; now for some from the  
language of אשכנז, namely German:

למדני ר' מנחם ב"ר חלבו... כלי: (I Sam. 13:21) ולשלוש קלשון  
<sup>97</sup> שקורין בלשון אשכנז נפלא

וקורין לו בלשון לע"ז (I Kings 6:9) גבים ושדרות בארזים  
צליז ובלשון אשכנז הימלין.<sup>98</sup>

There is a single reference to Arabic:

ברשן ובלשון ערבי קורין לאדם... (I Sam. 19:24) ויפול ערום  
שנטרפה דעתו ברשן.<sup>99</sup>

Thus Kara both passed on to Rashi some of the comments and  
he had learnt from Helbo, and inserted them into his  
own commentary.

## 2. Modes of Use: לע"ז

Kara uses לע"ז in a great variety of ways which we must now  
examine:<sup>100</sup>

a. The לע"ז as the sole gloss offered, without any further  
explanation: כובע; or מלטלנ"ט בלע"ז (I Sam. 1:15) קשת רוח  
הילמא בל"ע (I Sam. 17:5) נחושת.

b. A word of explanation with a לע"ז to accompany it, as  
in לכרי (II Kings 11:4) or בתרמילו בלע"ז שירפ"א (I Sam. 17:40) בילקוט  
קבוצת הגיבורים, ברנ"י בלע"ז... (I Sam. 17:40).

c. A לע"ז together with Targum Jonathan, as in חריצי חלב  
גבינין דחלב על שם שעוצרין... ובלע"ז פיושילא (I Sam. 17:8);  
וכן תרגם יונתן בחדא מתרתין... (18:21) בשתיים תתחתן בי  
or אנלא דובלירא בלע"ז כלומר בבתי השנית.

d. A לע"ז together with a Scriptural quotation: כי מרב  
שיחי מו"ן דקונפנ"ט בלע"ז כמו אשיחה ואהמה (I Sam. 1:16) שיחי  
(Psalms 55:18); or together with a Talmudic quotation: כי  
ובלע"ז כמהיי"ת כמו רואה... (I Sam. 16:1) ראיתי בבניו לי מלך  
וכמו לעות אדם בריבו ה' לא ראה (Rosh Hashana 2:8) אני את דברך  
שפתרונו לא חפץ (Lam. 3:36).

e. On occasion, two לע"ז from the same language: ויזורר

'מתח את זרועותיו ובלע"ז אשטנדילר ויש אומר: (II Kings 4:35) לועזין מגנא ויש אומרים: (25:1) דיק or; אשטרנידת כמו התעטט כי יער הוא from different languages: לעזים or two; פדריא ואף בלשון אשכנז, (French) ארוד לוי בל"ע...: (Josh. 17:18) וקורין לו בלשון...: (I Kings 6:9) גבים or...; קורין רוד"ן לשון כנען: (Hos. 10:7) קצף or; לע"ז צליד ובלשון אשכנז הימלין פרנ"א ובלע"ז אשקלומ"א.

The vast majority of Kara's vernacular terms are used to identify objects and provide terms for things from the various spheres of everyday life. For geography, see his comments on נפות צור (Josh. 11:2); גלילות (Josh. 22:11); המנהרות (Josh. 17:18); יער (Josh. 15:9). Agriculture: הגבול (Jud. 6:2); מזמרות (Jud. 9:14); האטד (Jud. 8:7); ברקנים (Isa. 2:4); שדמה (Isa. 37:27); גפן (Jer. 2:21). Clothes and ornaments: the fifteen different kinds mentioned by Isaiah in 3:18-23. are also cited for הנצב (Jud. 3:22); המסדרונה (Jud. 3:23); מלמד הבקר (Jud. 4:21); המקבת (Jud. 4:18); בשמיכה (Jud. 3:31); והנטיפות (Jud. 8:26); ברקתו (Jud. 4:21).

Other foreign terms are intended to explain grammatical points, as in יעמד לשון הווה ואין משמעו: (Josh. 18:5) יעמד זה: (Jud. 1:19) ויהי ה' עמו or; כאן להבא, יעמד בלע"ז אשטיי"ט פתרונו בזמן שהיה ה' את יהודה... ובאותו לשון כתב כאן... ודבר יס... זה שהוריש את ההר היה בשעה שה' עמו, טנט קומ פוד בלע"ז When we are told of Samson that יהוא יחל (Jud. 13:5), Kara explains that אי אפשר לומר ששמשון החל להושיע את ישראל... אלא והוא יחל פתרונו דבר זה שהוא נזיר ממעי אמו יגרום לו שהוא יחל יס... זה שהוריש את ההר היה בשעה שה' עמו, טנט קומ פוד בלע"ז On one occasion he goes so far as to warn the reader against an interpretation based upon an incorrect לע"ז. When Eli says to Hannah, אלקי ישראל,

כאן השמר לך פן... Kara explains (I Sam. 1:17) יתן את שלונך  
תנקש אחרי הסומים הפותרים יתן דוני"ר בל"ע בלשון בקשה ונמצאו  
עוקרין בפתרון ותיבה זה כל הפרשה... יתן לעתיד דונר"ד בל"ע ולא  
לשון בקשה...

Often we find Kara explaining whole phrases, or even the spirit of a passage, by means of vernacular terms. Here also we discover what is unique to Kara in his use of בל"ע: the fact that he may deploy entire phrases or clauses in French instead of offering equivalents for isolated words. Several examples are given below:

a. אדאו"ט חנה אנייריי"ד...: (I Sam. 1:20) ותהר חנה ותלד בן.  
אדנוו"ט פרטורי"ד פי"ל בלע"ז, כלומר כשהגיע לסוף שנה כבר נתעברה  
חנה וילדה בן.

b. ולא נתכנו, אדוונ"ט...: (II Sam. 2:3) ולא נתכנו עלילות.  
לוי שונ"ט אמנדיר"ש לש אוורש בלע"ז כלו' בידו לתקן את המעותים.

c. אך לשון מיעוט, וזה: (I Sam. 18:8) ועוד לו אך המלוכה.  
פתרונו אינו חסר עוד כי אם המלוכה... אנקורא כר אייד לא מלוכה  
שי אוורר טוט בלע"ז.

d. ובלע"ז איבריא דאלטר"א צוז"א פלו"ג: (Isa. 51:21) שכורת  
דווי"ן.

e. [To explain God's threat against the people in Hos.  
4:19] ולשון בני אדם לומר כן לחבירו כשסרח לו אומר לו ייט"ו:  
104. אילי"ד אינאו"ן דרפא"ל בלע"ז

### 3. Vernacular Languages Employed

Generally speaking French constitutes Kara's standard  
לשוננו (I Kings 6:9) לשוננו Rashi too refers to French once as בלע"ז;  
6:9). Nevertheless Kara also draws upon other languages.

אשכנז (German). In addition to the passages we have

already quoted from Helbo, we find כי יער הוא (Josh. 17:18):

וקורין לו: (Jud. 9:46) צריח; or בלשון אשכנז קורין רוד"ן...

בלשון אשכנז הגז and so on.<sup>105</sup>

(Jud. והנטיפות in a Slavic tongue). Found in לשון כנען

<sup>106</sup>בלשון כנען מינושט"ש והם עינקי הגרגרת: (8:26)

Arabic. Found in the passage quoted from Helbo, above, from I Samuel 19:24, and also in Isaiah 14:19: וכן בלשון ערב; and so in Ezekiel 39:18. שקורין למדוקר אלמוטען

Bannitte notes that the Rabbis customarily cited words even from languages they did not understand, as the result of 'a constant inclination towards anthologising and a strong verbal bent in educational practice.'<sup>107</sup> Since Kara lived his whole life in France it is reasonable to assume that he did not in fact know German, Slavic or Arabic, and that he wielded these foreign terms because he was an educator and a teacher.

In his commentary on Prophets he uses some 270 different foreign terms. Let us note the main characteristics of his usage.

a. The word בלע"ז is inserted before or (more commonly) after the foreign term.<sup>108</sup>

b. On occasion the word בל"ע appears before or after the foreign term.<sup>109</sup>

c. The forms בלשון אשכנז <sup>110</sup>וּבְלָשׁוֹן לַע"ז (Josh. 17:18; Jud. 9:46; Jer. 2:21) and the like (Jud. 8:26; I Sam. 19:24; Isa. 22:18) are very common.

d. The forms בְּתַר' בְּלָע"ז (I Sam. 1:20; II Kings 16:14; Ezek. 11:11) and יִיְלֻעֲזִין also appear.

e. At times the word שקורין precedes the foreign

term;<sup>112</sup> the name of the language is sometimes appended as well.<sup>113</sup>

f. The formulation *וְכִּי יִשְׁמַע* appears once, in II Sam. 13:26.

g. A foreign term is occasionally introduced without any opening or closing formula (Jud. 8:7; I Kings 6:15; Isa. 27:9; 34:11).

From this list we may draw the conclusion which we have reached in other contexts: that on the whole Kara avoids set formulations and, as befits a teacher, uses different and interchangeable expressions for the same thing.

In summary it can be stated that Kara frequently uses foreign terms to explain nouns or concepts from everyday life, and grammatical forms as well. Usually, as with any teacher of Scripture who is concerned to clarify points for his students, there is an accompanying explanation. Most of his foreign terms are drawn from French, but some also appear from other languages; and he uses all of them with the variety which he exhibits in all other matters. He differs from his contemporaries in offering the translation into French of complete sentences and not just isolated words.

#### IV. Biblical Style

Kara displays an inclination to define with precision what he calls נתיבות הקרייה (I Sam. 1:20), i.e. the rules which underlie the style of the Bible. He considers the reader under an obligation to know the methodology of Scriptural language so as to be able to understand the text: ורצונך לידע (I Samuel 3:3). ולעמוד על סוף הדבר ועל עיקרו כוף את עצמך והנך בלשון המקרא (I Samuel 3:3).

##### 1. Duplication of Words and Topics

When a word or phrase is repeated Kara does not regard this as superfluous information, but rather gives a reason for the occurrence. For example, in א-ל אלקים ה' א-ל אלקים ה' הוא יודע וישראל הוא ידע אם במרד ואם במעל ה' אל תושיענו היום הזה (Josh. 22:22) he asks

...ולמה נכפל כאן שני פעמים א-ל אלקים ה' זה פתר'...  
וכן במקום אחר כשעתיד לכפול שני דברים כופל שני תיבות  
לפניו כמו אנכי אנכי... (ישע' מ"ג 25)... אף כאן השם  
הוא יודע שלא במרד והשם הוא יודע שלא במעל.<sup>14</sup>

Of a different nature is the repetition of the word בנקר in

II Samuel 13:4, whose function, Kara holds, is to stress the daily routine: אינו אומר שהיה דל בנקר ולא כל היום אלא בכל בנקר. Different again are those instances where whole events are repeated. The comment on Jud. 13:12 states the rule clearly:

דע לך שבכל כ"ד ספרים שהכתוב שונה עליו וכופלו תמצא  
שמקצר הכתוב את דבריו או בפעם הראשון או בפעם שנית אם  
קיצר בפעם ראשון הוא חוזר ומלמד בפעם שנית מה שחיסר  
בראשונה כמו כאן שקיצר לו בתחילה את דבריו... ופעמים  
שהוא בא להאריך בראשונה כמו כאן שהוא אומר... ומקצר לו  
באחרונה... וכן במקומות הרבה.

[When in any Biblical book something is repeated, it is abridged either the first or the second time around; where it is briefly treated on the first occasion, it is discussed at





שדוד הוא אדוניהם אלא שדרך המקרא שמדבר אדם על עצמו כאילו מדבר מאחר כמו... אף כאן היה לו לומר קחו עמכם את עבדי ולא אמר אלא כ'י. עבדי אדוניכם [By 'your master' he meant himself, but it is a Scriptural rule that a person speaks of himself as if someone else were speaking.] Similarly we find instances in Isaiah where the prophet speaks of himself in the third person, like David, and Kara remarks, כאילו הוא מדבר על ידי. On another point, Kara speaks of the tradition possessed by the Sages that בלשון אחד (I Kings 22:7). In some of Jeremiah's addresses he mentions similar prophecies uttered by Ezekiel and says, ואף נבואה זו (Jer. 13:26). Commenting on Isa. 35:9, he adds, עולה לכמה וסגנון אחד עולה לכמה. נביאים.

He occasionally elaborates on the prophetic style, as when the prophet includes himself with the nation in a rebuke given in the name of God: כן דרך הנביאים להיות כוללים עצמם (Isa. 1:18). Where a prophet uses identical language for both a rebuke and the following consolation (Isa. 2:1, 4), or for both a condemnation of idols and a blessing from God (Jer. 10:8), or for the wars of two different nations (Jer. 50:41), Kara explains that he felt the subject matter of his prophecy within his very bones, and therefore spoke thus (Isa. 15:5; 21:3).

### 3. מקרא קצר

To describe the phenomenon of מקרא קצר (abbreviated phrases), Kara makes use of one of the following expressions: הרי זה מן (Jud. 6:26; II Sam. 24:1; I Kings 7:15, 20); ומקרא קצר הוא זה (Josh. 22:34); המקראות הקצרים (I Kings 22:24; II Kings 20:9); תפש לו המקרא לשון קצר (I Sam. 9:27); מקצרי (I Sam. 14:6; 24:10; 26:10; Jer. 38:5); or קצורי מקראות (Ezek. 30:6; 34:30; Hos. 1:9).

In Joshua 10:21 he uses the phrase לא חרץ לבני ישראל לאיש to explain מקרא קצר briefly:

ולא חרץ כלב את לשונו כמו ולכל בני ישראל לא יחרץ כלב  
לשונו (שם' י"א 7) ויש מקומות הרבה שקיצרו הכתובים את  
לשונם ולא ביחנו את דבריהם באר היטב וסמכו על אנשי לב  
הקוראים בהם שיבינו הדבר כמו... יב'

[The word 'dog' is understood (see Exod. 11:7), and there are many instances wherein verses are shortened and rely on the good sense of the readers.] In this verse Kara adds the missing word on the basis of the similar expression in Exodus, although usually it is context or logic which complete a phrase, as in אשר שם לו בדרך (I Sam. 15:2; cf. Jer. 38:5; Hos. 1:9), where Kara explains פת' אשר שם לו אורב גב' בדרך כמו... והרבה מקראות שצריכים להוסיף תיבה כיוצא בו פתר' ותחס (I Sam. 24:10) that ותחס עליך He says of the phrase עיני עליך וזהו מן המקראות הנקראות קצרי כתוב שידע בהן הכתוב שמעצמך אתה למד ולא טרח לכותבן כמו... וכן רבים On occasion he simply supplies the missing word without noting that it is an instance of מקרא קצר, as in ויקח ישי חמור לחם (I Sam. 16:20), which must mean חמור טעון לחם, or ותכל דוד המלך (II Sam. 13:39), where ותכל נפש דוד המלך (cf. II Sam. 21:16; II Kings 20:9).

There are many places where he passes such incompleteness

over without remark. For example, Joshua 21:10 states ויהי (cf. 16:8; 13:5, etc.). I do not think that his failure to grapple with these instances is indicative of any lack of consistency on his part, since he declares on more than one occasion that this feature is to be found in numerous places and that one must rely on the good sense of the reader. He therefore takes notice only of those occurrences which seem likely to cause difficulty or be a stumbling block to the reader. There is no suggestion of textual criticism in his approach, as he himself says: שידע בהן הכתוב שמעצמך אתה למד ולא טרח לכותבן (I Sam. 24:10; Ezek. 34:30).

Rashi describes the phenomenon of מקרא קצר in similar terms. From a total of fifteen observations by Kara on this subject we find in Rashi only five. Some of these are formulated in identical language (Josh. 22:34; I Kings 22:24; II Kings 20:9), while others have a different wording (I Kings 7:15, 20).

#### 4. מקרא מסורס

On only five occasions does Kara note the occurrence of a מקרא מסורס (reversed phrase) by name. He refers to it thus: 'מקרא מסורס הוא זה וזה פתרוןו'.<sup>123</sup> After pointing out the problem of the defective syntactical sequence he proposes the correct order. We may add that Rashi deals with this issue in only two instances (I Kings 7:18; Ezek. 22:3), and that Kara several times confronts the problem without naming it (I Sam. 3:3; 20:29; II Sam. 17:3).

## 5. תמיהה The Expression

In a number of places Kara adds the word בתמיהה or תמיהה (in amazement) after the introductory phrase of a verse to indicate that it is a question; sometimes he also formulates the question or explains it:

124. (I Sam. 10:11) "הגם שאול בנביאים" בתמיהה

125. (I Sam. 14:43) "הנני אמות" בתמיהה, כלומר 'בשביל שטעמתי מעט דבש אמות בתמיהה

Jeremiah 31:19 asks, והבן יקיר לי אפרים אם ילד שעשועים, and Kara explains at length the verse itself and the issue of rhetorical questions: מקרא תימה הוא זה. שהוא תימה שבתחילת המקרא הוא אומר הבן יקיר לי אפרים והה"א ננקדת בחתך פתח ואחריו הוא אומר אם ילד שעשועים, בדרך כלל הדברים התמיהים כמו... וכן כל תיבה שתחילתה ה' ובאה עליה תיבת אם, דע לך שהיא תמיהה

[When a word begins with ה and is followed by אם, know that it is an expression of astonishment.] Kara wishes to clarify for the reader what kind of sentence he is faced with, since verses of this type might be understood as declaratory or imperative. To avoid any misunderstanding of the subject matter, he adds the word בתמיהה, without further explanation (Jer. 49:8; Mal. 3:8; etc.).

## 6. משל and Simile

In his Mavo Lamikra (I:1:81, pp. 56-57), M. Segal distinguishes among (1) משלה, 'a series of stories which combine into a complete picture' (2) המשל הסיפורי, 'which is always accompanied by the נמשל (moral). The משל belongs to the comparative aspect of an image', and (3) דימוי straight (image, simile), 'which expresses only the resemblance in

quality or action between the two things compared' (sect. 73, p. 52). Kara does not distinguish between משל and ודימוי, but employs both expressions for all three of Segal's concepts. We shall look at several examples. In Jotham's parable of the trees (Jud. 9:9), Kara says, לא שהלכו העצים למשוך עליהם, In Joash's parable to Amaziah of Judah (II Kings 14:9) he explains what the משל is and what the נמשל and sums up: אף כאן אתה בא. The parable wielded by Isaiah to arouse Hezekiah of Judah against the king of Assyria is defined by Kara as מליצת המשל (Isa. 37:24), and he uses the same terms in speaking of similes. In Hosea 5:10 we find the phrase היו שרי יהודה כמשיגי גבול. This is a comparison, pure and simple, and Kara says, משל זה ממשל על, Similarly, in Isaiah 1:8, in the string of similes about Jerusalem, כסוכה בכרם כמלונה במקשה כעיר נצורה, he explains, וכל זאת משל ודימוי על ירושלים. הם משולים לכרם. כי בערה, With regard to another simile, ומקום ציון דימה לסוכה (Isa. 9:17) he writes, משל ודימוי הוא, What emerges from all this is that Kara does not distinguish between parables and similes, as can be shown from many other instances.<sup>128</sup> In the case of phrases which point out resemblances, he notes (Hag. 2:3) that the letter כ serves as an identifying sign:

כשהוא רוצה לומר כמות זה כן מות זה משמשין בו הכפ"ן  
כגון כגן ה' בארץ מצרים (ברא' י"ג 10), כעבד כאדוניו  
כשפחה כגברתה (ישע' כ"ד 2).

So also with the most common type of comparison: וכן דרך האות. של כ"ף. כל מקום שתמצא כמה דברים שכולם שווים בא האות של כ"ף  
Elsewhere (see on Jer. 8:22), Kara adds ומשמש בכולן

that parables and similes are clearly both techniques whose function is to bestir the people into heeding the prophet's usually unwelcome remarks (he uses מליצה in the sense of 'enigmatic saying'): משל ודימוי הוא שדימה הנביא לסבות אליו (Jer. 8:22). At times a parable may be more difficult to understand. When Isaiah calls time and time again to the people to listen to him (28:23), Kara explains, לפי שכל פרשה זו כולה משל ודימוי הוא אומר האזינו ושמעו והקשיבו שמשל וחידה קשים להבין יותר מן המליצה. Nevertheless the prophets make extensive use of this means in order to speak to the people with greater concreteness (see Isa. 8:1).

## 7. Wordplay

Kara deals with this topic only in a number of places in the Latter Prophets, under the name לשון נופל על לשון. Let us look at some examples.

a. עניה ענתות נדדה מדמנה (Isa. 10:30-31). Kara explains,

ועל שם שהלשון נופל על הענתות לשון עניה כמו שהוא אומר בצדו נדדה מדמנה, כלומר מדמנה שמה נדדו מפניו וכי עקרון תעקר (צפניה ב' 4) וכמו מי דימון מלאו דם (ישע' ט"ו 9).  
[There is a play upon 'Anathoth' to suggest 'poverty' (עניה),

just as 'Madmenah' implies 'flight' (נדדה); compare Ekron's being 'rooted up' (תעקר) and Dimon's being filled with blood (דם).]

b. כי מעלה הלוחית בבכי יעלה בו (Isa. 15:5). More briefly: לשון נופל על הלשון. היא נקראת מעלה הלוחית ולכן העולה בבכי (cf. Isa. 15:6; Ezek. 33:27). יעלה בו

c. רעו לשון: (Jer. 6:3) אליה יבואו רועים... רעו איש את ידו. מרעה ואחר הלשון שתפס המקרא אליה יבואו רועים בו בלשון סיים

[The word רעו suggests מרעה, and after an intervening phrase

the text returns to this expression.] Kara does not define this as a play upon words since there is an interval of five words between the two occurrences of רועים and רעו, but it is clear that he considers it a pun, and this holds true for the following example as well.

d. He cites three instances where wordplay may be discerned in spite of the fact that there is a sizeable gap between the components. Commenting on ונקותי in Jer. 19:7, he says

וזה לשון תפס אחר הנקבוק [פס' 1] וכן כשאמר לך וקנית לך  
אזנר פשתים (ירמ' י"ג 1) ואחר כך אמר כאשר ידבק האזנר  
(י"ג 11) וכן על היוצר חרס (יר' י"ט 1) אמר הנה אנכי  
יוצר עליכם רעה (ירמ' י"ח 11). וכן בכל מקום הלשון נופל  
על הלשון.

Despite the distance between the relevant words he sees a play upon words in the repetition of verb, noun or sound.

## V. Comparisons and the Resolution of Contradictions Between the Early Prophets and Chronicles

### 1. Comparisons Between the Early Prophets and Chronicles

Most of the comparisons which Kara institutes with Chronicles begin with Chapter 5 of II Samuel. In general, we can say that he refers to only a few instances in proportion to the great many discrepancies between the Early Prophets and Chronicles. His treatment of the subject can be divided into three categories:

a. Instances where he cites the parallel entry from Chronicles, points out the difference, and leaves it at that.

b. Instances where he cites Chronicles to provide further details as to events narrated in the Early Prophets.

c. Instances where he notes the difference (and occasional contradictions) between the versions and resolves them, in

general by harmonizing the two.

As a rule Kara adopts one of the following expressions when he quotes from Chronicles: **ובדבה"י סי'י; ובדברי הימים כתיב** (II Sam. 24:12); **ובדברי הימים הוא י'י; ובדברי הימים כת'** (I Kings 2:4); **הוא אומר or וכן הוא אומר בדברי הימים** (II Sam. 6:17; 7:9; 8:13) **or קוראו בדברי הימים** (II Kings 11:6). We shall now examine his commentary in line with the division suggested above, attempting through examples to determine why in one place he remarks a discrepancy without concerning himself with it, and in another devotes a long explanation to differences between the texts; and whether or not he operates on a conscious principle in this matter.

a. Here Kara sets Chronicles against the Early Prophets in regard to a word, part of a verse or a complete verse, without explaining or discussing the difference. He glosses **מיני כלי זמרה הם, ובדברי** (II Sam. 6:5) as follows: **ובמנענעים**. He notes the difference without adding anything, which is especially strange in view of the fact that this is not the only modification found in the text, for in II Samuel the complete phrase is **ובמנענעים ובצלצלים** whereas in I Chron. 13:8 it is **ובמלצתים ובחצצרות** - which Kara does not even mention. In the same chapter we are told of David that he was **מפוז ומכרכר**, and Kara writes, **בדברי**, thus (unlike in the previous example) demonstrating the disparity between the phrases. In another instance he explains the verse in Chronicles but not the difference between it and the version in Samuel. Taking up the phrase **איש מדון** (II Sam. 21:20; cf. also 5:9) he says,



בדברי הימים כתוב איש מידה כלומר איש גדול, but what about the discrepancy between the two epithets, 'stature' as against divisiveness? Elsewhere, in I Kings 15:15, he notes the different appellations for God, the Tetragrammaton in *Kings* and אלקים in *Chronicles*. In Joshua he remarks one difference as to a place name, ואת עלמון (Josh. 21:18), but does not discuss it: ובדברי הימים ואת עלמת והיא בחורים.

These are a few of the instances where he deals with a single disparity among many in a particular passage<sup>132</sup> or a section as a whole (II Sam. 24:17). It emerges from them that he has no consistent method in this area, and that by no means every dissimilarity is explained. And even if we can attribute his inconsistent noting of variations to the fact that he cites *Chronicles* from memory, it remains unclear why he does not harmonize the various verses.

b. On many occasions Kara cites the parallel segment from *Chronicles* for its supplementary information, or in order to explain some obscure point or even complete a מקרא קצר. Below are a number of examples.

In the description of the altar which Solomon built,<sup>133</sup> he cites the parallel verses from *Chronicles* for its account of the copper basin and its dimensions, which *Kings* does not mention (I Kings 8:16). In another place, II Sam. 6:1, additional information of a different kind is cited. The text states ויוסף עוד דוד את כל בחור בישראל לפי שבתחילה נתייעץ עם זקני עם, שרי עוד which Kara picks up: והוא ויוסף עוד דוד, האלפים והמאות כמו שכתוב בדברי הימים... וזהו ויוסף עוד דוד להוסיף עוד על אותה עצה ולקח את כל בחור בישראל שלשים אלף. Thus עוד is explained by the information from I Chronicles 13:1-5.

With regard to the depth of the Copper Sea of Kings,<sup>134</sup> Kara adds an explanation from II Chron. 4:6, לטבול הכהנים את<sup>135</sup> from the same source he tells us of the basins; בתוכו; מעשה העולה ידיחו בם. In I Kings 15:7 he goes to trouble to explain a verse from Chronicles, since it might be understood in two different ways, after he has supplied further information to supplement the statement in Kings.<sup>136</sup>

He also fills out several instances of מקרא קצר in accordance with the parallel verse in Chronicles. In II Samuel 24:1 it says, ויסת את דוד בהם לאמר, and Kara explains, מקרא קצר הוא זה וחטר תיבה אחת ופתרון ויסת שטן את דוד... וכן מצינו בדברי הימים ויעמד שטן על ישראל ויסת את דוד למנות את איזה עבר רוח ה'. Elsewhere, in I Kings 22:24, we find איזה הדרך עבר רוח ה', and here too he completes the thought: והרי זה מקרא קצר ובדברי הימים כתוב איזה הדרך עבר. In other instances he cites Chronicles not in order to supply further information but rather to clarify events and how they have come about, or to explain a difficult verse. On the passage (II Sam. 7:23), מפני עמך אשר פדית<sup>לך</sup> ממצרים גויים ואלקיו פשר זה לא הייתי יודע אלא שדברי הימים מלמדני פתרונו, שכתב בדברי הימים מי כעמך ישראל אשר הלך לו האלקים לפדות לו עם... לגרש מפני עמך אשר פדית ממצרים. Similarly, he explains Solomon's name (II Sam. 12:24) through the explication provided in Chronicles, and when he discusses the wreck of Jehoshaphat's merchantmen at Ezion-geber (I Kings 22:49), he draws on Chronicles to account for the disaster: לפי שנתחבר באחזיה בדבר זה לכך נשברו וכן אמר לו הנביא בדברי הימים בהתחברך (II Chron. 20:37). עם אחזיה פרץ ה' את מעשיך.

In addition to what has been said above it seems to me

that Kara had an additional purpose, one that he was perhaps unaware of, in citing parallel verses from Chronicles. On occasion his quotations consist of entire verses which differ from the texts of Early Prophets in ways that appear to be marginal and devoid of significance. Nevertheless they are quoted, and we must wonder why he should have selected these verses in particular. Before we attempt an answer let us look at some examples. When in his dedicatory speech for the Temple, Solomon speaks of the choice of Jerusalem as the site of the Temple and the choice of David as king, Kara cites the equivalent passage from Chronicles (I Kings 8:16; II Chron. 6:5-6). This contains an additional clause, ולא בחרתי באיש, together with another minor change - from מארץ מצרים to ממצרים - but really there is no difference between the two, Chronicles being an exact repetition of the statement in Kings.

Elsewhere,<sup>137</sup> we are told that Pharaoh's daughter moved out of the city of David to live elsewhere, and Kara adds from II Chronicles 8:11 Solomon's reason for changing her abode: וישכן לא תשב אשה לי בעיר דוד. In II Kings 8:24 we find יורם עם אנתיו ויקבר עם אנתיו בעיר דוד, and Kara comments, ובדברי הימים הוא אומר בעיר דוד ולא בקברות המלכים. Apparently in all these instances nothing more is involved than the provision of additional facts, but if this were the case we would have expected it to be performed in a more methodical and less sporadic fashion, and that significant information should be added; but this has not been done.<sup>138</sup>

It seems to me that the additions are made within a very particular range: either the moral and religious appraisal of

a figure, favourable or unfavourable, or matters connected with God.<sup>139</sup> In the first two examples above a warm view is taken of Solomon's conduct and actions, in contrast with the pejorative impression gained from Chronicles of Joram's character, which made him unworthy to be interred in the royal sepulchre. Let us look at some further instances. We are told of David that **ויעש דוד שם נשוכו מהכות את ארם בגיא** (II Sam. 8:13), and Kara explains that the renown that David gained for himself was **שקבר שונאיו לאחר שהרגם**, this being according to Chronicles. He goes on to remark, **איזהו שם**, גדול שאדם קובר את אויבו. Thus the addition from Chronicles enables him to offer a favourable appraisal of David. In contrast to this a critical view is also taken, for commenting on **והמלך דוד זקן בא נימים ויכסוהו בגדים ולא יחם** (I Kings 1:1), Kara explains that David felt cold, **בראותו המלאך המכה בעם וכן מפורש בדברי הימים דכתיב ולא יכול...** דוד ללכת... כי נבעת מפני חרב מלאך ה' והכל בגלל מפקד העם.

Another instance of the condemnation of a king on moral and religious grounds can be found in the case of Abijam, whom God punished, says Kara, because he did not destroy the golden calves (I Kings 15:7). This piece of information is taken from Chronicles; it is not mentioned in Kings. The case of Joash is comparable (I Kings 22:49; II Kings 12:3; 14:7, 17). Careful consideration of all these instances will show, in my opinion, that with the exception of those places where Kara introduces a passage from Chronicles in order to resolve a contradiction or explain a difficult passage or other significant issue, he quotes in order to furnish the attentive student with appraisals of character on the basis

of moral and religious norms.

c. In quite a few places Kara contrasts the version of the Early Prophets with that of Chronicles (which differs from it only slightly) and resolves the difficulty, usually by a harmonisation. Where necessary, however, he does not hesitate to state that the two versions cannot be reconciled.

In some cases a single letter is the only disparity. The phrase **ושובך שר הצבא** (II Sam. 10:16) appears in I Chronicles 19:16 as **ושובך שר הצבא**, and Kara says **...שובך שר הצבא**. There is no contradiction but rather the annotation of two different characteristics in the same person. In contrast to the word **מכלת** in I Kings 5:25, II Chronicles 2:9 has **מכת**, and Kara explains the former as an expression for sustenance, as in **ויכלכל יוסף**, and the latter as **הן מיני חיטים**. The underlying idea, consequently, is identical.<sup>140</sup> The same phenomenon can be found elsewhere, except that the contrast involves a parallel in the Book of Psalms. The words **וענותך** in II Samuel 22:36 and **וענותך** in Psalms 18:36 are both expressions of humility. In II Samuel 22:46 we find **ויחגרו ממסגרותם** and in Psalm 18:46 **יחגרו**. Kara accounts for this in terms of a transposition of letters, or as he puts it, **והוא מהתיבות** [which both mean 'lamb']. In instances when entire words are different Kara again stands by the method of harmonisation. **מתג האמה** of II Samuel 8:1 is identical with **גת ובנותיה** of I Chronicles 18:1, **ודומה שלפי** **שגת פלישתים היתה ראש וחוזק לחמשה סרני פלשתים... שלכך נקראים**. **מתג האמה שמי שתופס בידו מתג הוא רודה ומושל בחבירו**. The city of **עלמון** (Josh. 21:18) is called **עלמת** in I Chronicles 6:45.



2. <sup>143</sup>"כתובים המכחישין זה את זה"

On several occasions Kara juxtaposes a verse from the Early Prophets with the corresponding verse from Chronicles, notes the contradiction between them and attempts to resolve it.<sup>144</sup> Most of the contradictions involve numbers - quantities, measures and times - and generally he finds a solution in the Midrash or the Talmud, or (sometimes) a logical explanation which harmonises the different versions. In the census of the people, Israel is numbered at 800,000 and Judah at 500,000, according to II Samuel 24:9, while in I Chronicles 21:5 Israel has 1,000,000 souls and Judah 470,000. Kara quotes Midrash Samuel (end of section 30) to the effect that they were numbered by the use of paper slips of which there were two series, one for a large census and one for a smaller one, in order to fulfil David's requirements, so that if the smaller one were unacceptable they might show him the larger one.

In another place there is a contradiction as to the number of inspectors set over the people. In Kings they are listed as 3,300 (I Kings 8:30; 9:23), while in II Chronicles 2:17 it is 3,600. Kara's intelligent and logical explanation is that since 3,300 inspectors supervised the work of 150,000 individuals, another 300 had to be added to check on the inspectors themselves. He adds, *ותדע שהרי יש עוד כתובים בדנר* [here he notes other contradictions]. *הרי ארבע מקראות מכחישין זה את זה וכבר פירשנו בשנים הראשונים* <sup>145</sup>How many stables Solomon had presents another problem. According to I Kings 8:6 there were 40,000, but II Chronicles 9:25 has 4,000, and

Kara, asking כִּיצַד יתְקַיֵּמוּ שְׁנֵי כְתוּבִים הַלּוֹ, explains that there existed stables in two different places. One of these contained 4,000 large stables, each one of which held 40 horses, for a sum total of 160,000 horses, while at another location Solomon built 40,000 small stables each of which held 4 horses, so that in reality אַחַד חֲשֹׁבֹן. And if one wishes to know why a two-stable arrangement should have been necessary, he explains that the horses were moved around every so often from one to the other so that they could be cleaned of the refuse that had accumulated. The solution is original and appealing, but in my opinion impracticable. A similar interpretation is offered for the inconsistency in the sums collected from the tribes, for in II Samuel 24:24 fifty silver shekels are taken in and in I Chronicles 21:25 six hundred: נָטַל מִכָּל שָׁנַיִם וְשֹׁשֶׁת חֲמִישִׁים שֶׁקֶלִים. נָטַל מִכָּל שָׁנַיִם וְשֹׁשֶׁת חֲמִישִׁים שֶׁקֶלִים. 146...הָרִי שֶׁשׁ מֵאוֹת שֶׁקֶלִים

In the construction of the Temple it says in I Kings 7:15 that the height of the two pillars was 18 cubits, whereas in II Chronicles 3:15 it is 35 cubits, and the disparity is to be resolved by understanding that the two pillars were cast together, making a total height of 36 cubits; the missing cubit represents the capital of each, each of which measured half a cubit (see 7:22). As to the height of the hall, he introduces an interpretation from Helbo, but it does not resolve the difficulty (see I Kings 6:2-3; II Chron. 3:4). The Talmud's gloss is quoted to settle the contradiction as to the volume of the Copper Sea, which according to I Kings 7:26 contained two thousand בָּת (a liquid measure) and to II Chronicles 4:5 three thousand בָּת; and וּפִירְשׁוּהוּ רַבּוֹתֵינוּ בְּמִדָּת



היובש שהגודש היה שליש בבית הקיבול (Eruvin 14b).

Contradictions with regard to time and the reigns of kings are also pointed out and reconciled, generally with the aid of Midrash Seder Olam or the Talmud.<sup>147</sup>

Elsewhere Kara resolves a contradiction between what is said in Joshua 10:14 on the sun and moon's standing still, ולא היה כיום ההוא לפניו ואחריו לשמע ה' בקול איש, and the description in Isaiah 38:8 of the sun's nevertheless returning on itself in the reign of Hezekiah. After stating the problem, he says, תשובה לדבריך חזקיה לא ביקש אות זה שיתארך לו אבל הק' נתן לו זכת' הנני משיב את צל המעלות. Hence in fact there is no contradiction, since only once has it occurred that God so acted on a human request - during the time of Joshua. In another instance Kara presents the contradiction and admits his inability to resolve it. According to II Kings 9:27, Jehu pursued Ahaziah to Megiddo and killed him there, but according to II Chron. 22:9 Ahaziah was found hiding in Samaria. Kara says in his inimitable way, יש ליישב את המקראות אך יש גמגום בדבר שהרי לא היתה ליהוא מושלת בשומרון עד יום המחרת כמו שמפורש בענין ויאסף שלמה רכב: In I Kings 10:26 we are told: ופרשים ויהי לו אלף וארבע מאות רכב ושנים עשר אלף פרשים וינחם בערי הרב ועם המלך בירושלים. The parallel verse in II Chronicles 1:14 is identical with the exception of the word ויניחם, as against the וינחם of Kings; but this disparity is marginal to the subject. Let us look at what Kara says: ובדברי הימים הוא אומר אלף ושבע מאות, ואני אומר אלף וארבע מאות בערי הרב וכשלש מאות עם המלך בירושלים וכן פירושו בדברי הימים וינחם בערי הרב ועם המלך היה עוד רכב בירושלים וכאן רק פירושו

וינחם בעיר הרכב ועם המלך היו מקצתן בירושלים. Chronicles, he asserts, records that Solomon had 1,700 chariots (not 1,400), but this figure is not to be found in any known text or manuscript. It would seem that he depended upon his memory for the verse from Chronicles, and in consequence had to resolve a contradiction which does not exist. It is of interest to note that Rashi describes Solomon's arrangements in similar terms, but without the discrepancy in the figures.

In summary, we have seen that while Kara not infrequently compares and contrasts a verse from the Early Prophets with the equivalent passage from Chronicles, it is not always clear why the the parallel is adduced. The practice is justified when it is a question of offering further information, explaining unclear passages or noting discrepancies in order to show that no contradiction is in fact involved; but along with these instances we have observed many cases where discrepancies are remarked without evident reason - and these cases really display no common denominator. It is possible that they consist of points raised by Kara's students as he delivered his lectures, and that he took note of them without actually feeling that they represented difficulties (otherwise he would have expressed an opinion). The fact that he was both a teacher and an educator also supports the theory that many of the additions which he cites from Chronicles are designed to give a final touch to the moral and religious evaluation of Biblical figures by the reader-student.

### 3. The Resolution of Contradictions and Difficult Passages Within the Writings of the Prophets Themselves

As we have already observed, Kara's principal means for resolving contradictions or difficult passages likely to cause misunderstanding consists in attempts at harmonisation, both between verses from the Early Prophets and Chronicles and between verses from within the Prophetic Books themselves. But where with regard to Chronicles Kara deals with only a minority of the occurrences, when it is a question of the Early Prophets he is careful to clarify all such issues.<sup>148</sup> We shall now look at a number of difficult passages and contradictions of various types.

Gideon battles against the Midianites, yet in one verse they are called ישמעאלים (Jud. 8:24). Kara cites the sale of Joseph (Gen. 37:28) to show that למדין קורא ישמעאלים. In the passage on the Gibeonites there is much ambiguity. Are they חוטבי עצים ושואבי מים (Josh. 9:21) for the congregation as a whole, for the altar (v. 23) or for both (v. 27)? Kara's solution is that initially they served the congregation for a short period, in appeasal, but once the altar had been erected they served it forever. He shows a clear sensitivity and understanding of what is hinted at between the lines, as if he saw the situation unfolding before his eyes. In another instance, Judges 1:18 implies that Jerusalem had been conquered, and so the necessity for its conquest in the days of David is puzzling. Kara explains אבל מצודת ציון שנה לא (I Sam. 7:2). Concerning Hannah, we are told that she did not eat of the sacrifices offered in Shilo (I Sam. 1:7). Yet immediately afterwards it says, ותקם חנה אחרי

Kara sets out the problem and its solution: אכלה בשלה ואחרי שתה אלא על כרחך אחרי אכלה בשילה פתרו' אחרי עת האכל. From this we may conclude that Hannah herself did not eat. Absalom says on one occasion, אין לי בן בעבור הזכיר שמי (II Sam. 18:18). Kara points out the difficulty and suggests a solution, finding a way to harmonise the passages in question:

וכי לא היה לו בן והלא כתוב ויולדו לאנשלו שלשה בנים  
(י"ד 27) אלא שלא היה לו בן דומה בקומתו.<sup>150</sup>

So also with regard to the statement that Michal had five sons (II Sam. 21:8), which contradicts the earlier declaration that she had no child (6:23). Kara adopts the Talmudic solution: מירב ילדה אותם ומיכל גידלה אותם ומתוך שמיכל גידלה אותם מעלה עליה הכתוב כאילו ילדו.

Among the officers of Solomon are listed וצדוק ואביתר (I Kings 4:4), and Kara writes, אילו מבני אלעזר ואין זה [i.e. Abiathar son of Ahimaaz], שהרי כבר גירשו שלמה מהיות כהן והוא היה מבני עלי ועלי מבניו של איתמר. This explanation prevents the student from confusing two different characters.<sup>151</sup>

A difficult problem with which modern scholars too must grapple is who actually kills Goliath. David, as we are informed in I Samuel 17, or Elhanan (II Sam. 21:19)? In his predilection for harmonised texts Kara writes, אלחנן זה דוד, שחננו א-ל, but while this rests upon Midrash Ruth Rabbah 2b it does not explain how David came to be called Elhanan as well, nor what connection the passage has with I Chron. 20:5, where there is a further discrepancy. In another instance (I Kings 12:18) he explains that אדורם is the אדונירם of I Kings 5:28, again ignoring Chronicles (II Chron. 10:18), where he

is called הדרם.<sup>152</sup> He likewise resolves the contradiction between the statement in I Kings 22:48 that Edom had no king and the reference to מלך אדום in II Kings 3:9: ...לא מלך גמור. Discrepancies between the Early Prophets and the Pentateuch are also settled.

Elisha says to the king of Israel, who is at war with Moab, וכל עץ טוב תפילו (II Kings 3:19): a violation of the explicit commandment in Deut. 20:20. Kara invokes one of his principal paedagogical rules, מידה כנגד מידה, to solve the difficulty: הם עשו עמכם שלא כדין דכת' על אשר לא קדמו אתכם וגו' ולא די להם כך אלא ששכרו את בלעם לקללכם ואתם גם אחת עשו להם שלא כדין וכל עץ טוב תפילו. In another instance, he resolves the geographical problem posed by Rachel's tomb. According to I Sam. 10:2 it is located on the border between Benjamin and Ephraim, yet Gen. 35:19 places it in Judah, south of Jerusalem. Kara cites an explanation from Tosefta (Sotah, chap. 11), which shows that the verse can be read in a way that does away with the contradiction.

Another type of discrepancy arises in connection with the computation of years, quantities and the like. In Joshua 13:3 we are told that there are five Philistine lords, yet when they are enumerated six are mentioned: חמשה סרני פלישתים. Kara notes that this difficulty is raised in the Talmud (Hullin 60b), together with its solution: that עוים should really be of the south; cf. Josh. 14:4; 17:5; 18:7). A contradiction of a type already encountered in our discussion of Chronicles arises in the episode of the concubine at Gibeah (Jud.

20:48). It states there that 25,100 Benjaminites were killed (v. 35), but since 26,700 had been mustered (v. 15) and 600 fled (v. 47), one thousand men are unaccounted for. After setting out the problem, Kara gingerly grapples with it: ושמא האלף ברחו אל הערים ונפלו למחרת כששבו בני ישראל אל ערי... בנימין להחרים הנשים והטף. We thus have a solution, but one expressed most warily. In the same way Kara smoothes over the difficulty in connection with the numbers of David's fighting force (see on II Sam. 23:39). In II Kings 24:16 it says that 7,000 went into exile, while only two verses before the number given is 10,000. Kara states the difficulty and draws on Jer. 52:28 to resolve it: בא הכתוב השלישי והכריע בספר ירמיהו דכת' זה העת שלשת אלפים אמור מעתה שלשת אלפים היו משבת יהודה ושבעת אלפים מבנימין ושאר שבטים ואף בסדר עולם למדנו <sup>154</sup> Again, he tackles the contradiction in the size of the capitals of the pillars of the Temple, said in I Kings 7:16 to measure five cubits in height and in II Kings 25:17 three cubits, explaining in a logical manner, ואומר אני שלא מנה אותן שתי אמות התחתונות בסוף הספר לפי שהיו שוות לעמוד <sup>155</sup> [The two bottom cubits did not count, as the pillar itself was wedged two cubits into the capital.]

His approach to resolving disparities connected with the duration of a king's reign is of interest. On occasion he settles these conflicts with great precision through computation, while there are other situations where he does not hesitate to admit that any solution seems uncertain or difficult, and that he is therefore puzzled by the text. In I Kings 22:52 we are told that אחזיהו בן אחאב מלך על ישראל

בשומרון בשנת שבע עשרה ליהושפט מלך יהודה. The whole of Kara's gloss deserves attention: נמצא ... שכלו ימי אחאב בשנת תשע עשרה ליהושפט וכאן הוא אומר שמלך אחאב בשנת שבע עשרה ליהושפט אך בדקתי ומצאתי ברוב מלכי ישראל שאינו מדקדק ברוב שנותיהם אם עומד בסוף השנה שונה אותה לו מתחילתו [If the initial few months of a reign fell at the end of a year, they were sometimes reckoned by the kings of Israel as a whole year of a reign, and sometimes not.] Thus not only does he explain the contradiction but he goes to the trouble of establishing a general rule which underlies the method of reckoning kings' reigns.<sup>156</sup> Frequently he offers a solution from Seder Olam, as with the verse בשנת שלשים ושמנה שנה לעזריהו מלך יהודה מלך זכריהו (II Kings 15:8). First outlining the difficulty, he says, ובסדר עולם ראיתי אלא שירבעם מלך בחיי אביו שנה ואיני יודע אם שבוש ספרים הוא שאינו יכול ליישב בשנת שלשים ושמנה מלך יודע.<sup>157</sup> זכריה שלא בעינייך הזה

In three places he points out that the computation in a text is unclear.

a. In Isaiah 8:23 he deals with the dates of the various exiles and says, ואין החשבון מפורש במקרא בגלוי אבל יש ללמוד מבריתא וסדר עולם.

b. Jeremiah 10:1 speaks of two periods of drought whose dates are not clear: וכאן סתם הנביא את דבריו שלא פירש באיזה דור באו אלו שני הבצרות מה שלא מצינו כן בכל מקום שיסתמו. הנביאים את דבריהם כל כך

c. Ezekiel 1:1 notes the year, month and day on which Ezekiel began to prophesy, but סתם הנביא את דבריו ולא פירש למנין מה מנה. It is therefore unclear on what reference point

his calculation is founded.

He is not afraid to admit unequivocally that he has no explanation, but not before he has outlined the difficulty. In I Kings 10:14 we are told that Solomon possessed משקל הזהב שש מאות שישים ושש. Commenting on II Chron. 8:11, Kara works it out: 120 from Hiram, 120 from the Queen of Sheba, 420 from a Tarshishian vessel from Ophir - this gives us a total of 660, ויפלו חבלי Josh. 17:5 says that והשש לא ידעתי מאיו המה. Kara takes the trouble to calculate the why and how of these ten shares, then cites a solution from the Talmud and comments on it, וגמגום גדול בדבר ותשובה גדולה יש להשיב עליו. He concludes with the phrase he often uses when he lacks an answer, ואשר דברו אמת ישים מחשך לאור ומעקשים למישור. This expression is repeated in his attempt to explain the question which Gideon puts to Zebah and Zalmunna, איפה האנשים אשר הרגתם בתבור (Jud. 8:18), and which Kara regards as a rhetorical question. He again admits to having no explanation for what is said of the length of Joash's reign: מקרא זה מוכחש משני צדדים ולא מצאתי...<sup>151</sup> לו מתקן שהיה לו לומר שלשים ותשע

It should be noted that Kara does not deal with the contradiction inherent in the two accounts of David's entering Saul's service, only remarking that he has no explanation for the subject (I Sam. 17:55).



## VI. Multiple Glosses

I apply the term 'multiple glosses' simply to those instances where Kara offers more than one explanation. He does this in one of the following ways: (1) In addition to his own gloss he offers one from another scholar; or both come from different commentators. (2) In addition to his own gloss he adduces one or more explanations without naming their source. Two different sets of terms are employed: (a) שמעתי, ראיתי or ענין אחר, דבר אחר, that is, ע"א or ד"א; and (b) יש פותרים or יש אומרים.

Explanations from other commentators can be classified as follows (the subject is further discussed below):

a. The extra gloss becomes an additional possibility for the reader, without Kara's taking a stand for or against.

Among the commentators used in this way may be named Helbo,<sup>159</sup> Rashi,<sup>160</sup> Menahem ben Saruk (I Kings 20:27), and Rabbi Meir שלית ציבור (I Kings 10:28).

b. The extra gloss is subjected to criticism. Helbo again appears, ור' מנחם פתר... כך שמעתי מר' מנחם אחי אבא, אבל אני (II Sam. 24:6; cf. I Kings 8:27; 16:9), together with Rashi,<sup>161</sup> to whom we devote a separate discussion in Chapter 3, and Dunash ben Labrat (II Sam. 13:20; I Kings 19:21). On one occasion Rashi's opinion wins over Helbo's (II Kings 16:14), and on another occasion Kara rejects both: ראיתי בפירוני ר' שלמה זצ"ל... ובפירוני ר' מנחם (I Kings 18:37).

c. At times Kara notes, as an additional explanation, some gloss which he has 'heard'. In general we can say that it

will be rejected, whether it appears as the first explanation (I Kings 19:19) or (as is usually the case) as the second.<sup>162</sup> Commenting on the phrase משרפות מים (Josh. 11:8), he says, תרגומו... חריצין ונעיצין של מים שהן מלוחים, אבל שמעתי משרפות מים מים חמין כגון חמי טבריא ופתרון ראשון עיקר. The explanation which he has 'heard' is dismissed out of hand. In another place we are told וישתחו שם לה' (I Sam. 1:27), but it is not at all clear who actually prostrated himself, and Kara writes, יש לומר עלי השתחוה... שאם תאמר, שמואל השתחוה והלא עודנו נער אך שמעתי ששמואל השתחוה; Rashi appears to be the source. Kara expresses his own opinion and cites another, albeit in order to reject it, as something which he has 'heard'; and so in other instances.<sup>163</sup> On only two occasions does he introduce an explanation heard from others as the sole gloss. On וימלט השעירתה (Jud. 3:26), he says, וימלט אל היער, כך שמעתי, - again he may be referring to Rashi - and on ואענה את זרע דוד (I Kings 11:39) he remarks, ואענה הוי"ו פתוחה לפי שהוא להבא שפתרונו עתיד אני לענות את זרע דוד למען דבר זה... שמעתי. Here he says simply שמעתי instead of his customary כן שמעתי. He records that he has learnt these interpretations from others but in only one case does he note the source.<sup>164</sup>

There are several places where he says of himself ראיתי, and in each instance the reference is to books, as in וראיתי (Jud. 6:26; cf. Isa. 16:1); ... ולא ישר בעיני (I Kings 18:26); ... ומדרש אגדה ראיתי ושגור בפי הכל... (II Kings 20:13). Once we actually find שנספר מוגה של תרגום נביאים ראיתי (I Kings

6:34), which refers to an emended translation. In one place (Jer. 8:23) he applies ראי'תי to a book of interpretations (ספר פתרונו), and מצאתי to the interpretations of the Karaites (Isa. 23:13).

More widespread is the form מצאתי, and here again books are in question. It appears five times in connection with the Old Testament itself: I Kings 6:34, ונרוב מקומות מצאתי כן...; I Kings 22:52, אך בדקתי ומצאתי; II Kings 9:29, אך בכל...; Judges 5:4, שחירותי על כל...; Judges 5:4, ...המקרא לא מצאתי... אך מצאתי. At the same time, the expression is used to refer to Midrash Seder Olam (I Kings 11:41; II Kings 12:7), the Pesikta (I Kings 5:10), the Midrash,<sup>165</sup> and other works. Thus we have here first-hand testimony as to points that Kara has heard (with his opinion on them), or that he has seen or found in books in the course of his labours. In essence the expressions ראי'תי and מצאתי are identical. Only once does he use both of them together with שמעתי in a single explanation.<sup>166</sup>

There are many occasions on which he offers a multiple gloss without indicating its source, contenting himself with general expressions like ייש פותרים or ייש אומרים<sup>167</sup> or ייש מפרשין<sup>168</sup>. In most instances he uses the phrases דבר אחר or ענין אחר<sup>169</sup>. One can assert, generally, that those explanations which are preceded by ייש אומרים or ייש are qualified or dismissed outright by Kara's own gloss.<sup>170</sup>

In Zechariah 9:9 he cites an interpretation under the rubric of ייש אומרים, and then says, אלא כך פתרונו, and proceeds to explain it in another way. In Jeremiah 51:1 he

offers an explanation which is according to מקרא של פשוטו, and which he regards as the preferable view, and then adds a midrash under the rubric ויש אומרים. Sharper expressions of rejection are to be found in places where the verb פותרין is employed. He supplies two explanations of Zebah and Zalmunna's exchange with Gideon, ויאמרו כמוך כמוהם (Jud. 8:18). The first is glossed with כך פותרין רוב העולם, a suggestion he criticise it most sharply: ופתרון זה לאבן נגף; and he then records his own interpretation. The prophet Isaiah speaks of עם נורא (18:2), a people, according to Kara, whose religion is different; and he adds אבל הפותרים... אומה שעשו לה נוראות... טועים הם (He uses this phrase once again, in Jer. 50:11.) In one instance he says of an interpretation whose source is given that ולא יתכן: that is, he rejects it absolutely (Ezek. 21:20). Again, we may find ולא יפנה לבנוך לשמוע דברי הפותרים (Isa. 8:4).

When he uses the expressions דבר אחר or ענין אחר his intention is usually to offer the reader an additional explanation and leave him to decide for himself which he prefers. On five occasions he proclaims his own preference for the explanation cited under the rubric of דבר אחר. In Isaiah 63:19 and Ezekiel 10:20 he sets out one explanation, follows it with another described as דבר אחר, and finally notes that he has heard this latter view from R. Yitzhak bar Asher Halevi (the Riba), and that he considers it the correct one. In Ezekiel 13:19 he provides two interpretations for the phrase להמית נפשות and gives the preference to the one glossed as דבר אחר. The two last instances are from the Song of Deborah (Jud. 5:10, 13), where he says of the דבר אחר

explanation that וזה עיקר. Once he shows a preference for a comment described as ענין אחר (Ezek. 1:14). Except for these cases, out of a total of about 80 usages each additional explanation represents an alternative. There is an exceptional instance in II Samuel 17:16, where he begins his explanation of יבולע with דבר אחר. This suggests that an initial gloss is missing.

### VII. Miscellaneous Principles

1. Kara does not give an interpretation more than once. On occasion he says so explicitly, while at other times he simply implies it. In connection with the portion of the tribe of Dan in Judges 18:1 he says, כשם שפירשנו כבר בספר, יהושע. On the same occasion, when he deals with the name of their city (v. 29), he remarks, פסוק זה מפורש כבר בס' יהושע, אינו צריך לפרש כאן מהו. Elsewhere he says, במקום נחלת בני דן or כמי שפירשנו לעיל<sup>174</sup>; שכבר פירשתיו בספר שופטים<sup>175</sup> or ובמקומו פירשתי ואין לשנות כאן<sup>176</sup>.

There are a few exceptions to this rule, as in וכבר פירשתי<sup>177</sup> or when the same לע"ז is used twice,<sup>178</sup> but in general his policy is not to repeat points which have been made earlier on in the commentary.<sup>179</sup> Students of Kara must note this, since it means that no repetition of glosses may be looked for; Kara expects the reader to fill out interpretations on the basis of the partial account which he offers. Explaining a מקרא ובמקצת שפירשתי שמע חכם, קצר, he turns to the reader and says, (Josh. 10:21), ויוסיף לקח ובמקצת, (Josh. 15:19). He demands that the

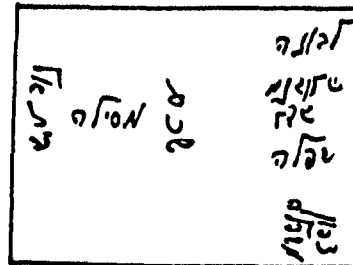
reader recognize the method underlying the commentary and remember what has already been explained, so that he may clarify for himself what remains unclear.

2. He may offer an explanation by making a general point, then pinning it down to details and returning to the generalisation, as in a well-structured short lecture. We are told in I Kings 1:22 וְהָיָה עֹדֶנָּה מְדַבֵּר עִם הַמֶּלֶךְ וְנָתַן הַנְּבִיא בָּא וּמַעְצֶמֶךְ, Kara first explains this by talking in general terms, and then אתה למד כשנכנס נתן לדבר אל המלך יצתה לה בת-שבע מפני כמה דברים, אחת שאין דרך, proceeds to detail the reasons: כבוד ועוד אילו היתה עומדת שם כשנכנס נתן... ועוד ממה שאתה קורא אתה למד. Finally, a generalisation to sum up: למטה בענין שיצתה לה בת-שבע כשנכנס נתן. The structure, then, consists of an opening general point, three considerations to justify it, and a generalising summary. In the same way he explains the verse (I Sam. 16:7) כִּי לֹא אִשְׁרָא יִרְאֶה הָאָדָם רְאִיתָ בֶּשֶׁר וְדָם אֵינָהּ רְאִייתָ שֶׁהָיָה אֵינֹו רֹאֶה אֶלָּא, את הגלוי ואינו רואה את הטמון, אבל הקב"ה רואה את הטמון כגלוי, is followed by the specific point that man's eyes can only see external phenomena, whereas God sees into the heart; and in conclusion he returns to the generalisation.<sup>180</sup>

3. On four occasions in his commentary on the Early Prophets he finds it necessary to use an explanatory drawing or sketch.

a. We read in Judges 21:19, ויאמרו הנה חג' בשלו מימים, ימימה אשר מצפונה לבית-אל מזרחה השמש למסלה העלה מבית אל שכמה ומנגב ללבונה. Kara copies the complete verse and adds:

כעין זה. The right side of the sketch which follows is not at all clear.<sup>181</sup>



b. I Samuel 14:5 reads, השן האחד מצוק מצפון מול מכמש והאחד, מנגד מול גבע, the subject being the region where Jonathan and his young man carry out their courageous act. Kara writes ובעין זה והפלישתים מצד זה וישראל מצד זה / \ / \ מנגב מול... גבע, in order to explain the positions of the armies facing each other against the rock columns.

c. I Kings 6:13 reads, זאת פתח הדבור עשה דלתות עצי שמן, האיל מזוזות חמישית, and Kara explains that האיל are the door posts and that חמישית (pentagonal) refers to them: המפתן אחד והמזוזות מיכאן ומיכאן שתיים הרי שלש, המשקוף העליון עשוי בשתיים כזה.



He goes on to cite Rashi. We should note that this latter interpretation appears in Rashi under the rubric כך and that the sketch in Apenstein's edition is incorrect. According to the explanation, and sketch in Rashi, it should appear like this:



What it means is that בשתיים כזה המשקוף העליון עשוי.

d. In Isaiah 9:13, Kara explains why the prophet compares the governing power to a כיפה (dome, palm tree) and its subjects to a reed: דע כי כיפה יש לו שני רגלים כמו זה; a sketch follows. A ruler is like a dome in that he is over the people:



A reed resembles a palm tree except

שאינו מסכך אלא מצד אחד כעין זה

and then comes a sketch:



4. He tends to draw attention to the conclusion of his commentary on a particular book.

<u>Book</u>	<u>Closing comment</u>
Joshua	---
Judges	חסל ספר שופטים
Samuel	---
Kings	סליק ב' ה' ל' כ' (ברוך הנותן ליעף כוח)
Isaiah	---
Jeremiah	נשלם פירוש ירמיה
Ezekiel	נשלם פירוש ספר יחזקאל תהילה ותפארת לא-ל. ברוך גואל ישראל. הנותן לידי א-ל הא-ל המושיע יעזרני בפ' הושע
Hosea	נשלם פירוש ספר הושע בו כל ימי אשתעשע
Joel	---
Amos	נשלם פירוש ספר עמוס אחל פירוש ספר עובדיה
Obadiah	נשלם פירוש עובדיה אחל פירוש ספר יונה
Jonah	נשלם פירוש ספר יונה שבת לדר מעונה



<u>Book</u>	<u>Closing comment</u>
Micah	חסלת ספר מיכה
Nahum	חסלת ספר נחום
Habakkuk	---
Zephaniah	---
Haggai	---
Zechariah	חסלת ספר זכריה
Malachi	---

He does not bother to write a closing phrase for every book, nor is his style uniform. Clearly exceptional is the conclusion to Ezekiel. This commentary is attributed to a student of his, a fact which perhaps accounts for its unusual colophon.

#### VIII. Realia

It would seem that Kara spent most of his life in Troyes, a city in the district of Champagne, whose twice-yearly fairs were known far and wide.<sup>183</sup> These fairs, together with the mode of life natural to an agricultural region, gave Kara ample opportunity to meet people of all types: merchants, artisans, farmers, pedlars, doctors, sailors and soldiers. He knew a great deal about the management of fairs and about techniques for the production of oil and wine, the smelting of iron and gold, the coining of money and construction. It is clear from his commentary that he was alive to whatever occurred in his natural surroundings and interested himself in every aspect of life - nature, the tools used in house and field, social customs and arrangements. This knowledge was of enormous assistance in his study of daily life in the time of

the Bible, and it must have made it easier for his students to familiarise themselves with various features of the Biblical period. Clearly he was anxious to give them a sense of the realities with which they were dealing in reading the Bible. The following sections contain material related to daily life during the period of the Scriptures, organized according to the various topics which are to be found, either explicitly or implicitly, in Kara's writings.

### 1. Domestic Economy and Farm Management

Among the things which could be made from the flour produced by threshing was ניקודים (biscuit bread), שמכניסו לתנור עד, שיקרם עורו מלמעלה וכשיקרמו פניו מוציאו ועושהו בקעים שיהא חמימות התנור שולט בכולן ומניחו בתוך התנור עד שיצנן התנור (Josh. 9:5; cf. Jud. 7:13; I Kings 14:3). Without doubt this gloss upon the food used by the Gibeonites to prove to Joshua that מארץ depends upon the kitchen fare of Kara's own time. Another baked item is the עוגת רצפים of I Kings 19:6, which is עוגה האפויה בגחלים<sup>184</sup>. Kara takes the trouble to explain kitchen utensils like כור (cauldron), דוד (pan), קלחת (kettle) and פרוור (pot; I Sam. 2:14; Ezek. 24:5), either by describing their form, their purpose or uses or by providing a vernacular term. He knows how to make cheese,<sup>185</sup> and how salt is manufactured: ... חריצין ונעצין<sup>186</sup>. של מים שהן מלוחים ששורפים אותן מים להוציא מהן מלח<sup>187</sup>. Neither was the production of oil foreign to him, and he explains שמן נקי שאין זיתיו נטחנין בריחים אלא שמן כתית<sup>188</sup> as שמן כותשן במכתשת ואין מעלה שמרים כל כך כמו הטחון (I Kings 5:25),



parchment sheets, and the scribal task (Jer. 36:23). He is also acquainted with the work of blacksmiths and of potters.<sup>190</sup> He makes the interesting remark on the pasture to which shepherds bring their flocks that although nutritious feeding can be found in the mountains, good pasturage also exists near inhabited areas because the refuse which people throw away results in the growth of rich vegetation (Ezek. 34:13; 33:13).

Farm management too was known to Kara. He is familiar with the practice of making a feast for the sheep-shearing festival (I Sam. 25:4); he is aware that cattle are worked with a bridle, and horses with a whip.<sup>191</sup> He knows about the custom of hanging a bell between the eyes of a horse as a decoration (I Sam. 3:7; Jer. 19:3; note Zech. 14:20), and can distinguish between horses bred for work and סוסים טובים On another occasion he compares his own with the Biblical period in connection with the phrase מזהרות מן האנירים שהיו רוכבים, in the Song of Deborah: על הסוסים ומקפיצין את הסוסים היו עקבי סוסיהם נשמטים 391. ונחבלים .

Birds: he knows that some nest in trees and others on the ground (Ezek. 31:13). He is familiar with the annual migratory patterns of the stork (I Kings 5:13) and the methods by which fowls are fattened in coops (Jer. 5:27; note Isa. 34:15), and he speaks of the foolishness of the dove, which consists, he says, in the fact that it will build its nest by the river edge, where it is likely to be washed away, and that it will return to its nest even when its fledglings have been taken (Jer. 48:28; Hos. 7:11); and he knows that

the vulture eats carrion (Jer. 12:9).

Animals: he remarks that the wolf usually seizes its prey at night; only when it is especially hungry will it attack by daylight (Jer. 5:6; Hab. 1:8). He understands the disposition of the fox (Ezek. 13:4) and the danger to clothes posed by the moth (Isa. 50:9). On four occasions he makes points about snakes. He knows that a snake sheds its skin once a year, שִׁמְכָנִיס אֶת עֲצָמוֹ בֵּין שְׁתֵּי אֵילָנוֹת הַדְּבֻקִּים זֶה בָּזֶה (Jer. 46:22), and he considers that different terms found for snakes in the Bible, שָׂרָף, נָחָשׁ, צִפְעָה, פֶּתֶן, שֶׁרֶף, and זֶרְקוֹן, represent different stages in the snake's maturation (I Kings 5:13; Isa. 14:29; 30:6). He is aware of the existence of poisonous spiders and scorpions, and knows about the ways of river fish (I Kings 5:13; Ezek. 29:3). It need hardly be said that he is acquainted with domestic animals like cows (Jud. 6:25; II Sam. 8:1; Jer. 31:17) and sheep (I Sam. 25:4; Jer. 33:13).

## 2. Agriculture

On this topic too Kara demonstrates great expertise; he knows about both methods and tools.

Wheat: he explains that it is essential to plough a field before it is sown, since otherwise thorns will sprout and the seeds will be lost. Ploughing also uproots the thorns and thistles which have grown in the field since the previous harvest (Jer. 4:3). Moreover, the organisation of the sowing is important: wheat in the centre, barley around it and spelt at the edge (Isa. 28:25). Immediately after sowing, when the first stems have sprouted, it is customary to cut them so that stronger stems will grow in their stead and the clusters

of grain be firmer in consequence (Amos 7:1). Following the sprouting it is important that the climate be warm and the sun shine, since rain not only hinders the ripening process but also makes the wheat liable to rot when it is stored after the harvest.<sup>194</sup> He knows how a field looks when it has been reaped, with stalks which have not matured (Isa. 37:27) and thorns sprouting. He considers that a certain species of wheat called חִטִּי מִיִּנְיָהּ is the best in the world; it grows in only one region in Israel. Its grains are so large, the size of ox kidneys, that they can be counted individually (Ezek. 27:17). Last of all is the threshing of the wheat to produce flour. He explains that the װן is the tool employed: it is a kind of wide wooden plank into which sharp stones have been sunk. A man sits on top and cows draw it around in a circle, crushing the wheat until the stubble becomes straw (Isa. 28:27). Threshing can also be carried out by beating the wheat with a stick or using a mortar (I Kings 5:25).

The vine: Kara is again able to display a broad knowledge since the Champagne district was famous for its grapes. He knows how a wine-press is hewn out as a round pit in front of the vat into which the liquid flows. He emphasizes the importance of supporting the branches of the vine with pegs and poles (Ezek. 19:11), and distinguishes between the various kinds of grapes and raisins, which can be consumed throughout the year (I Sam. 25:18; Ezek. 27:18). It is interesting to note that he asserts that in Israel grapes ripen before Passover, although this has no basis in fact.<sup>195</sup>

The fig: He distinguishes between moist, fresh figs and the dry ones which are threaded on strings and are called דבילה (I Sam. 30:12; II Kings 20:7). He adds that figs do not ripen all at the same time but בזה אחר זה. The first to ripen, in the months of Tammuz and Av, are called תאנים, while the term קיץ is applied to those that ripen in Ellul, which the Sages call קייצי תאנים (Isa. 16:9; Amos 8:1).

It is worth noting that Kara knows about scarecrows, which he describes as מצויר צורת אדם שעושין להפחיד העופות שלא יאכלו הפירות.<sup>18</sup>

He differentiates between tree species which bear fruit and those which do not, and between those which bear early in the season and those which bear late. He knows that remedies may be prepared from trees and plants,<sup>19</sup> and he is acquainted with agricultural instruments: the plough, the pitchfork, the axe and so on (I Sam. 13:21; II Sam. 24:22). The months of the year are named, he says, in accordance with what takes place in them. פתרונו בחודש, for example, חודש זיו (I Kings 6:1, 38), and בול is מרחשון שהעשב בלה, ובוללין לבהמה מן הבית... על שם שכל יבול is בירח איתנים (ibid.) he says, Of הארץ נאסף בו על שם העת שנאותו הפרק כבר העשבים נעשין קלחים ודליות הגפן והאילנות מתקשין ונעשין עץ.

### 3. Construction and Ships

He describes those engaged in construction as אדריכלים חרשי האנן שחבריהם עושין על פיהם ראשי האומנים, the wall being built by the architects' apprentices (II Kings 12:12). The month of Iyyar is the best time for building, שכל בעולם שכל מי שרוצה לבנות בנין מקויים צריך לבנותו בעת חום צח עלי אור ולא ביום מעונן כדי שידבק הסיד בקיר ולא יפול הטיח מן הקיר (I Kings 6:1). Lime, then, is an important material for plastering walls, whereas the תפל of Ezek. 13:10 is לקרקע הדומה לסיד... ואין מתקיים בפני הגשמים... והוא טיט בלא תבן.

He explains how construction is actually carried on, providing extensive descriptions in his glosses on the account of the building of the Temple and Solomon's palace (I Kings 6-7): how the blocks were hewn into their exact shapes at the quarry itself, either by means of the Shamir (a mythical worm) or with a hammer and chisel, transported to the construction site, raised and adjusted into place (I Kings 6:7). He glosses most of the technical terms connected with building through the Targum, French and German expressions, the Talmud or actual description of the operation in question.<sup>200</sup> He is also acquainted both with the instruments used in construction, such as the weights attached to plumb-lines<sup>201</sup> or tools needed for hewing, and with the materials involved - cedar wood, hewn stone, etc. (Jud. 9:46; I Kings 5:20).

He understands and explains points in connection with the sea and ships (especially in chapter 27 of Ezekiel): the interior layout of a ship, its cabins, decks and galley-ways (Ezek. 27:25, 26), and its various parts - the oars used for



propulsion; the mast, which must be of sturdy wood, high and straight; the covering which secures the ship and its cargo from rain; and the sails hanging from the masts (27:6). He knows about the crewmen of the ship, such as the caulkers, whose job is to repair of breaches and fissures in the sides to keep the water out (27:9), the divers who measure the depth of the sea with a line to determine whether the ship can or cannot anchor in a port (27:11), and (of course) the captain, who must be an expert on winds and sea currents (sea captains generally came from Tyre: 27:8, 9). Every large ship was fitted out with weapons for defence against pirates (27:10; this point is more applicable to the Middle Ages than to ancient times), and with light boats whose purpose was to transport men and materials from the shore to the larger boat whenever the port was too shallow (27:3, 9). The importance of the sea and its ships to Kara lay in the fact that any mishap or delay in a voyage resulted in an increase in the prices of the merchandise intended for the market of the port city (27:33). There were even lighter boats made of bulrushes (Isa. 18:2), and Hiram of Tyre sent rafts to Solomon (I Kings 5:23), although Kara's explanation that these were logs for building which were tied together and by this means sent by water from Tyre to Israel is perhaps more relevant to his own age than to Solomon's.

#### 4. Anatomy and Medicine

Kara expatiates on the subject of birth a number of times. When the moment of delivery approaches, one places the expectant mother on a special chair (Isa. 37:3), a procedure

especially important for a first-born child, as this is the most difficult birth (Jer. 4:31). He speaks of premature births (I Sam. 1:20), and labours that endanger the mother's life, as when the foetus lies horizontally rather than vertically in the womb at the time of delivery (I Sam. 4:19; cf. II Kings 19:1). After the child is born he is washed to smooth out his skin, and Kara adds that there are countries (France is not one of these) where salt is scattered over the baby to harden the skin; immediately afterwards a nappy is put on and the infant is swaddled (Ezek. 16:4). In connection with the Judgment of Solomon, he points out that there is a very considerable difference in the appearance of the skin of a baby born that very day and one born three days earlier (I Kings 3:18). His last remark in this area is the observation that a nursing woman cannot become pregnant (Hos. 1:9).

Kara also displays some knowledge of anatomy, speaking, for example, of the location of the tooth which lies in the cavity of the jaw (Jud. 15:19), of the intestinal tubes, the digestive tract which lies like a circular well in the human stomach, the effect of age upon bones (I Sam. 14:19), and other points. With regard to the treatment of injuries he draws comparisons from his own time: a wound within which liquid pus or blood has collected must be drained by being softened with oil. This makes it possible to treat the injury or return the bone to its proper position. Broken limbs must be bound and set, using strips of material, until they have healed (Isa. 1:6; Ezek. 30:20; 34:4). Speaking of the effect of salt water on the hair, he makes the curious remark that sea-water causes baldness.<sup>202</sup> Nor does he recoil from

discussing death. He notes that the dead are buried in the clothes in which they were killed (Isa. 14:19) - possibly a custom of his own surroundings; at any rate, Jews are not in question here - and that incense was placed on dead kings to prevent malodorous smells (Jer. 34:5). He also remarks on the stages of decay after death (Ezek. 37:5).

### 5. Armies and War

Kara displays great understanding of points connected with armies, battle strategy, weapons and fortifications. This may be due to an insight gained from what he saw around him in his own period. In discussing the murder of Eglon (Jud. 3:15) he explains the use of a sword, לפי שלא היה אדם מרגיש מן החרב, שעל ירך ימינו וגם כשחוא שולפה ביד שמאלה לא היה עגלון מרגיש לפי שדרך בני אדם לחגור חרב בשמאלו ולשלפה בימינו. Swords and spears are wrapped up tightly to prevent rusting (Ezek. 21:20; Nahum 2:4). Goliath's helmet was made of copper to protect his head, but helmets can also be made of iron (I Sam. 17:5; Ezek. 23:15). The נס or יד, a long pole with a piece of material at the top, has two functions: to summon people to an army as it is being formed, and to call for help from nearby cities for a city under siege (Isa. 5:26; 13:2; 30:28; Jer. 4:6).

In connection with David's lament Kara explains the care of a shield, שכן דרך בעלי המלחמה שמושחין את המגן בשמן כדי, כשאדם יוצא and its use: שיחליק החץ ממנו שלא יקבל המכה (II Kings 19:32). He distinguishes between a מגן and a צינה as follows: פי שניים על המגן שהצינה מקפת את האדם משלוש רוחותיו... ומגן אינו מגין

אהקשקשים ממלאים את (Jud. 8:26; cf. II Sam. 8:7). A coat of mail with its metal rings is also described: חלל הטבעות של שריון ואם תאמר דק היה השריון ויכולים לירות בו חיצים לכך נאמר ומשקל השריון חמשת אלפים שקלים והיה עב כל כך בין אהב (I Sam. 17:5), and when Ahab is struck בין הדבקים (I Kings 22:34), Kara explains, שאדם מדביק כובע נחושת לשריון על ידי רצועות unconventional weaponry like the לחי חמור טרייה (Jud. 15:15), Kara explains why it had to be fresh and therefore moist: לחה... שאם היתה הלחי יבשה לא היה יכול להרוג בה לפי שהיתה נשברת אבל עכשיו לא נשברה. He says that a chariot was drawn by four horses (I Kings 10:29), and that several chariots together were known as רכב (I Kings 16:9).

A band is a band שלוט מעצמן מאתיים מעצמן לשלוט גדוד is a band שחולכין בין מאה או מאתיים מעצמן לשלוט גדוד is a band...כאשר ימצאון He recognizes the existence of units of special troops and runners in the army of Israel (II Sam. 23:8; II Kings 11:4; 15:25), and distinguishes between שנפוצים על פני כל הארץ להרוג ולאבד המשחית, the marauders המחנה על העיר לבלתי המצב, which is ולשלול שלל ולבוז בז (I Sam. 13:17; Ezek. 24:6).

His explanation for איש הכיניים is particularly interesting: שכן דרך בעלי מלחמה כשבאין אלה לקראת אלה... שולחין אחד מהם אילו לאילו לדבר ביניהם או להשלים או להודיע את רצונם להילחם ואיזה יום תהיה המלחמה. ואותו אדם נקרא איש הכיניים (I Sam. 17:4). He is not merely the champion who represents his people but also a negotiator between two enemy camps.

לעת שרגילים, Spring was the season for conducting wars, המלכים לצאת שזהו שכבר גדלו העשבים והירקות שאז רגילים המלכים

לצאת למלחמה (II Sam. 11:1). A scout had specific functions: in an inhabited place, he had to give the alarm by blowing the ram's horn from the top of the tower when he observed the sword of the enemy,<sup>206</sup> and on the battlefield, כשישא גוי אל גוי חרב ואלה חוזים נוכח אלה שניהם מעמידין צופים בנוהג שבעולם, (I Sam. 14:16; Isa. 21:5). As to night encampments, שכן דרך גייסות כשחונים בלילה מעמידים להם חלוצים סביבות המחנה שאם יפול עליהם גדוד שיהיו אילו החלוצים נכונים לעמוד נגדם (Jud. 7:11). The order of the night watch was as follows: שלש אשמורת הוזה הלילה ועל כל אשמורת היו מעמידין שומרין מחדש ואילו ששמשו עד עכשיו הולכין וישנים להם (Jud. 7:11). How were the troops drawn up in battle? שהיו קריבין אנשי הצבא אל המלחמה היו מעמידין אנשי הצבא לאחורי המערכה ומקיפין ומסבבין כל אנשי המלחמה כמין עוגה וזו היא (I Sam. 17:20; cf. 26:5). Kara further makes a familiar but important point: נוח להחריד ולהלחם בעם שהוא שוקט ובוטח מעם שהוא נשמר דרך אותן (Jud. 18:7). He asserts that שנוצחין המלחמה לשרוק בקולם ולהשמיע קול ניצוחין...;<sup>207</sup> possibly this was a practice of his own time. In connection with fortifications, he tells us that a צבור אדמה is סוללה להגביה תל לעמוד עליו להילחם על העיר ועל שם שהוא כובשו וחובטו בעצים ומקבות כדי שיהא נדוש וכבוש בחוזק קורחו סוללה (II Kings 19:32; Ezek. 4:2).

The actual attack on a city was conducted from such a siege-mound, for two main reasons: The entrance was narrow and well-protected (Isa. 22:7), and defended by the regular army within the city (Isa. 29:3); and the method of digging beneath the gate or the wall was not always successful

because it meant exposing oneself for too long a period (Ezek. 21:27). A wall could be breached from a siege-mound, and Kara adds that during the siege of Jerusalem the inhabitants demolished their own homes in order to strengthen fissures in the wall with stones. The wall or gate was subjected to the steady blows of an iron-headed battering ram (Ezek. 21:27; cf. 4:2) or a sort of catapult which Kara describes in detail (Ezek. 26:9). Furthermore, כל עיר ועיר היו עושין לה שתי חומות חיל וחומה שורא ובר שורא ושברו אנשי (II Sam. 20:15). Similarly he says of Jerusalem, in connection with ויבן דוד בנה חומה נמוכה סביב המגדל והוא כעין that סביב מן המלוא וביתה חצר המגדל והמצודה ולפנים מן אותה חומה קרוי מילוא ובפנים בנה ונקרא... (II Sam. 5:9). As to the מילוא itself, (I Kings 9:15) מילוא על שם שמוקפת בחומה נמוכה וממלאין לתוכה עפר. So it would seem were the cities of Europe fortified in the Middle Ages.

## 6. The King's Court

As with the earlier topics, here again Kara's approach is of interest and the influence of his surroundings can be detected in indirect ways. First of all, kings customarily make a feast for their retinue upon their coronation.<sup>200</sup> In Kara's opinion only the heir to the throne may ride the royal mule (I Kings 1:33), and to have a chariot, horsemen and runners in front of the king belongs to טכסיסי מלכות.<sup>201</sup> He notes that אין דרך כבוד שאדם נכנס לחדר המלך לדבר אליו שיהא מבקש... חבירו עומד ושומע מה חבירו (I Sam. 16:22). Someone whom the king has condemned to death cannot escape his punishment (I Sam.

19:1), but a person who has come to visit the king or who is on a royal mission may not be killed (I Kings 2:5). He also explains the functions of the king's servants: אנשי התרים are customs officers שעוברים במקום למקום לסחור ופורעין לו מט מן הסחורה; the same is true of הרוכלים (I Kings 10:15). The גזברים are responsible for the financial affairs of the kingdom (II Kings 12:12). נצבים concern themselves with the maintenance of the king and his household (I Kings 4:5); they must not be confused with the נציבים, who are the king's representatives in distant regions to forestall any possible rebellion ((I Sam. 10:5; II Sam. 18:6). A סופר is needed לפי שאין לך מלך שאין באין לפניו דברים הרבה שצריכים זכרון שכל מי שבאין לפניו דברים הרבה אי אפשר לו שלא ישכת דבר זה מפני דבר זה, לפיכך צריך סופרים לכותבם וקורין אותו ספר זכרונות (I Kings 4:3). Elsewhere he notes that the scribe commits the king's judgments to writing.<sup>211</sup> The מזכיר determines the docket of those who are to be tried before the king,<sup>212</sup> and הספר שר must determine how many men can be conscripted from each city.<sup>213</sup> Kara also explains a number of duties in connection with the Temple carried out by different people,<sup>214</sup> such as שומרי הסף, who were ממונים על כל צרכי הסף, פקידים (II Kings 12:10; 23:4), the הבית ומפתחות העזרה בידם (II Kings 11:18), and others (II Kings 11:5).

## 7. Geography

Kara is not very knowledgeable with regard to geography, especially when he deals with the identity of localities in the land of Israel and the surrounding countries; and even as to those places which he can identify he possesses very few facts. Usually he explains the meaning of a place name and draws conclusions from it as to topography, climate and other points. This want of information is characteristic of the contemporary exegesis, both locally and in other places: knowledge of the land of Israel extended only to its famous sites. We shall now look at some instances of his treatment of place names, geographical concepts and scenic descriptions.

He explains יושבי סלע שדרים במקום שמים מופיעים as אשדות (Josh. 10:40). מן ההר means שכונות נפות, and he adds a French gloss in clarification (Josh. 11:2; I Kings 4:11; cf. I Sam. 19:19). אלון בצעננים refers to a plain with many pits מישור שהיו בו מצבות is אלון מצב, while נקבצים שם (Jud. 9:6).

People, he suggests (I Sam. 4:13), sat at crossroads and gazed at pedestrians [to conduct business with them?]. Along roads were placed milestones like האבן האזל (I Sam. 20:19), and perhaps also אבן הזוחלת (I Kings 1:9), but here it seems more likely that Kara was extrapolating from his own period to the distant past. He refers to the city as מטרופולין (II Sam. 20:19), and there are in addition ערי מנצח and open towns, ערי שדה (Jud. 5:7, 11; Isa. 42:11); the latter are also called עירים (Jud. 10:4). He provides an interesting explanation in connection with the city of תדמור (I Kings



קיבץ עפר בארץ המישור עד שעשאן תל גבוה ובנה לו על התל (9:18) חומה סביב ובנה בתוכה עיר וקרא אותה תדמור ובלע"ז קורין אותה דוניון. The מילוא, as we have already seen, is a place בירושלים בעיר דוד ונקרא מילוא על שם שמוקפת חומה נמוכה וממלאין (I Kings 9:15). לתוכה עפר.

Other localities in Israel with which he seems to be familiar are the hot springs of Tiberias (Josh. 11:8; Zeph. 1:10), the Sea of Galilee,<sup>16</sup> the Judaeen Hills and Mount Ephraim (Josh. 11:21; 12:7; Jer. 13:19; Ezek. 4:6), the Philistine coast (Josh. 13:2) and Jericho (Jud. 1:16). All other places, as we have noted, are explained in line with their names. Thus ארץ כנליים ארץ טיט שהרגל משתקעת is ארץ כנול (I Kings 9:13), and דרך דרך השכונני באהלים means דרך דרך (Jud. 8:11; Isa. 42:11; Jer. 2:10). He offers a similar treatment of עין רוגל (Josh. 15:7), and many others.<sup>17</sup> רמתיים צופים

In glossing נחל קדומים (Jud. 5:21) he makes an interesting point: מקום הוא ושמו קדומים וישב על נחל קישון... ואל תשיבני לומר היכן מצינו מקום ששמו קדומים אומר אלף מקומות תמצא בארץ ישראל שלא נימנו בספר יהושע לפי שלא מנה יהושע אלא העיירות. העומדות על הגבולין וכשהוצרך הכתוב להזכירו הזכירו לצורך השעה. Nevertheless in his commentary on the sections in Joshua which deal with the dividing up of the land his scanty grasp of the geography is quite evident. He finds distinctions between the various expressions which Scripture uses in describing the boundaries of the tribes, ועבר, ועלה, ונסב, and וירד (Josh. 15:2-3, 9), whereas in fact these are nothing but ways of defining direction and area, and do not

denote specific localities.

On many occasions he also grapples with the geography of the Middle East as a whole, and here too he exhibits only a slight knowledge of places and landscapes. From the Bible itself and other sources he realized the importance of הַיַּאֲזָר, the Nile (Jer. 46:7), as Egypt's one and only source of water for the whole country, which is generally deficient in rain water. So great is the Nile's significance that Egypt itself is named after the river which at times floods it.<sup>218</sup> Kara also identifies the Scriptural נִי with Alexandria (Jer. 46:25; Ezek. 30:14), but makes a serious geographical error when he explains that the city of Gaza is to be found in the southwestern corner of Egypt (he bases himself on Joshua 13:3).<sup>219</sup> He commits similar errors in connection with other places, starting with Jerusalem, which he declares to be in the south (Isa. 21:1), while Damascus מִצְעַת מִזְרְחִית לְאַרְץ (Amos 1:3); it is more accurately to the north-east. He places Tyre and Sidon in the west of Israel (Amos 1:3; Joel 4:4), and Philistia as well, although in truth the former lie to the north and the latter to the south-west, along the sea coast.

He places Ammon, Moab and Edom (also called Yemen) to the south;<sup>220</sup> south-east would be more correct. Elsewhere (Jer. 22:6) he identifies the district of Gilead, from which medicines came, as belonging to Lebanon, when it is actually part of the historical land of Israel, won from Sihon in Transjordan.<sup>221</sup> It must be admitted that there are some places which he identifies correctly, if in general terms, like Tarshish (Jonah 1:3), the land of Cush (Ezek. 30:4, 9),

the isles of Elisha (Ezek. 27:5), Babylon, Medea and Persia (Isa. 41:25; Jer. 50:9; Ezek. 17:4). On one occasion he explains, through a comparison with events of his own time, that people who settle inside another country, not far from the border of their own land, are considered as belonging to their country of origin (Ezek. 23:23).

He displays a general familiarity with the natural cycle whereby vapour rises from the sea, turns into clouds moved by the wind, and finally descends as rain (Jer. 4:11; 10:13); and with the stars and constellations in their array (Amos 5:8, 26; Job 9:9; 38:31).

### Chapter 3

#### Kara's Use of Other Sources in his Commentary upon Prophets

It may reasonably be asserted that no commentator - and certainly no classical commentator - operates in an exegetical vacuum. We cannot imagine a commentary which does not draw, consciously or unconsciously, upon exegetical tradition, transmitted orally or in written texts. Beyond doubt this is true of the greatest of the commentators like Saadiah Gaon, Rashi and Rashbam: their work displays the influence of Talmudic and Midrashic literature, and of their exegetical predecessors. Kara too draws upon earlier work. Some of his explanations are cited in the name of their originator, while others are integrated without acknowledgment into his continuous commentary.

In this chapter I wish to look at his use of the following sources: the Aramaic Targumim; Rashi; Menahem bar Helbo; Menahem ben Saruk and Dunash ben Labrat; and other commentators whom he mentions. I shall conclude with some notes on his approach to *מסורה*, *נוסח*, and *טעמי המקרא*. In each case certain questions must be asked. When does he work other people's interpretations into his own commentary without ascription, and when does he acknowledge his source? When commentators are divided on a particular point, when does he mention the dispute, simply give the opinion of one side, or provide his own explanation (or criticism) in favour of another opinion? Does he display a unified method of approach towards these sources? An investigation of these questions

may make it possible to sketch out Kara's working approach towards his predecessors.

### I. The Aramaic Targumim

Kara occasionally cites the solutions offered by Onkelos and Targum Jonathan to various problems.<sup>1</sup> He refers to Onkelos on the Torah in 24 places,<sup>2</sup> once by name<sup>3</sup> and on the other occasions through phrases like מתרגמין or כתרגומו, etc.; and invariably he accepts Onkelos's point without dispute. His approach to Targum Jonathan, in his numerous references, is quite different. He makes use of a wide and varied range of phrases when citing Targum Jonathan,<sup>4</sup> generally employing the word תרגומו<sup>5</sup> or some variation upon it,<sup>6</sup> or פירש יונתן<sup>7</sup> or ויונתן פתר<sup>8</sup>. Frequently he quotes from Targum Jonathan without saying so.<sup>9</sup> Sometimes he draws upon it for a single word,<sup>10</sup> for a phrase or expression,<sup>11</sup> or occasionally for entire verses.<sup>12</sup> His purpose is to explain place names,<sup>13</sup> understand hapaxes and unusual words<sup>14</sup> or parables or poems,<sup>15</sup> or to get rid of difficulties.<sup>16</sup>

What are the different ways in which Targum Jonathan is cited, and how do they differ from one another?

1. Kara first sets down his own gloss and then, in confirmation, Targum Jonathan.

2. On occasions when he has derived his solution from Targum Jonathan, or his exegetical determination arises from Targum Jonathan, he quotes the Targum and then supports it with something from the text, adds to it an explanatory note, or leaves it to stand by itself.

3. He cites Targum Jonathan together with another commentary - that is, Targum Jonathan represents one side in an exegetical dispute. Here two strands can be distinguished: when Kara gives his own interpretation first and follows it with Targum Jonathan, which implies that without dismissing Targum Jonathan entirely he thinks his own version superior; and when he places Targum Jonathan before his own view, which means that he wholly rejects the former.

We shall now describe in more detail the different ways in which Kara makes use of Targum Jonathan.

1. When Kara's Interpretation Appears First, and Targum Jonathan Is Then Cited in Support

When, in his independent endeavour to understand the text, Kara arrives at a particular exegetical determination and the 'right' interpretation, and subsequently finds the same point in Targum Jonathan, his practice is to set down his own gloss first and then to cite Targum Jonathan in confirmation to clinch the וְשִׁנּוּ. In these cases, we must note that Kara's interpretation is broader and more comprehensive than that found in Targum Jonathan,<sup>17</sup> and that the passage cited from Targum Jonathan does not always deal with the verse under discussion. Instead, he uses Targum Jonathan to supply parallels from other verses in support of his view, which does not necessarily overlap with Targum Jonathan on the verse immediately in question.<sup>18</sup>

For example:

a. Interpretations wider than that of Targum Jonathan

1. Isaiah 54:12: וְשַׁעֲרֶיךָ לֶאֱבֹנִי אֶקְדָּח.

Rashi and Kimchi show us that אֶקְדָּח is to be understood as 'burning coal', from the root קד"ח, as in Isa. 50:11, קוֹדְחִי שֹׁא, that is, some type of precious stone which can burn like a torch or give light as fire does.<sup>19</sup>

After Kara has explained that these are precious stones sparkling like fire, and supported this from Targum Jonathan, he further cites the Midrash.<sup>20</sup> What are the exegetical choices here? Either 'stones quarried from the rock' (from נִקְדָּח) or 'sparkling precious stones'. Kara prefers the second, in view of the fact that verses 11-12 speak of precious stones. אֶבֶן אֶקְדָּח are therefore gems whose preciousness is evinced by their sparkling like fire.

11. Jeremiah 38:5: וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ צִדְקִיָּהוּ הִנֵּה הוּא בִּידְכֶם כִּי הַמֶּלֶךְ יֹכֵל אֶתְכֶם זָנַר. This verse seems to be incomplete, for אֶתְכֶם is a direct object and the preceding verb, יֹכֵל, requires an indirect object (לְכֶם). Some verb corresponding to אֶתְכֶם is therefore called for, and Kara explains that the verse is somewhat abridged, and adds יֹכֵל לְהַשִּׁיב אֶתְכֶם זָנַר. After he has given this explanation, he finds that Targum Jonathan does so as well, and notes this accordingly.

b. Interpretations wider than Targum Jonathan's, but not on the same verse

We shall note one instance where after his own interpretation Kara does not cite Targum Jonathan on the verse in question (since he in fact differs from it), but relies for support on Targum Jonathan in connection with a different verse.

Jeremiah 4: 31 קול בת ציון תתיכח תפרש כפיה 31. Kara says:

תתיכח. לשון דאבון נפש שתרגומו מכה נפש. כלומר תדאב ותאבל על עצמה.

Targum Jonathan explains תתיכח with דמשתטחא, unlike Kara, and so he cites in support Targum *Onkelos* on Deut. 28:65, ודאבון נפש שתרגומו ומפחת נפש. The exegetical difficulty here is apparent from the different senses advanced in the two Targumim, and here Kara prefers Onkelos.<sup>21</sup>

## 2. When Kara has Derived his Solution from Targum Jonathan

When Kara derives his explanation from Targum Jonathan, or his exegetical determination has come to him through his study of Targum Jonathan, his practice is to cite Targum Jonathan in one of the following ways:

### a. He quotes Targum Jonathan and supports it with a Scriptural reference

1. Jeremiah 31:39: וכל העמק הפגרים, ת"י כל משרא אתר דנפלו... תמן פגרי משיריית אתוראה. דכתיב ויצא מלאך ה' ויך במחנה אשור (II Kings 19:35). והנה כלם פגרים מתים.

Kara takes his gloss of עמק הפגרים from Targum Jonathan: that it means the plain where the corpses of the Assyrian army fell during the siege of Sennacherib, in Hezekiah's reign. To support this, he cites a verse which speaks of פגרים מתים. In accepting Targum Jonathan he effectively rejects other possibilities. One might, for example, take עמק הפגרים as a cemetery in which dead bodies are buried, but he cannot accept this because פגרי or פגרים always has an unfavourable connotation in the Bible since it is connected with punishment or unnatural death for human beings,<sup>22</sup> or



is associated with animals.<sup>23</sup>

ii. In I Kings 6:34 we find both שני קלעים and שני צלעים.

Kara notes that Targum Jonathan renders both as צירין, and says,

וברוב מקומות מצאתי כן בשתי כתובות הכתובים זה אצל זה  
והם פתרון אחד שהכתוב משנה את לשונם כמו גם עתה. הנה  
השמים עדי וסהדי במרומים (איוב ט"ז 9) ועד וסהיד לשון  
אחד הם ומשונים בלשון אף כאן צלעים וקלעים שניהם פתר  
יונתן ציריו זהו פתרונו של יונתן וגם לפי משמעו...

Here Kara moves to a detailed explanation of the two nouns,  
and returns to the first issue:

ואל יהא לב אדם מגמגם על פתרון זה שיאמר היתכן לשתי  
תיבות הנמצאין בפסוק אחד שיפתורו שניהם לשון אחד שבספר  
מוגה של תרגום נביאים ראיתי קלעים מתורגם דשין וכדי  
לסמוך עליו.

Thus he defends the Targum and supports it with a detailed  
clarification which rests upon personal testimony.

b. He quotes Targum Jonathan and adds a note or explanation

When he cites only the solution given by Targum Jonathan and  
places after it an explanation or note upon part of the  
Targum, he indicates that this is מקרא של פשוטו and that he  
adopts it as his own opinion.

1. I Kings 7:33: ומעשה האופנים כמעשה אופן המרכבה.

Kara explains: רצונך לידע מעשה המכוונות עיין לך במעשה המרכבה  
של בני אדם... He then cites Rashi's interpretation, which in  
his opinion misunderstands the Targum and is consequently  
misleading, and adds, מפני מה תרגם אותן כעובד גלגלי מרכבת...  
יקרא? אומר, יונתן לא ערך אלי מלים ואף על פי כן הרימותי ידי אל  
ה' שלא עלה במחשבתו ללמד לדורות דבר הנראה מתוך דבר שאינו נראה  
[Jonathan, in his opinion, did not think  
of explaining the chariot here in terms of the obscure  
Chariot passage in Ezekiel.] It follows from this that the

reference cannot be to the chariot of Ezekiel but to a human artefact, and Kara goes on to explain the Targum. He provides several interpretations for I Sam. 10:12, including the Targum's, of which he says, ולשון זה נראה יותר מכולם.

ii. Jeremiah 47:3: מקול שעטת פרסות אביריו.

Kara says:

תרגם מקול מפסועית. ופתרוננו מקול פסיעות פרסות סוסי אביריו ומרעש רכבו והמון גלגליו.<sup>24</sup>  
The word שעטת is a hapax. The context makes several interpretations possible - the noise of hooves, loud knockings, or (as in Targum Jonathan: מפסועית) the marching of horses' hooves. In such a case Kara relies upon the Targum.

c. He quotes Targum Jonathan without any addition

In quoting Targum Jonathan on a word, phrase or verse, without any other remark either before or after, Kara indicates that he is in agreement with the Targum and that it constitutes פשוטו של מקרא. It is readily comprehensible, and no clarification is necessary.

Hosea 13:3: וכעשן מארובה

Kara: כתרג' וכתננא דסליק מכוות נורא.

The word ארובה is frequently found in the Bible in association with the heavens: ארובות השמים<sup>25</sup> - the windows of heaven; and it is also applied to the depression which contains the eyeball<sup>26</sup> and to a dovecote.<sup>27</sup> In the present context it means a chimney - a window to let the smoke out. In view of all these senses, Kara quotes Targum Jonathan for a precise statement as to the meaning of the verse.<sup>28</sup>

### 3. Targum Jonathan Together With Another Interpretation

Here we must distinguish between two methods whereby Targum Jonathan is cited together with a dissenting commentary:

#### a. When Kara places his own interpretation before Targum Jonathan's

In such a case, he indicates that his own interpretation is preferable to that of Targum Jonathan, but that the latter is not to be entirely dismissed.

Isaiah 11:15: בעים רוחו.

Kara:

ברוח גדולה וחזקה. בעים מגזרת "לעי השדה" שהוא לשון קיבוץ וכן "שמו את ירושלים לעיים". ויונתן תרגם במימר נביוהי. הוה ליה למימר למקרא בבעים רוחו?

Kara explains that in the word בעים the letter ב is a preposition and the word itself is עי (heap, collection, large number), and he cites Scriptural passages in confirmation; compare his gloss on Job 30:24. According to Targum Jonathan, however, בעי is the root, מלשון בקשה ותרגם, במאמר נביאיו - that is, במימר נביוהי. But Kara has difficulties with this, because it ignores the preposition ב, and should have appeared as בבעים רוחו.<sup>29</sup> Here he emphasises the fact that his gloss is to be preferred to that of Targum Jonathan, which he cites second.

#### b. When he cites Targum Jonathan before his own opinion

In these instances, his intention is to imply that he neither agrees with Targum Jonathan nor thinks that it has any basis in the פשט, and that it is therefore to be rejected.

<sup>30</sup>נבוכה ה' דרככם

Kara:

...ויונתן תירגם אתקיו ה' אורחכון ועשה מן נוכח לשון נכוחה ואי אפשר לפי שהנו"ן ננקדת במלאפוס והכ' בפתח...

אבל [אם] היה פתרונו לשון נכוחה אז היה הכ"ף ננקדת  
 בקמץ...  
 [The view of the Targum is not to be accepted because the כ  
 is pointed with פתח and not with קמץ.] On David's speech at  
 the end of his life<sup>31</sup> Kara says ... ויונתן פתר בתרגומו מה  
 שפתר אבל פשוטו כך הוא, that is, that he regards the statement  
 in Targum Jonathan that David prophesies the future as  
 On another occasion when he quotes Targum Jonathan<sup>32</sup>  
 together with another interpretation he says of the latter  
 ונראין דבריו, which means that he rejects Targum  
 Jonathan.<sup>33</sup> As to הכרתי והפלתי, which the Targum renders as  
 קשתיא וקלעייא, Kara admits that איני יכול לעמוד על  
 Elsewhere it seems to me that he has not<sup>34</sup>  
 understood the Targum, for in I Samuel 14:19, where Saul says  
 to the priest, אסוף ידך, and Targum Jonathan translates קריב  
 (in accordance with 23:9), in the sense of 'inquiring  
 of' the ephod and not hiding it away, Kara (and Kimchi) think  
 that the meaning is 'not to inquire': ... לא המתיו עד שישב  
 לו דבר ואמ' לכהן אסוף ידך כלו' כנוס ידך אליך ואף כאן לא שמר  
 But this is an exceptional case.<sup>35</sup>

#### 4. Errors

I shall now list several places in which Kara's citation of  
 Targum Jonathan is unclear or mistaken, or his version of the  
 text differs from ours.

a. (Jud. 8:13) מלמעלה החרס.

תרגומו עד לא מיעל שימשא כלומר עד שלא שקעה השמש. But  
 Targum Jonathan in fact reads עד מיעל שימשא - that is, before  
 sunset.

b. (Jud. 8:16) ויודע בהם.<sup>36</sup>

Kara: זתבר ותרגומו וגרר עליהם; but Targum Jonathan says עליהון, in the sense of breaking them on them.

c. (II Sam. 1:19). הצבי ישראל.

Kara: ויונתן תירגם איתעתדתון ישראל... כלו' אתם ישראל ניצבים... Whether by intention or not, Targum Jonathan reads הַצִּבִּי and not הָצִבִּי.

d. (II Sam. 3:12). וישלח אבנר מלאכים אל דוד תחתיו לאמר.

Kara: במקומו של דוד שלח לו יואב מלאכים... ויונתן תירגם ישלח... Targum Jonathan translates אבנר איזגדון לות מאתריה למימר as it does in 2:23, but there it means 'in the place where he was', while here תחת cannot possibly mean 'from the place'.

e. (II Sam. 16:12). אולי יראה ה' בעיני.

Kara: כתרג' בדמעת עיני. It is strange that there is no connection between the Targum and the text.

f. (II Kings 5:24). ויבא אל העפל.

Kara: ויונתן תירגם אתר כסי. It is possible that העפל is taken as אפל, so that it is translated as 'in a covered place' (so also Metzudath Tzion), although it is actually a locality in Samaria.

To sum up, we can say of Kara's approach to the Aramaic Targumim that (1) in twenty-four places in his commentary upon Prophets he makes use of Onkelos on the Torah, naming him on one occasion only. In all these references Targum Onkelos is given as the sole interpretation. (2) He makes frequent use of Targum Jonathan on the Prophets, sometimes agreeing with it and sometimes dissenting. (3) When he has arrived independently at a gloss similar to the one he then

finds in Targum Jonathan, he sets down first his own interpretation and then a brief account of Targum Jonathan. On occasion he relies upon Targum Jonathan in connection with a verse which is not that under discussion. (4) When he has actually derived his explanation of the text from Targum Jonathan, he quotes the passage in question and then either appends a Scriptural verse in support; adds a note or explanation; or leaves Targum Jonathan to stand by itself. (5) When a gloss from Targum Jonathan is cited together with his own interpretation, the order is of significance: if his own opinion is placed first, it is regarded as the preferable view, although Targum Jonathan is not to be dismissed, but if it comes after the citation from Targum Jonathan, the latter is rejected on the grounds of its insufficient foundation in the טש.

## II. Rashi

### 1. Historical Background

Rashi was born in 1040 in Troyes, in the Champagne district. His was a family of scholars, and he spent his youth in his birthplace and later moved to Worms to study in a yeshivah of the Rhine region. Thence he left for Mainz, returned as a consequence of economic difficulties to Troyes, and became there one of the leading figures in the community. His extraordinary expertise in Talmud enabled him to pronounce on many problems of הלכה. After some time he started a study circle on the Torah which turned into a yeshivah whose importance increased greatly with the destruction of the Rhine yeshivoth in 1097 at the beginning of the Crusades.<sup>37</sup> As Kara was a native of Troyes it is reasonable to assume

that he knew Rashi and his Beth Midrash, to a greater or lesser extent (as I shall show below), and that there was some interchange of opinions between them on exegetical points.<sup>38</sup> There is some evidence for all this.

(a) Rashi mentions Kara a number of times: משום ר' מנחם [נ"ר] (Isa. 10:24); כך שמעתי מרבי יוסף וחנאני (Isa. 64:3);<sup>39</sup> 'משום ר' מנחם שאמר משום ר' עזריה שמעתי מפי ר' פ"י (Job 9:17);<sup>40</sup> and similarly in his additional notes to his commentary on Num. 17:8 Rashi acknowledges Kara.<sup>41</sup>

b. As we know, Helbo never met Rashi, and his comments were relayed to him by Kara. Rashi quotes Helbo in a number of places, and Kara's role as an intermediary is quite clear: ובשם רב' מנחם ששמע מפי ערבי אחד ברשן בלשון ערבי משוגע... ולא ידעתי מה הן ושמעתי משמו של רבי מנחם זצ"ל שהם (I Sam. 19:24); (I Kings 6:9); ובשם ר' מנחם שמעתי... (II Kings 4:39). Since he heard Helbo's glosses משם, it is evident that they cannot have been available to him in written form, and that Kara reported them orally. On several occasions, too, Rashi makes use of Helbo without direct acknowledgment.<sup>42</sup>

c. The acquaintanceship between Rashbam and Kara has already been demonstrated, and I accept Razin's opinion that Kara spent much time in Rashi's house and there became acquainted with Rashbam (for which there is written evidence).<sup>43</sup>

M. Ahrend writes that Kara cannot reasonably be regarded as Rashi's pupil, but that the two sages met and exchanged ideas.<sup>44</sup> This may be so, or conceivably the two studied together for a period in Rashi's Beth Midrash in Troyes, so that the connection between them was stronger than is now

apparent; but on these points there is no evidence free of ambiguity. Several scholars have tried to elucidate the link between the commentaries of Rashi and of Kara upon various Biblical books.<sup>45</sup> Some minimise the significance of Kara's work, regarding it merely as an elaboration of Rashi's<sup>46</sup> or a faithful reworking of Rashi with some innovations.<sup>47</sup> One writer goes so far as to assert that in his commentary on the Prophets Kara is entirely dependent upon Rashi, and that only with regard to the Hagiographa is he independent.<sup>48</sup>

At the beginning of this century Apenstein showed that this was an exaggerated view, and he was the first to publish a lengthy study on this topic.<sup>49</sup> In his view, the criticisms of Rashi expressed by Kara in his commentary on the Early Prophets prove that he was not dependent upon him. We may add that Kara's commentary is far longer than Rashi's, and has a different approach. Apenstein details the differences between the commentaries on the Early Prophets, and concludes that just as Rashi influenced Kara, 'so in the same manner, if not to a greater extent, Kara influenced Rashi.'<sup>50</sup>

Before we examine in more depth the relationship between Kara's commentaries upon the Prophets and Rashi's, it is desirable to set down the general impression created by an initial reading through of both works. Kara's commentary is several times as long as Rashi's, and it is controlled by a leading principle, the wish to follow out the connection between points in the text and discern the Biblical author's continuity of thought. It is not made up of isolated explanations dealing with specific phrases but is a



paraphrase of the entire text. Moreover, Kara's style is peculiar to himself. It involves appeals to the reader and a debate with him through a use of particular expressions and rules which Kara has adopted - none of which is to be found in Rashi.

Taking all these together, we must conclude, even before we examine the subject in detail, that Kara's commentary on the Prophets is in no way an extended reworking of Rashi but an independent commentary which contains many points learnt from teachers and colleagues like Rashi and Helbo.

## 2. Citations from the Sages Found in Kara and Not in Rashi

- a. Kara quotes Rabbi Meir the שליח צבור at I Kings 10:28; Rashi nowhere mentions him.
- b. The gloss of Rabbi Yitzhak b. Rabbi Eleazar Halevi on I Kings 5:3 does not appear in Rashi.<sup>51</sup>
- c. Sefer Josippon is cited by Kara on Jud. 5:21 but not by Rashi.<sup>52</sup>

Two further Sages are admittedly mentioned by Rashi, but it was Kara who told him of their interpretations: Helbo, whom Rashi never met, and who was Kara's uncle, and Eleazar Hakallir, whose liturgical poems, made known to Kara by Helbo, were passed on by him to Rashi, who calls him ר' אלעזר.<sup>53</sup> It should be said that the scantiness of these references does not prove anything, inasmuch as relatively speaking all of them appear in Kara only very rarely.

## 3. Use of the Aramaic Targumim

Kara makes use of the Targumim more frequently and for a

wider variety of purposes than does Rashi.<sup>54</sup>

a. He cites Targum Onkelos only once by name,<sup>55</sup> all his other references being without identification; there is nothing of this in Rashi.

b. Targum (Talmud) Yerushalmi is cited by Kara in three places: Jud. 5:28; II Sam. 17:19; and Hos. 7:5. Rashi does not refer to it.

c. Targum Jonathan on Prophets is the Targum most often cited by Kara. Not only does he refer to it far more frequently than Rashi does,<sup>56</sup> but he does not hesitate to attack Rashi with the assertion that the latter has not understood the Targum, והוא מעוות הישרה לכל שתורת אלקיו בקרבו, ומהפך דברי אלקים חיים ומטעה כל ישראל אחריו בפתרונו.<sup>57</sup>

#### 4. Use of Midrashim

In this section I do not intend to discuss differences in approach to the Midrash, the manner in which it is used, or when and how Kara cites Midrashim in comparison with Rashi, since these points are discussed in a separate chapter. I wish simply to show that Kara tends to cite the Midrash at greater length than Rashi, whose allusions are brief. As I examined the two commentaries on the Early Prophets, I found that more than thirty Midrashim appear in Kara and not in Rashi,<sup>58</sup> and that a slightly smaller number of Midrashim is found in Rashi and not in Kara.<sup>59</sup> This fact of itself indicates that in this area there is no close partnership between the two commentaries, and further support for this surmise comes from the observation that some Midrashim are cited by both, but in connection with different texts.<sup>60</sup> A

second point is Kara's longwindedness. In II Sam. 21:19, for example, Rashi says on **היו משפחתו אורגים בן יערי אורגים** that **כרוכת למקדש הקרוי יער** (seven words). On the following phrase, **תירגמו יונתן... ופתר' יערי כמו יער**, Kara says, **בית הלחמי, הלבנון הוא בית המקדש שנקרא שמו יער הלבנון ומידה כנגד מידה**, **יבוא דוד שאמו אורגת כרוכת לביהמ"ק במנור אורגים**; this amounts to 25 words.<sup>61</sup>

In general, we can say that not only are fewer, and different, Midrashim found in Kara, but that in citing Midrashim identical to Rashi's he quotes them at greater length - a feature characteristic of his style.<sup>62</sup>

##### 5. Quotations from the Talmud

As in the foregoing section on Midrashim, we argue here that there are numerous places where Kara quotes from the Talmud as to a range of matters; that these citations are not to be found in Rashi; and that where the two use the same passage Kara generally does so at greater length. That Rashi was a greater expert in Talmud than Kara is here taken for granted. In what follows I have no intention of suggesting otherwise: what we find in Kara is no especial profundity or discussion of points, but simply Talmudic allusions for a variety of purposes. In his commentary on the Early Prophets alone there are about fifty such references which are absent from Rashi.<sup>63</sup> Once again we may find the same passage used by the two commentators in different places. Kara on II Sam. 6:23, for example, is identical with Rashi on 21:8. Here is a single example of Kara's full and lengthy style. In Jud. 5:21 Rashi cites a Midrash in seven words, while in Kara it is

eleven times as long: seventy-six words. While this is an extreme instance, in most cases Kara is much more long-winded than Rashi.<sup>64</sup>

#### 6. טעמי המקרא, נוסח ומסורה

In every place where Kara speaks of המקרא Rashi says nothing at all, so that on this head Kara is wholly original. Below we discuss at length Kara's attitude towards נוסח and מסורה. A comparison of passages in Kara and in Rashi establishes that there are no parallel allusions. As I will show, Kara goes to trouble to find exact texts, and does not accept the Sages' opinion without demur. On the problematic passage in I Sam. 1:9, כי לנביא היום יקרא לפנים הרואה, Rashi writes הסופר כתב זאת ואין זה מדברי נער שאול Kara, by contrast, does not hesitate to say explicitly מכלל שספר זה לא נכתב בימי שמואל... Both know that in the opinion of the Sages Samuel wrote his own Book, but Rashi does not venture to oppose this in so many words. In two places where it is possible that Kara had a different נוסח (once as to a טעם<sup>65</sup> and once as to וכתוב<sup>66</sup>), nothing at all appears in Rashi.<sup>67</sup> Compared with Kara, then, Rashi is conservative in his approach to נוסח and מסורה, and in this he faithfully reflects his period, as we shall show later.<sup>68</sup>

## 7. The Relationship Between the Early Prophets and Chronicles

Kara frequently compares passages in the Early Prophets with parallel passages in Chronicles in order to bring out differences in the text, supplement the information provided in Prophets or settle differing versions. In most instances Rashi does not address himself to the matter.<sup>69</sup> Once again, in those cases where the two commentators resolve outright contradictions,<sup>70</sup> Kara's treatment is generally far longer and more detailed than Rashi's.<sup>71</sup> As for contradictions within the Early Prophets, I have counted eight cases which are reconciled by Kara and which Rashi leaves unmentioned.<sup>72</sup> In one instance each offers a different solution.<sup>73</sup>

## 8. Use of ר"ל (Vernacular)

The extensive use made by Kara of ר"ל constitutes one of his principal qualities as a teacher of Scripture who was concerned to teach verses in accordance with their literal meaning. To make things easier for his students, he provided a translation into their own language. In this he followed a path laid down by his predecessors, but made a much greater and more varied use of the technique. As a general rule, we can say that almost all the instances of ר"ל found in Kara do not appear in Rashi; in a few places the two commentators use different terms, and in a very few instances their ר"ל is similar or identical. Some figures may make these points clearer:

a. ר"ל found in Kara and not in Rashi: Early Prophets: 83 instances;<sup>74</sup> Latter Prophets: 91 instances.<sup>75</sup> These 174

usages represent several times Rashi's total.

b. In several places, each commentator offers a different ללע". In Josh. 9:5, for example, Rashi translates נקודים with ללע". In II Kings 18:17, Rashi translates פוטקיר"ה בלע"ז and Kara with פוטקיר"ה בלע"ז. These represent two instances out of 42 in the Book of Prophets.<sup>76</sup> Taking (a) and (b) together, then, there are more than 200 instances in which there is no connection between the two commentators as to their use of ללע".

c. In a few places, the ו"ל is similar or identical in the two commentators. Since the transliteration of French words into Hebrew is in question, differences as to one or two letters are not generally significant. Some of the discrepancies arise from editing practices.<sup>77</sup> The total number of instances, 40, is relatively low.<sup>78</sup>

d. Unlike Rashi, who provides לע"ז for single words or phrases, Kara is prepared to use it for entire sections of a verse. In I Sam. 1:20, for example, he renders ותהר חנה ותלד with אדאז"ט חנה אנייריי"ד אדנוו"ט פי"ל בלע"ז; and there are other instances elsewhere.<sup>79</sup>

We must conclude that in the area of ׀"ע Kara stands revealed as wholly independent; and just as it is possible that Rashi influenced him, so may he have influenced Rashi. It should further be remarked that in Rashbam, whose work is later than Kara's, the quantity of ׀"ע is very small.<sup>80</sup> Rashbam did not continue in the line laid down by Kara, who was indeed מִקְרָא, one who 'read' the Torah to his students; and it would appear that the use of Hebrew was correspondingly reinforced.<sup>81</sup>

### 9. Reciprocal Allusions

In the Early Prophets, Rashi does not name Kara (as he does in Isaiah and Job, as we noted above in the introductory matter), but he does mention Helbo. It is clear today that Helbo's glosses came to Rashi though Kara, Rashi himself owning that he has heard something מנחם של ר' <sup>82</sup>. To this should be added the instances in which Rashi makes use of Helbo without naming him.<sup>83</sup> Kara, by contrast, mentions Rashi by name 19 times, as a rule employing the form ר'נא ר' <sup>84</sup>. When he cites Rashi's opinions, Kara generally uses the expressions <sup>85</sup> or ומצאתי נראיתי בפירוני ר'נא or בפירוני <sup>86</sup>. On occasion he says explicitly שלמה ר' <sup>87</sup>. This variety is in no way surprising, for it is characteristic of Kara's entire mode of writing.

Two points should be noted. Kara does not use the root נח"ר when he cites a gloss of Rashi's, as he does when invoking other commentators, and there is no evidence in his work that he heard things directly from Rashi.

### 10. Degree of Identity Between the Commentaries on Prophets

In every book within Prophets we find identical comments supplied by Kara and by Rashi. The number is generally speaking very low in Joshua and Judges and greater in Samuel and the Latter Prophets; and it increases to an extreme degree in Kings. We must reject Apenstein's opinion with regard to Judges that 'a great part of the glosses are identical in Rashi and in Kara, as is proved from the notes',<sup>88</sup> since examination of the notes indicates that nothing can be shown from them. Secondly, the Book of Judges

contains 21 chapters. On average, Kara glosses about 15 verses in each chapter. He therefore provides about 300 pieces of commentary, and of these only about 50 resemble Rashi's - that is to say, one sixth of the total, hardly 'a great part'.

In Joshua, there are about 20 points of identity or considerable closeness between Rashi and Kara (out of the 16 chapters commented upon). Judges offers two or three points in each chapter, amounting to about 50 instances of significant similarity (only in the Song of Deborah is there a great number of identical glosses). The relationship strengthens in Samuel, for in each chapter there are four or five points of identity or similarity. In the first chapters of Kings the proportion increases to between seven and ten, and from Chapter 6 the identity is so great that it is the points of difference which appear exceptional. It seems reasonable to suggest that Kara's intensive use of Rashi in Kings is responsible for the criticisms he utters of Rashi, most of which are to be found in that book.

In the Latter Prophets, if we except Ezekiel (where I have made no comparison), the situation is as follows. (a) About 15 glosses are cited in Rashi's name;<sup>80</sup> (b) about 10 clearly allude to Rashi;<sup>81</sup> (c) about 100 are partially similar or almost identical in expression;<sup>81</sup> and (d) about 340 are similar in content but not in language.<sup>82</sup>

We must not conclude from this that where the glosses are identical Kara copied from Rashi; it is reasonable to think that exchanges took place between them and that Kara was the source of some of Rashi's interpretations. It should be borne



in mind that Kara would have seen nothing dishonourable in such borrowing, for as Poznanski makes clear,<sup>93</sup> it was customary practice in the period. From everything we have already said, it also emerges that Kara displays no consistent approach in his citations of Rashi. Sometimes he copies from him with punctilious accuracy,<sup>94</sup> or retains the basic idea with some verbal changes;<sup>95</sup> and sometimes he cites him with alterations which fall into two categories. Either (a) he expands Rashi by adding explanatory matter (i) to strengthen and clarify his point, or (ii) to introduce a further exegetical element such as translation or Midrashic reference, etc., or (b) he omits something and quotes Rashi only in part.

These different modes exhibit an immense range of variation. The significant point is the distinction in principle between them. This distinction has already been drawn in the comparative sections above, but a more comprehensive view must now be taken as we follow out continuous passages of commentary.

a (i). מתוך שהם (I Kings 3:9). Rashi writes, רבים יש להם עסקים רבים ונאים לדון ואין לי מתון לעיין בדינם. Kara writes, שעם רב יש לו עסקים יתירים ונאים לדון ואין לי מתון לעיין בדינן שעוד זה צועק אינו מספיק לדבר דבריו עד שהאחר הוא... Here Kara repeats what Rashi has to say, with some slight changes and a greater concreteness of expression.

ii. הכרתי והפלתי (I Kings 1:38). This is an instance of the addition of an exegetical element, for Rashi writes, תרגם, יונתן וקשתיא וקלעיא ורבותינו אמרו אורים ותומים, while Kara

comments,

אילו גבורים שבאו עמו מארץ כרתים, ופלשתים הם יושבי חבל  
ים פלשתים דכתיב הוי יושבי חבל הים גוי כרתים [צפניה ב'  
5] ותרגומו קשתיא וקלעיא ופת' רבותינו אילו אורים  
ותומים,

thus adding a comprehensive explanation of the place of  
origin of the גבורים.

b. (I Kings 3:14). Omission of material is  
notable here, for Rashi comments,

העושר והכבוד שלא התניתי בתורתי לתת למלך אתן לך בין  
זכאי בין חייב אבל אורך הימים ומלכות הדורות כבר התניתי  
בתורתי לבלתי סור מן המצוה למען יאריך ימים על ממלכתו  
וגו' (דב' י"ז 20) ועל אותו תנאי לא אשנה ואם תלך בדרכי  
והארכת וגו' וכן במלכות דורותיו אחריו אמר לו ואתה אם  
תלך לפני וגומ'. לא יכרת לך איש וגו' (לקמן ס' 4, 5) כך  
שנויה בספרי ורבי חנינא בן גמליאל אומר הרי הוא אומר גם  
עושר גם כבוד וגומר.

[I have made no conditions in my Torah as to wealth and glory  
for kings, and I will give them to you whether you deserve  
them or not, but long life and the descent of kingship to  
posterity have been made dependent upon not swerving from the  
commandment, that you may prolong your days in your kingdom,  
etc. (Deut. 17:20); and I will not change this condition.  
Similarly, as to his children's inheriting his kingdom, God  
said, 'Now if you walk before me ... a man shall not be cut  
off from you...'; see the discussion in Sifri; and R. Hanina  
b. Gamliel said, 'He mentions both wealth and glory, and  
makes an end.']

Kara's gloss is

עם העושר והכבוד, שכן התניתי בתורתי לבלתי סור מן המצוה  
ימין ושמאל למען יאריך ימים על ממלכתו וגו' (דברים י"ז  
20).

He has shortened Rashi considerably and missed out most of  
his points.<sup>96</sup>

Further categorisations of Kara's approach might be  
suggested, but this seems unnecessary in view of the emphasis  
we have laid on the principal point - the differences,

qualitative and quantitative, between the two commentaries.

### 11. Kara's Criticism of Rashi

With regard to the Book of Kings, Apenstein claims that 'wherever Kara rejects Rashi's opinion with particular force, he cites him by name.'<sup>97</sup> As careful reading shows, however, Apenstein contradicts himself, and so it is difficult to determine his actual opinion. Ahrend<sup>98</sup> considers that 'Kara did not mention his master Rashi in his commentary unless he wished to disagree with him.'<sup>99</sup> To my mind the situation is rather different. On some occasions Kara attacks Rashi by name, and on other occasions he attacks him without identifying him at all. As a rule he is named when Kara quotes his gloss as differing from that of himself or another commentator whose text is also quoted.

#### a. חטאים (I Kings 1:21).

Rashi writes:

חסרים ומנועים מן הגדולה כמו אל השערה ולא יחטא (שופ' כ' 16).  
[They miss greatness, as one might fling a stone at a hair and miss (Jud. 20:16).] Kara (commenting on נפשך את נפשי) openly declares that Rashi is in error:

וכל מי שפותר חטאים חסירין מן המלכות כמו קולע (באבן)  
אל השערה ולא יחטא, טועה הוא.

#### b. כמעשה אופן המרכבה (I Kings 7:33).

Here is Rashi:

תרגם יונתן בעובד גלגלי מרכבה אופן בתוך האופן שתי וערב  
כמו שאמר ביחזקאל במרכבה גבוה.  
Kara attacks Rashi's version of the Targum but only after he has set down his own solution. He then quotes Rashi, without naming him, and asserts

כשפרש לך כל מעשה המרכבה חתום לך כל פירושיה בדבר אחד  
ואומר לך רצונך לידע מעשה המכוונות עיין לך במעשה המרכבה  
של בני אדם... וראיתי בפתרון התרגום של יונתן... והוא

(מעות) יסי הישרה לכל שתורת אלוקיו בקרבו ומהפך דברי  
אלוקים חיים ומטעה כל ישראל אחריו בפתרון. הראית מימין  
אדם שנתן לו המקום לשון לימודים... שיאמר לכל דבר  
המתקשה להבין, רצונך לידע דבר זה הסתכל בחוקות השמים  
כתבניתו... כך תבניתו בארץ, והלא הוא ישיבהו מי יעלה  
לנו השמימה ויראהו לנו, ואל תשיבהו<sup>103</sup> אם כדברך מפני  
מה תרגם יונתן כעובד גלגלי מרכבת יקרא? אומר, יונתן לא  
ערך אלי מלים ואף על פי כן הרימותי ידי אל ה' שלא עלה  
במחשבתו ללמד לדורות דבר הנראה מתוך דבר שאינו נראה ולא  
נודע מקומו איו, ומהו פתרון כעובד גלגלי מרכבת יקרא?  
כמעשה מרכבת השרים שבניין מלאכתן נישתנית ממלאכת העגלות  
העשויות לטעון משאות.

[Anyone who offers this solution distorts and overturns the words of God, for how could a sensible man say to someone who does not understand something, 'If you wish to know it, look up at the sky, and from what you see there you will grasp this point on earth'? Will he not reply, 'I don't know what is in the sky'?... The chariot here is a chariot for human beings or loads.] Kara's comments are orderly and clear. He supplies his own gloss on the verse, juxtaposed with the Targum's view as interpreted by Rashi, and then he attacks Rashi<sup>103</sup> and gives his own understanding of the Targum. The extremely unfavourable language which he applies to Rashi should be noted: מעוות הישרה... מהפך דברי אלוקים חיים, מטעה כל ישראל.

The question arises as to Kara's failure to mention Rashi by name in this clash between their commentaries. In instances like this the answer appears to me quite simple. Where Kara rejects Rashi's opinion in such pungent language, he refrains from naming him - his master - out of tenderness for his honour.<sup>104</sup> Sometimes the rejection is phrased in plural terms against הפותרים or האומרים, when Rashi (or those who offer glosses similar to his) is in question.

c. Here now are two instances in tabular form, (i) Isaiah 2:20 (Kirchheim), אשר עשו לו להשתחוות לחפר פרות ולעטלפים, and (ii) Jeremiah 50:11: כי תפושו כעגלה דשא ותצהלי כאבירים.

Rashi

להשתחוות לחפרפרות.  
גלולים בדמות חפרפרות.  
מיני שרצים שחופרים  
בארץ...

Kara

1.

...לחפרפרות ולעטלפים. לאותן גומות שחופרין להם  
חפרפרות לעטלפים, שם יטמין איש אלילי כספו ואיש  
אלילי זהבו.  
ולא תטה אשורך מני הדרך לפרש להשתחוות לחפרפרות  
ולעטלפים, שהיו משתחוים לחפרפרות ולעטלפים.  
שהפותרים כן שוגים ומשגים את הבריות משני  
דברים: אחד שאינן מבינין פירוש הניקוד והטעמים.  
שלא נתנו אלא לפרש המקראות...  
משוגתו שנית הנו עוה מעגלותיו ולא ידע שבמקום  
שתמצא השלכה מפרש בצדו היכן...  
ואם כדבריו, כאן לא פירש היכן ישליך?

11.

כעגלה דשא. פתרונו כעגלה הרבוצה בנאות דשא  
ורועה במרעה טוב שמשמנת מתוך מרעה הטוב...  
וכל הפותרים כעגלה דשא. העגלה הדשה בתבואה  
ומביאין ראייה לדבריהם שעגלה הדשה בתבואה אוכלת  
היא בתבואה ומשתמנת, אינה ראייה. וטועה הוא...  
ואם כדברי הפותר... ותדע שכן הוא שהרי "דשא" זה  
כתיב א' לשון דשא, ודשה בתבואה ב-ה.<sup>105</sup>

כעגלה דשא. הדשה  
בתבואה ואוכלת תמיד.

i. [Rashi: They will bow down to idols in the shape of burrowing creatures. Kara: People will hide their idols in burrows dug by moles and bats, and do not think that they will bow down to the moles and bats; anyone who interprets thus misleads us and does not understand the vocalisation and טעמים.] Kara vehemently rejects the view of הפותרים. That this means Rashi is clear from what follows, in which the attack shifts from the plural to the singular. Why is Rashi's interpretation so unacceptable? (1) It is not in harmony with המקרא; and Kara takes the opportunity to declare that טעמי המקרא were given to us as an aid in the interpretation of the text. (2) It is not consistent with the Hebrew language, for wherever 'casting away' is mentioned in the Bible the passage always includes the place involved as an indirect object. By Rashi's account, however, the text does not state where the items are to be thrown.

ii. While Kara initially directs his attack against הפותרים (in the plural), he immediately changes to the singular with וטועה הוא ומתוך דבריו הוא נתפס, by which Rashi is meant. Why does he combat Rashi's gloss with such vehemence? (1) It is neither rational nor in harmony with the spirit of the text, for it is impossible that a working beast, an animal engaged in threshing, should become fat. It is more likely to grow thin. (2) The word דשא is written with נ, not ה, so that it is not associated with דישה (threshing).

## 12. Criticism in Which Rashi Is Named

a. On I Kings 18:37, Kara quotes Rashi's gloss with precision, saying

ראיתי בפירוני ר' שלמה זצ"ל נתתה להם מקום לסור מאחריך  
ובידך היה להכין ליבם אליך. ובפירוני ר' מנחם הזקן  
ראיתי ואתה הסיבות ... ולשון הראשון קשה לאמרו והשני  
גמגום בו.

[Rashi's interpretation is difficult to accept, and Helbo's is confused.] Here he cites and rejects two opinions.

b. In Isaiah 26:7, both Kara and Rashi explain the verse אורח לצדיק מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל יֵשֶׁר מִעַגְל צְדִיק תִּפְלֹס. Kara begins with his own interpretation and then quotes Rashi and explains why he does not accept him. Both regard the verse as a prayer to God to aid Israel, but both syntax and טעמי המקרא dictate that the word יֵשֶׁר ranks as an entreaty and not as an auxiliary to מעגל. Rashi's gloss is divorced from the general context, while Kara sees the verse as a continuation of the foregoing verses (which deal with the fall of Rome) and hence as a prophecy that God will make the city of Rome into an אורח יֵשֶׁר מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל which will serve as a pavement for Israel. Kara's explanation is more wholly a פשוט interpretation, and it is in line with the context.

We shall now look at some examples of Kara's naming Rashi without adopting a stance one way or the other.

a. בחגורתו אשר במותניו (I Kings 2:5).

Kara explains this in a particular way (that the sword was fastened to the waist in the usual manner, but Abner bent down and it slipped), and then cites Rashi, ומצאתי בפירוני, רבנא שלמה זצ"ל, who holds a different opinion (that Abner did not fasten the sword in the normal way). He adds an explanation of Rashi, possibly intended as clarification, but

does not reveal his own opinion of the gloss.

b. וספון בארז (I Kings 7:7).

Kara first sets down his own solution and then, with his customary formulation, adds Rashi's opinion, which differs a little from his: he thinks that the whole inner structure was overlaid with cedar wood, and Rashi that only the floor was.

c. נחור המיטות (II Kings 11:2).

Kara cites the Targum and then Rashi, without taking any position himself.<sup>106</sup>

From what we have just said, it emerges that in these instances Kara feels that Rashi offers a further reasonable interpretation which is not to be rejected, and he leaves the reader to decide which gloss is preferable.

### 13. Summary

- a. Sages are mentioned in Kara who do not appear in Rashi.
- b. Kara's use of the Targumim is much greater and more varied.
- c. Kara is inclined to quote Midrashim in full (and not, like Rashi, in a shortened form), and many of his Midrashim are not cited by Rashi.
- d. The number of quotations offered by Kara from the Talmud (which are not found in Rashi) is very great.
- e. Kara deals much more critically than Rashi with questions of מסורה, נוסח, and טעמי המקרא, and enters more into comparisons between the Early Prophets and Chronicles (in order to resolve contradictions and apparent contradictions).
- f. Kara's use of לע"ז differs from Rashi's both quantitatively and qualitatively, for he may render into the



vernacular whole verses or parts of verses, not single words.

g. Kara's commentary is several times the length of Rashi's, and he does not hesitate to criticise Rashi severely, whether by name or not.

h. Kara's commentary is a piece of continuous exegesis which stresses the link between aspects of the text and not, like Rashi's, a series of isolated glosses.<sup>107</sup>

i. Rashi offers nothing equivalent to Kara's style, with its appeals to the reader and observation of deliberate rules.

Several conclusions emerge from these points:

a. Kara's commentary is in no sense merely an extended reworking of Rashi's, although they certainly influenced each other.

b. Kara's commentary exhibits certain characteristic features of which no hint is found in Rashi.

c. In a number of places (the percentage cannot be determined) Kara influenced Rashi, who worked Kara's opinions into his own commentary.

d. Kara's commentary is an independent work which occasionally contains the opinions of his older contemporary Rashi.<sup>108</sup>

### III. Rabbi Menahem bar Helbo

Rabbi Menahem bar Helbo (the Rambach) was the brother of Kara's father, and Kara's teacher. Where he lived is not certain, but it cannot have been Troyes - Rashi's city - since in that case he would have been acquainted with Rashi personally and his glosses would not have been transmitted to Rashi only as hearsay. He may have lived for some time in southern France, near Narbonne or Toulouse, as he was a pupil of Rabbi Yehuda הדרשן, the son of Moshe הדרשן, from whom he cites comments on liturgical poems. He deviated from his teacher in abandoning פסוק and turning to פשוט. We possess no further details with regard to him, his family or his descendants.<sup>109</sup> According to Kara, in whose commentary most of Helbo's extant glosses are to be found,<sup>110</sup> he had a circle of pupils who stood and listened to his glosses; and this may be why he is also called Menahem Kara (קרא),<sup>111</sup> like his nephew, Yosef Kara, who similarly expounded the מקרא. His interpretations seem to have been collected into a book called Pithronim<sup>112</sup> which Rashi quotes in a number of places.<sup>113</sup> As Rashi says that שמעתי משמו של רבי מנחם it would seem that Helbo's works were not actually available to him, and that he learnt of Helbo's interpretations through Kara, as he himself states in his comments on Isa. 10:24 and 64:3, and on Job 9:17. In a number of places he uses Helbo without acknowledgment.<sup>114</sup>

Helbo was the first person in France to pursue the פשוט,<sup>115</sup> and in this he followed a path wholly different from that of his teacher, Rabbi Yehuda הדרשן. He was acquainted with the work of Menahem ben Saruk,<sup>116</sup> as

Poznanski notes,<sup>117</sup> and also made considerable use of Targum<sup>118</sup> and לע"ז.<sup>119</sup>

When Kara mentions Helbo he employs a wide range of epithets: (1) דודי ר' מנחם (2) ר' מנחם בר חלבו אחי אבא (3) ר' מנחם הזקן בר חלבו (4) ר' מנחם. In quoting from him he uses these verbs: פתר,<sup>120</sup> וכל ימי ימי,<sup>121</sup> וכן מקובלני,<sup>122</sup> היה מזהיר,<sup>123</sup> פירש,<sup>124</sup> שמעתי,<sup>125</sup> or ראיתי בפתרוני.<sup>126</sup> In one passage we learn of Helbo's teaching his interpretations to a group of students, as Kara did after him: ועל פרשה זו היה מזהיר ר' מנחם בר חלבו אחי אבא את כל העומדים לפניו ושומעים את דבריו.<sup>127</sup> We may reasonably suppose that Kara was for a period one of his students, as he himself states in his comment on II Sam. 23:5. It should not be thought that only those few glosses which he cites in his uncle's name were what he learnt from him, for there can be no doubt that numerous other glosses are integrated into his work without any acknowledgment - a practice found in many commentators, who cared more about the matter taught than about the author of a particular interpretation and his right to the material. No improper motives need be ascribed here, for as I have already noted, contemporary readers were more concerned with interpretations than with the names of their originators. The glosses which Kara absorbed into his work became his own, the fruits of his own spirit, either because he had so identified himself with them as to adopt them as his own, or because through the process of study they came to seem like his own, and he made no effort to recall from whom he had first heard them.<sup>128</sup>

Since Helbo's commentary is not extant as such, it is difficult to make comparisons and to examine the degree of his influence upon his nephew. It is possible to compare certain of the glosses which Rashi cites in his name with similar glosses found without attribution in Kara, since Helbo's interpretations were transmitted to Rashi by Kara, who apparently moved to Rashi's Beth Midrash in Troyes after his uncle's death. Examples of comparable texts in this connection include Rashi and Kara upon I Sam. 19:24; I Kings 6:9; Ezek. 12:3; 30:13; 43:20; and Mic. 6:14. In each case, Rashi cites Helbo by name, and almost identical remarks, without any notation of source, appear in Kara. Why are some of Helbo's interpretations given in his name and others not? Can any coherent method be detected here? Why are some interpretations found in Helbo which take their rise from the Talmud or the Midrash attributed to him and not to their ultimate source? In what cases does Kara make use of his uncle's words? We shall try to discuss these and other questions below.

Kara's commentary contains about eighty quotations from Helbo.<sup>133</sup> In most instances they are used to reinforce his interpretations.<sup>134</sup> Occasionally they are set off against the opinions of others, and in these cases Kara does not accept his uncle's view.<sup>135</sup> In another group, Kara considers his own explanation preferable to Helbo's, on grounds of exegetical methodology. Some examples follow:

1. When Kara's Gloss Is More in Accord With the Common Sense of the Text

Hosea 10:15

בשחר, פתר ר' מנחם שהוא מלשון סוף... ואומר אני יוסף  
ביר' שמעון: בשחר אינו יוצא ממשמעו וכה פתרונו בשחר  
נדמה מלך ישראל. אדם אחר נדמה הוא ושותק כשהוא ישן אבל  
מלך ישראל אפי' בשחר ובצהרים נדמה כאילם לפני סנחריב.  
[R. Menahem explains that שחר comes from סוף ... but I Yosef  
son of R. Shimon say that שחר cannot depart from its meaning,  
and that it means that at dawn the king is silenced. An  
ordinary man is silent when he is asleep, but here a king of  
Israel will even at dawn or noon be as dumb before  
Sennacherib.]

2. When Kara's Gloss Is Supported by Something in the Section or the Passage Discussed

a. Jeremiah 47:5

עד מתי תתגודדי. תאספי. גדודי חיילים. כך פתר ר' מנחם  
בר' חלבו. אבל ממה שאני רואה בתחילת המקרא שאמר "באה  
קרחה על עזה" ובסוף המקרא הוא אומר "עד מתי תתגודדי",  
אני למד שהוא מלשון לא תתגודדי ולא תשימו קרחה. ופתרונו  
לשון שרט שאדם נותן בגשרו מרוב צער.<sup>136</sup>  
[Helbo thinks the term comes from גדודי חיילים (troops of  
soldiers), but according to the beginning and end of the  
passage it must mean to lacerate the body out of grief.]

b. In II Samuel 24 we are told of David's census of the  
people of Israel. The places through which Joab and his  
colleagues pass to carry out the census are named from verse  
5. In verse 6 the word חדשי appears. Kara explains it as a  
place name and then cites Helbo: מקומות שנתיישבו מחדש - that  
is, recent settlements. The context makes it fairly clear  
that a specific place is in question, and so Kara rejects  
Helbo: אני מגמגם בפתרון זה.

c. Jeremiah 38:7

וישמע עבד מלך הכושי. ת"י... וגם ר' מנחם בר' חלבו סמך על תרגום זה ופטר אחריו עבד מלך, זה ברוך בן נריה... הכושי צדקיה. מה הכושי משונה בעורו, אף צדקיה משונה שהיה נעים ביותר. אבל בדבריהם שזה היה עבד לצדקיה, כשהוא אומר "ויצוה המלך את עבד מלך הכושי לאמר: קח בידך מזה שלשים אנשים", היה למקרא לומר ויצוה המלך את עבדו הכושי? כשהוא אומר ויצוה המלך את עבד מלך הכושי: על כרחך אינו עבדו של צדקיה אלא סריס אחד בא מארץ כוש לצדקיהו ששלחו מלך כוש אל צדקיהו...

Kara, Targum Jonathan and Helbo all understand the construct

phrase עבד מלך הכושי as meaning 'the servant of the Cushite

king', as the טעמים also suggest, and do not take כושי as

equivalent to מלך, but the Targum and Helbo think that

the reference is to King Zedekiah. How can he be called כושי?

The Sages explain this as in Moed Katan 47b. Kara rejects

this interpretation because of verse 10, which provides a

grammatical refutation: ויצוה המלך את עבד מלך הכושי. If a

servant of Zedekiah were in question, the text should read

עבד מלך הכושי, and not ויצוה המלך את עבדו. Kara therefore

explains that this was a servant not of Zedekiah but of the

Cushite king who had apparently been sent as a gift to

Zedekiah: 'King [Zedekiah] commanded the servant of the

Cushite king'.

3. חילון המקראות Is in Harmony With Kara's Gloss

פשוטו של מקרא and [Context]

a. Isaiah 2:22

חדלו לכם מן האדם אשר נשמה באפו. פתר בו אחי אבא ר' מנחם בר' חלבו הואיל וסוף עובדיה של ע"ז לבא בנקרת הצורים ובמחילות עפר... חדלו לכם ממנה בטרם יבא אף ה' ליפרע מעובדיה וצא ולמד מן האדם הזה אשר נשמה באפו כי כמה נחשב הוא. היום כאן ומחר עאכ"ו [על אחת כמה וכמה] ע"ז שאין בה רוח חיים. אך אילו חילון המקראות לא יוכל הפתרון שהרי כתוב בצידו "כי הנה האדון ה' צבאות מסיר מירושלים ומיחודה משען ומשענה" ותיבת "כי" בא לפרש וליתן טעם בדבר לענין של מעלה להגיד מי גרם. ולדברי אחי אבא היאך יפרש כי הנה האדון ה' צבאות מקרא של מעלה שאמר

חדלו לכם מן האדם? אבל לפי פשוטו והילוכו, אני אומר  
המפרש יוסף בר' שמעון לפי שמתחיל בענין "כי יום לה'  
צבאות על כל גאה ורם. ושח גבהות אדם וגו'.

[Helbo explains that the text deals with idol worship, whose

adherents will eventually have to flee to rock crevices, but

in view of the context (הילוך המקראות) this cannot be

accepted, and the word כי clarifies the passage.] What

assertions does Kara make with regard to his uncle? His

interpretation, he says, (a) contradicts the פשט, in this

case the syntax, and (b) is not in harmony with the context.

The phrase חדלו לכם מן האדם does not refer to idolatry but to

man himself, and Helbo divides up the sentence (so as to

force his interpretation upon it) in a non-פשט way opposed to

טעמי המקרא. Nor - since Kara regards the הילוך המקראות not

simply as the few verses immediately preceding, but takes a

broader view which includes passages both before and after -

is Helbo's opinion supported by the context.

#### 4. When Helbo's View Is Unproved and Not in Accord with Historical Events

Jeremiah 49:20

אם לא יגזרום ישראל שהם מעט מכל העמים. ובפתרוני ר'  
מנחם מצאתי. צעירי הצאן הוא פרס הצעיר שנאחים דכתיב  
"ובני יפת גמר ומגוג ומדי ויון ותובל ומשק ותירס." אבל  
לא תביא ראיה לדבריו שתירס הוא פרס ואפי' לדבריו שתירס  
הוא פרס, היכן מצינו שמשלו פרס באדום? יי

[Helbo explains that צעירי הצאן means Persia, but the proof

text which he cites names not Persia but Tiras. Even if the

two are identified, historically speaking Persia never ruled

over Edom.] In two places Kara rejects Helbo in

unambiguous terms because his glosses do not represent the

פשט - despite the fact that he does not himself suggest

solutions to the difficulties. In I Sam. 13:21 he explains

(following Helbo) what instruments the Israelites brought to the Philistines to sharpen, but rejects Helbo's interpretation of ופתרון זה אני מפקפק אם ולהציב הדרכן with אמך... In I Kings 18:37 he similarly calls Helbo's view גמגום.

If we wish to summarise Kara's attitude to his uncle's commentary, we may say that (a) Kara spent a long time with Helbo, and derived from him a great deal of his view of the Torah and his exegetical approach; that (b) many of Helbo's glosses were absorbed into Kara's work without formal acknowledgment, either because he agreed with them or because, as one of the psychological effects of the learning process, he felt that they were his own and did not trouble to recall whence he had derived them; and that (c) in the eighty instances where he names Helbo, he either uses him to support his own view against another opinion, or juxtaposes his interpretation with those of other commentators, and so indicates that he does not accept Helbo, or at any rate thinks his gloss the less eligible. In these cases, his decision against Helbo arises from exegetical and methodological considerations, for he constantly bases himself on issues of Scriptural language and חילון המקראות.



#### IV. Menahem ben Saruk and Dunash ben Labrat

Menahem ben Saruk and his opponent, Dunash ben Labrat, wrote their works in Hebrew and are mentioned by name almost thirty times in Kara's commentaries. About a third of these references are to Ben Saruk (מנחם)<sup>139</sup> and the rest to Dunash.<sup>140</sup> Since Kara frequently cites the opinions of the two side by side, it seems sensible to discuss them together rather than separately. Sometimes a gloss is mistakenly attributed to Ben Saruk when in fact it is Dunash's,<sup>141</sup> and vice versa, and there can likewise be no doubt that many of their philological interpretations have been absorbed into Kara's work without acknowledgment.<sup>142</sup> The methodical way in which Kara adduces Ben Saruk and Dunash will now be examined.

When Kara explains a particular text, the same gloss is also found in Ben Saruk, and Dunash does not disagree with it, Kara cites it anonymously and so indicates that it constitutes פשוטו של מקרא, which he himself has arrived at or so taken over from Ben Saruk that it seems like the product of his own spirit. In such cases the gloss stands alone as an explanation of the text, and other exegetical possibilities are rejected in its favour.

In Nahum 3:10 we read רתקו בזקים. Kara explains that this means נכבדו, in harmony with the phrase found in Isa. 40:19. Following Ben Saruk's Machbereth, Rashi says the same. There is another instance in Jonah 1:6, where Kara's explanation of תעשׂה in terms of מחשבה echoes Ben Saruk's.

When Ben Saruk and Dunash disagree as to a text and Kara gives an explanation as if it were his own, without noting

that it comes from Dunash or recording the opinion of Ben Saruk, the implication is that Dunash's interpretation represents פשוטו של מקרא and Ben Saruk's does not (and is therefore rejected). For example, in Amos 1:13, על בקעם הרוֹת, Ben Saruk understands הריִם (hills) and Dunash נשים הרוֹת. Kara prefers the latter, for (1) the form הריִם - הרוֹת cannot be paralleled elsewhere in this sense, and Kara always tries to offer interpretations that are in line with common significations; and (2) the context describes acts of exceptional cruelty. The conquest of hills does not fit into this category, whereas the cleaving apart of pregnant women certainly does; and it is mentioned in II Kings 8:12; 15:16; and Hos. 14:1.

It is of interest that wherever Kara mentions disagreement between Ben Saruk and Dunash, he prefers the opinion of the latter. While Ben Saruk's interpretations may have a foundation in the פשוט, those of Dunash seem more suited to Kara's exegetical approach. In these cases, Kara first records Ben Saruk's opinion and then Dunash's reasoned view,<sup>143</sup> and finally his own arguments against Ben Saruk. In Isa. 38:14 the phrase כְּטוֹס עוֹר appears. Kara cites Ben Saruk for the view that this is a kind of bird and that a transposition of letters has occurred in עוֹר, which should read עוֹרָ. He then quotes Dunash's attack on this, which asserts that עוֹר applies to the sound made by rams (in connection with human beings it comes from עֲרֹנָה, a strong urge), and that the verse is an instance of מקרא קצר: it should read כְּטוֹס וְעוֹר. He goes on to give examples of the numerous places where the letter ם has been omitted from the

text, reinforcing Dunash's view.<sup>144</sup> Sometimes he cites a gloss in Dunash's name without remarking that Ben Saruk differs from him. For example, in Joel 4:11, עוֹשׂוּ וּבֹאוּ כָל הָעַמִּים, Kara quotes Dunash and the Targum for the view that עוֹשׂוּ means "to gather together" - that is, all the nations will assemble from all around - and adds a supporting text from Ezek. 27:19. Ben Saruk, substituting the consonant ה for ע, says in his Machbereth that עוֹשׂוּ is equivalent to חוֹשׂוּ. Kara too uses the substitution of letters with a common origin as an exegetical technique,<sup>145</sup> but he prefers to gloss words as they stand, if this is at all possible, and invokes substitution only when he has no other alternative. Hence in this case he gives the preference to Dunash on exegetical and methodological grounds.

In Isaiah 14:19 the phrase מְטוֹעֲנֵי חֶרֶב occurs. Kara cites Dunash for the explanation 'stabbed by the sword'. In his Machbereth, p. 99, Ben Saruk explains it in terms of 'burden', from טָעַן, "to load". Kara prefers the first, for it is in harmony with the context and it is reinforced by a philological comparison with Arabic. Elsewhere he is inclined to Ben Saruk rather than to Dunash. For the phrase in Hos. 8:8, כִּי מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל וְהוּא, he quotes Dunash's suggestion that the וְהוּא is superfluous and should for purposes of interpretation be dropped, as is done in other Scriptural passages. Kara asserts that the וְהוּא in these cases is not superfluous - it is charged with meaning which must be brought out by exegesis; and this is the opinion of Ben Saruk.<sup>146</sup> Why does Kara prefer it? This is not the only place where he speaks in such terms. In both Jud. 6:25 and II

Sam. 13:20 do we find a superfluous ), and each time Kara feels that it has significance. It would seem that the sanctity of the text dictates his exegetical policy: to his mind it is not possible that letters in the text should be so devoid of meaning that for purposes of interpretation one may dispense with them. In all the other instances in which there is disagreement between Ben Saruk and Dunash the issue is solely linguistic, but when the sanctity of the text is involved Kara gives the preference to Ben Saruk.

In conclusion, we may say that Kara does not actually quote Dunash and Ben Saruk but gives a free rendering of what they have to say, sometimes compressing it and sometimes expanding it. When the two are at odds, he takes a clear stand in favour of Dunash, in whose commentary he recognises the *UWD* of the text as his own exegetical approach would define it, if we except one instance in which the text's sanctity is involved. When he records disagreement between Ben Saruk and Dunash, he places Ben Saruk's view first and then gives Dunash's in an expanded form, with supplements, supporting texts and general principles. When the interpretation seems to him simple *UWD*, his practice is to set it down without any indication of authorship, as the growth of his own spirit.

## V. Other Commentators Mentioned by Kara

In this section we shall look at Kara's approach to commentators whom he mentions only a few times: R. Eleazer Hakallir, R. Shimon, R. Meir ben R. Yitzhak שליח ציבור, Rabbenu Saadiah, R. Yitzhak bar Elazar Halevi, R. Yitzhak bar Asher Halevi (the Riba), Rashbam, Sefer Josippon. Despite the scantiness of the references, we shall try to describe his attitude to their works.

### 1. R. Eleazer Hakallir

Five times in his commentary on the Prophets, Kara bases a point upon Kallir. On each occasion he uses him to resolve an uncertainty. We may reasonably suppose that Kallir's liturgical poems became known to Kara through his uncle, who was the first commentator in northern France to deal with liturgical poetry;<sup>147</sup> Kara himself wrote commentaries on Kallir's poems.<sup>148</sup> He is first mentioned in II Kings 11:2, and after that in the Latter Prophets: Isa. 24:22; Jer. 9:1; Zech. 9:16; and Mal. 3:20.

The central problem in Jer. 9:1 arises from the phrase מִי יִתְנַחֵם בְּמִדְבָּר מְלֹן אֲוֵרָתִים. Who is the speaker? Is it the prophet, as Rashi (for example) thinks? Kara holds that it is God Himself, speaking in response to the people's remarks in 8:19; and he invokes Kallir in support.<sup>149</sup> He again makes use of him in Zech. 9:16. The subject in verses 13-17, according to both Kara and Rashi, is the Hasmonean wars against the Greeks and the miracles which God wrought for the Hasmoneans - despite the fact that the preceding verses are explained in terms of the King Messiah, so that it would seem

desirable that this gloss should be continued with regard to what follows. With Kallir's aid, Kara changes his mind as to the bearing of the context, his reason being apparently the opposition to eschatological interpretations which he evinces in other passages.<sup>150</sup> These and the other instances make it clear that Kallir carries great authority for Kara, and he draws on him for support and for the settling of exegetical difficulties.<sup>151</sup>

## 2. R. Shimon

This commentator is mentioned only once by Kara, in Hos. 12:9. His identity poses a problem, and the reference to him differs between the Lublin text, which reads ור' שמעון אחי רבינו פתר, and the Breslau MS.: ור' שמעון אחי רבינו פתר. We shall try to decide between the two versions.

If we assume that ור' שמעון refers to Kara's father, as in the Lublin text, we may point to the fact that Kara mentions his father a number of times in his commentary.<sup>152</sup> But the Breslau reading is also possible, so that two conclusions can be drawn: that the comment ascribed to Kara is not his, but the work of one of his pupils, since ור' שמעון is identified as אחי רבינו; or that it is a marginal note added by a pupil to Kara's commentary which was later interpolated by a copyist. The first hypothesis apparently derives from the supposition that Kara's father was the author of the Midrashic collection known as Yalkut Shimeoni<sup>153</sup> - but it has been proved that this is not the case.<sup>154</sup> And if he were the author, it is strange that the son should not quote the work more often. Nor is the version of the Breslau MS.

reasonable, for nowhere else is there evidence of the existence of such a brother. Probably ר' שמעון should be identified as the brother of Rashi's mother, who was also known as ר' שמעון הזקן, with whom Rashi studied Torah.<sup>155</sup> The comment on Hosea may fairly be supposed to be Kara's own, and not the work of a pupil, and so the original allusion must have been ר' שמעון אחי אב רבינו פתח. The phrase אחי אב רבינו then gave rise to two versions, for אב was deciphered as אחי - a difficult reading which the Lublin text reduced to רבינו אחי and the Breslau MS. to ר' שמעון. The term רבינו refers to Rashi, for Kara calls him this several times,<sup>156</sup> and so do his other pupils.<sup>157</sup>

The text itself involves an exegetical disagreement. Does the verse allude to an historical event of the past or to the contemporary situation? Does אפרים connote Jeroboam, son of Nebat, of Ephrat, or the Kingdom of Ephraim (Israel) in the time of the prophet? Kara agrees with the Targum in explaining that the Ephraimites and their deceitful behaviour are in question, and this is פשוטו של מקרא. And why does he cite the gloss of ר' שמעון, which contains Midrashic traces? Possibly because it is directed more towards the context, that is, to the sins of oppression and deception committed by Jeroboam son of Nebat.

### 3. R. Meir ben R. Yitzhak שליח ציבור

In I Kings 10:28 Kara makes use of the work of this liturgical poet, whose commentary, like Kallir's, is called Yesod. Helbo wrote a commentary on his liturgical poems which was apparently passed on to Kara, as he himself notes.<sup>158</sup>

The comment is also cited by Rashi, with the rubric שמעתי. The issue involves the פשט of the text, the meaning of the word מקור not being clear in context.

#### 4. Rabbenu Saadiah

This commentator is mentioned only once, in Zech. 6:8, but Kara's commentary on the first eight verses of this chapter draw principally upon Rashi. It is not clear whether this is Rabbenu Saadiah הגפיתומי<sup>159</sup> or the Rabbi Saadiah who lived in France or Germany in the twelfth century.<sup>160</sup> In invoking Saadiah Kara possibly follows Rashi, who explains the chariots as the kingdoms of Babylon, Persia and Greece. These rise and fall and serve as a whip against sinful Israel.

#### 5. R. Yitzhak ben R. Elazar Halevi

This Sage is mentioned by Kara at I Kings 5:3.<sup>161</sup> Here too the principle of הלון המקראות leads Kara to give the preference to R. Yitzhak's comment, although he stands alone in holding the view in question. The word כרובים is universally translated and explained as birds of some type, but R. Yitzhak says that it refers to the שור הבר (wild ox) inasmuch as the verse deals solely with animals, wild and domestic, and not with birds.

#### 6. R. Yitzhak bar Asher Halevi

A Tosafist who was a pupil of Rashi, this Sage is mentioned twice in Kara's commentary upon Prophets,<sup>162</sup> and Kara prefers the glosses which he heard from him to his own because they seem more nearly the פשט of the text.



## 7. Rashbam (R. Shmuel ben Meir)

In the opinion of David Razin,<sup>163</sup> Kara spent much time in Rashi's house, and it is possible that there he became acquainted with the younger Rashbam. Rashbam quotes Kara a number of times in his commentary. He remarks on Gen. 37:13, יוסף קרא חבירינו והנאה לי; at the end of his commentary on Gen. 24:60 he adds, יוסף בר שמעון; while in his comment on Num. 4:10 he rejects Kara's opinion with טועה היה בזה ר' יוסף קרא. Kara quotes from Rashbam in Job 11:17 and Amos 3:12.<sup>164</sup> This is enough to show that they were friends and colleagues.<sup>165</sup> Ahrend also claims that there is a considerable resemblance in the exegetical principles upon which they operate,<sup>166</sup> and earlier Poznanski asserted<sup>167</sup> that Kara's principle that the Bible may mention something which seems superfluous in its context in order to render comprehensible things which appear later is also found in Rashbam, and that Rashbam merely expands it. Despite the points in common displayed by their commentaries, however, we cannot know what relations obtained between them in life, although it seems that each read the other's work and it is possible that they also discussed it.<sup>168</sup>

## 8. Sefer Josippon

Kara turns to Sefer Josippon four times.<sup>169</sup> In Jud. 5:21 he writes ונכמו שיאמר יוסיפון נחל מצרים כן יאמר; but I have not been able to find this passage in Sefer Josippon. In II Kings 20:13 he remarks, וראיתי בספר יוסיפון פנג הוא אפרסמון; compare also Ezek. 27:17 and Hag. 2:7. An

examination of Chapter 36, lines 92-97, and Chapter 45, lines 66-68, of Sefer Josippon shows that this is indeed a quotation from the work, which it itself borrows from Yosef ben Gurion. This enables us to conclude that Sefer Josippon was indeed available to Kara.<sup>170</sup>

#### VI. Kara's Attitude to נוסח and מסורה: Some Notes

'In their innocence, these French Sages made no attempt to conceal it if they found something which Ibn Ezra would call "a secret" and people today would turn from in horror as an invalid conception born of Bible Criticism. Not thus were these men, who were certain in their own minds that the truth could not confound their thought' (Geiger).<sup>171</sup> Kara's approach to the Biblical text certainly seems to be woven from clear thinking and a healthy mind, and to be under the control of a critical sense devoid of prejudice. He goes to trouble to search for exact texts, and compares versions. We are told of the Gibeonites that וילכו ויצטיירו<sup>172</sup> and Kara writes: ויש ספרים שכת' בהן ויצטיידו... אילו ואילו מביאין... ראי' לדבריהם ולא הכריעו אלו את אלו, גם בדבר הזה אין לברר הנכוחה זולת אלוקינו. אבל לבי נוטה אחר הספרים שכת' בהם ויצטיידו...<sup>173</sup> It is in line with the principles of נפש and context that he prefers ויצטיידו. Another instance occurs in the Book of Ezekiel,<sup>174</sup> in the phrase וכמשפטי הגויים אשר סביבותיכם לא עשיתם. Kara says that there are books in which the word לא is missing and that this is appropriate to the context, and indeed Biblia Hebraica notes that there are about thirty manuscripts in which לא is absent. Elsewhere, in Jeremiah 25:3, the word את appears

twice in a verse, and Kara suggests a search *בספר מדויק* where on the second occasion *ואת* might be written, and then the verse would be clearer. However, I have not found any evidence of such a reading. In Zechariah 14:5 we find *ונִסְתַּחֵם*, and Kara notes that this is the text found in the land of Israel, but in books from Babylon the word is pointed *ונִסְתַּחֵם*. The point cannot be resolved, he says, and so we see that two versions exist. In I Kings 6:34 he writes *שִׁבְטֵי מוֹגֵה שֶׁל...* or again, on II Kings 15:8, *...וְאִינִי יוֹדֵעַ אֶם שְׁבוּשׁ סִפְרִים הוּא...* It follows that Kara had available at least one text which varied a little from the one that we have today,<sup>17</sup> and we may reasonably suggest that he had several such texts and that he made comparisons between them. He honours the tradition of the Sages but is not willing to accept it blindly, and makes his points delicately but firmly. According to the Talmud, for example, Samuel wrote the book which bears his name, Judges and Ruth, and Kara concurs,<sup>17</sup> but he raises a question over the verse *כי לנביא היום יקרא לפנים הרואה* (I Sam. 9:9), and explains:

כשהוא אומר כי לנביא היום יקרא לפנים הרואה מה שהדור  
הזה קורא נביא היו הדורות הראשונים קורין רואה למדת  
כשנכתב ספר זה כבר חזרו לקרוא לרואה נביא מכלל שספר זה  
לא נכתב בימי שמואל... ורבותינו זכרוניהם לברכה  
אמרו<sup>17</sup> ששמואל כתב ספרו.

Thus he points out the difficulty and cites the solution of the Sages, but casts considerable doubt upon its correctness.

He is little concerned with questions of *מסורה* and at every point accepts what the Sages say, as in the case of the suspended *נ* in *מישה נן* (Jud. 18:30), which Baba Bathra explains as a respectful device to conceal Moses'

ancestry.<sup>171</sup> The same is true as to instances of תיקון סופרים, as in (I Sam. 3:13), where he says, והיה לו לומר כי מקללים לי בניו אלא תיקון סופרים הוא. Elsewhere, on II Sam. 12:14, he says of this phenomenon, (I Sam. 8:9), where the קרי is טחורים, <sup>172</sup> he explains in accordance with the מסורה that וקרי סמך, and adds, ... חיתה כמוס להם מכת טחורים... Here כמוס has the sense of hidden, for in his gloss on v. 12 he says <sup>173</sup> הוא שאמר למעלה (פסוק ט ויסתרו להם טחורים

Out of all the cases of קרי וכתוב he deals with only a few isolated instances,<sup>174</sup> and even then he simply mentions the problem. Only in II Kings 18:27,<sup>175</sup> לאכול את חריהם, does he say, היוצא דרך החור פי טבעת, ורבותינו תיקנו לכנותו לשון נאה... [what comes out of the anus; the Sages employed a euphemism], and he explains the differences in the versions of the קרי and the כתוב. There is one exceptional case (II Sam. 3:35), where he says of the phrase ויבוא העם להברות את להכרות כתוב וקרינו להכרות ושניהם בין להכרות ובין דוד that Both Kimchi and Ribag express astonishment at this,<sup>176</sup> having been unable to find such a קרי either in books or in the notes of the מסורה, only in a few isolated manuscripts. And it is possible that such a manuscript was indeed used by Kara.<sup>177</sup>

Kara also makes remarks on the question of the distribution of the text into verses, wherever it seems to him that it does not sit well with the content of a passage. In Josh. 13:3, following the Talmud,<sup>178</sup> he notes of חמשת סרני פלישתים that when you count you find that there are in

fact six. The sixth, והעוים, should be attached to the next verse, which now begins with the word מתימן. I Samuel 12:20 finishes with ונכבדכם את ה', and verse 21 starts with כך סמוכים לעד לעולם ונפתרים באמת. ולא תסורו. Kara says, and indeed the phrases appear in him as a continuous passage, with no break between the verses.<sup>188</sup>

We see, then, that Kara accepts the dicta of the Sages, but does not hesitate to criticise them with regard to questions both of נוסח and of the מסורה notes.

#### VII. Kara's Attitude to המקרא טעמי: Some Notes

Kara regards המקרא טעמי, which he calls ניקוד, as punctuation signs which mark the syntactic relations between words, so enabling us to understand the status of the various elements of the text, and fix the points where one must pause in reading. In a few isolated cases he treats the טעם as a guide to the chanting of a passage which also has a useful function in interpretation, as in Hosea 11:6. With regard to ואכלה he says מנוגן הוא באתנחתא ושם סיום הדבר - and so in other instances.<sup>189</sup> On two occasions he goes much further and says that the prophet shortened or lengthened what he had to say in order to fit it to the chant: ומה שכתב שני פעמים בדמיון: חיי כדי למלאות את הניגון.<sup>190</sup>

Like some of his contemporaries, he tries to offer interpretations that are in accordance with המקרא טעמי, except for a few cases where it is apparent that he does not agree with the arrangement of the טעמים. Only four טעמים are mentioned by him: All יי. תביר ורביע יי, אתנחתא יי, זקף יי. We shall indicate a firm break, called by Kara מפריד.<sup>191</sup>

look at a few examples. When Gideon is ordered to take **כר** **הב' של...** Kara says, <sup>151</sup> **השור אשר לאבין ופר השני שבע שנים** **אבין ננקדת בזקף ומפרידו מתיבה שלאחריו ומעמידו לבד להפסיק** **הפתרונות זה מזה שאילו לא ננקד בזקף היה דבוק פר השור אשר לאבין** **ל...-ופר השני שבע שנים** and this is the basis for his interpretation: that the text speaks of two different bullocks. Elsewhere, in Jud. 12:4, <sup>152</sup> he writes, **ואף הניקוד** **...מוכיח על הפתרון שגלעד ננקד בזקף גדול**.

It follows from the above that **טעמי המקרא** are an aid to him in interpretation, as he himself acknowledges: **אבל פשוטו של מקרא אינו כן מפני שני דברים אחד שתיבת חום מנוקד בזקף** **הניקוד** In another place, Isa. 2:20, he says, **והטעמים לא ניתנו אלא לפרש המקראות** [the vocalisations and accents were provided to assist interpretation]. In three places he apparently disagrees with the decision of the accentuator but does not specifically name the **טעמים**, dealing only with the division of the verse. In I Sam. 20:26 we read **ולא דבר שאול מאומה ביום ההוא כי אמר מקרה הוא בלתי טהור הוא כי** **עומד לבד ושם גמר** that **בלתי טהור** **לא טהור**, and Kara says **הוא כי לא טהור**. This means that he does not accept the division made by the accentuator, who designates **בלתי טהור הוא** as a complete phrase. There are similar instances in II Sam. 20:4 and 23:3. We may say in general, then, that his approach to **טעמי המקרא** is one of respect, but that he is prepared to reject the accentuator's arrangement of the text if it seems to be at odds with the sense.

I have found two anomalous cases. In II Sam. 3:34 the word כנפול is accented with a תניר, but Kara comments עומד כנפול, but his interpretation rests upon this זקף, which is not to be found in our texts, so that either a different version was available to him<sup>100</sup> or he is simply in error. In Isa. 1:7 the word אדמתכם is accented with a רביע above the כ, but according to Kara אדמתכם נקוד ברביע אל"ף של, and here again he may have used a text which is no longer extant.

### Conclusion

At the end of the eleventh century, and more particularly in the twelfth century, a significant shift occurred among the Jews of northern France in the sphere of Biblical exegesis. Until this time, the Sages had been principally concerned with Talmudic study and with midrashic commentary upon a number of Biblical books. In the period under discussion, however, the Jewish world in general began to display a marked inclination to interpret the Bible in a methodical manner which dealt in succession with each book.

In the present study we have examined the exegesis of a figure who belongs to this period, Rabbi Yosef Kara, with regard to three main issues: his exegetical approach, his attitude towards פשט and דרש and his relation towards his predecessors. From his treatment of various verses a practical sense of the first can be obtained, while the frequently paedagogic character of his mode of argument suggests an explanation for it.

In his note on I Kings 8:8, Kara makes a bold declaration as to the validity of his commentary in פשט terms:

במקרא זה אומר אני יוסף ב"ר שמעון שזהו פשוטו ומליצתו,  
ובירורו של דבר ולא כפוסח על שתי הסעיפים אלא באמת  
ובנכוחה [בכ"י: ובנוחה].

What makes this passage remarkable is its sheer length and the variety of terms employed by Kara to characterise his commentary (these have been discussed above). The phrase ובירורו של דבר connotes what he regards as the proper kind of commentary, in addition to describing it as פשט in style, while ולא כפוסח על שתי הסעיפים is a polemic against



those with different views.

Like other commentators of the period, he makes use of various terms derived from the root י"ש"נ in order to define the nature and aim of exegesis. A good commentary is that which offers help in solving difficulties presented by the text and מיישבו על אופניו: that is to say, is appropriate to the context. The phrase נשטו ומשמעו indicates that the נשט of the text is achieved when there is a complete accord with the sense which arises from the words - which includes the part they play within the scene described and the conceptual context.

One of Kara's innovations in his commentary is his devotion to חילון המקראות or חיבור המקראות, as he says on I Samuel 21:4: וכך פתרתי אחר חילון המקראות ועניינם. The term עניינם refers to the content and fundamental conception of a passage or verse, while חילון המקראות, on the other hand, involves a concern with the inner dynamics of a passage and the flow from one verse to another; it is complemented by the term סדר המקראות, which is applied to the order in which things occur and the textual environment. It is punctilious attention to this 'order' which, in Kara's view, makes it possible to offer a commentary which is well-founded with regard to chronological issues.

Kara's innovatory concern with חילון המקרא emerges as one of the most characteristic lines of approach in his commentary. Clarifications of the order of events and the links between passages abound. His commentary itself does not pause at one דיבור מתחיל or another, but forms a continuous composition which moves with the text and accompanies it like

its shadow. His חיבור המקראות serves as his criterion for a פשוט commentary, as he himself explains in a number of places; on occasion he clarifies lengthy passages and even entire chapters in such terms. He displays a clear preference for considering the general sense of the text rather than the individual phrases of חיבור המתחיל, his motive being the wish to arrive at a true and comprehensive interpretation.

Another significant innovation made by Kara in connection with textual continuity and its פשוט interpretation is his interest in 'anticipations' and concern שלא תתמה. He will note that a particular verse in a passage has been placed there שלא תתמה on a given point, and usually he explains what might cause bewilderment were it omitted. In his many dealings in this area of exegesis he also notes that wherever there is a later narrative with regard to which the reader may subsequently be puzzled, the passage at present under discussion קדם ולימוד - raises the point earlier on, in an apparently superfluous phrase.

The examination of Kara's attitude to the פשוט is made relatively straightforward by his paedagogical approach, which leads him to make appeals to his students or readers and to outline and explain his exegetical views; his attention to the פשוט means that he devotes space to accounting for his interpretations and defining them as the פשוט of the text.

Kara appears to have possessed an extremely mature and considered conception of the nature of פשוט, as his use of a wide range of terms indicates. פשוט, in his view, may be achieved by the careful use of a number of exegetical

methods. That he does not provide an abstract definition of *Uṣṣ* is not to be regarded as a deficiency in him, for the period of which we are speaking had not arrived at the notion of such definitions; instead, we find a variety of terms and expressions which in combination supply the sense required.

Scholars are agreed that among the commentators of northern France in the period, Kara stands out both for his efforts to achieve a *Uṣṣ* commentary and for his explicit statements on the subject. His commentaries contain a series of declarations that the *Uṣṣ* is to be preferred, and very frequently that it is the sole view to be taken. Here he differs greatly from Rashi, not only because the latter's commentary includes a not insignificant proportion of midrashic interpretation but because Rashi occasionally ranks the Midrash as equal if not superior to the *Uṣṣ*. Kara displays both exegetical independence and a conscious deployment of exegetical devices, and he founds his commentary on a harmony with the text.

His dealings with Midrash also involve an innovation. As far as he is concerned, the function of Midrash (and he was acquainted with the bulk of Midrashic literature) is to embellish the Biblical text, and nothing more. He goes so far as to liken those who maintain a midrashic view to drowning men clutching at a straw, or calls the Aggada *להג*. He makes use of Midrash only in order to settle the few difficulties which cannot be resolved in *Uṣṣ* terms. Even on these occasions, as Ahrend points out, the Midrash functions as a supplement to the *Uṣṣ*, so that Kara is not guilty of inconsistency. As we have already noted, he attacks *שגג*

commentary frontally and in the most unambiguous language, indicating the error of such an approach and his determination to eschew it himself.

A fair picture of the relationship between  $\text{שט}$  and  $\text{שר}$  may be obtained if we look at the spirit of the period and its characteristic modes of study. In the twelfth century intellectuals were concerned with establishing the correct balance between traditional authority and human understanding and reason. Widespread searches were made for exact texts of the Scriptures, and a marked interest was taken in the grammar and style of Biblical Hebrew and in the connection between topics in the text. These issues form precisely the  $\text{שט}$  commentator's field of endeavour, and the general intellectual tendency of the age is reflected in the exegetical attempt to fix the relationship between  $\text{שר}$  (representing traditional authority) and  $\text{שט}$  (the authority of human reason). Kara was one of those who professed the new principles, and his repudiation of  $\text{שר}$  is clearly stated. It should be noted that when he is engaged in the actual business of interpretation he is not always able to put his principles into practice, and has to be content with declaring his sympathy for the modern approach. It is mostly in key texts that he is careful to act upon his declarations, while on other occasions he may compromise and (for various reasons) cite a midrashic explanation alongside the  $\text{שט}$ .

In Kara's view, then,  $\text{שט}$   $\text{של מקרא}$  is achieved by attending to a number of points: context, meaning, grammar, order of events, style, anticipations, juxtapositions, and so forth. He is aware of his limitations, admits it when he can

find no explanation, and would modestly have agreed with Rashi in the desire - which represented the spiritual tendency of the period - לעשות פירושים אחרים לפי הפשטות - המתחדשים בכל יום.

On this point, Kara does not resemble a person struggling for exegetical liberty. In many respects the bonds of the Midrash are already behind him, and in citing and grappling with Midrashim he acts not out of compulsion but out of the duty to take his predecessors' work into account and his respect for the Torah which has nourished him and enabled him to take further steps forward. Almost the sole subjection he feels is towards the Biblical text itself. It is he who made the great leap and (together with Rashbam) inaugurated a new exegetical school in twelfth-century northern France.

His distinctive quality lies not only in his advanced conception of פשוט but also in his exegetical approach in general. In the course of his commentary he frequently adopts the first person and addresses the reader in the second person, while everywhere else his work strikes an objective note, neither writer nor reader intruding upon its discussion of difficulties. The main function of his first-person formulations is to give weight to his own as against other people's opinions, while his use of second-person address may reflect the influence of his work as a teacher and the style of argument found in certain parts of Talmudic literature. To his mind (and here again he was the first to think so), anything mentioned in the text is there for the purpose of providing the reader with information necessary to comprehension. He therefore himself issues instructions to

his audience phrased in terms that draw on roots like מַצ"א, יָד"ע, קָרָא, בִּי"ו, לִמ"ד and so on, whose force is that of a teacher's directions to his pupils to note, infer or conclude.

Another most noticeable characteristic which is peculiar to Kara is the series of passages in which, in a variety of phrases, he acknowledges his inability to provide an explanation, his situation ranging from a partial or conditional uncertainty to complete bafflement. Unlike Rashi, who in every one of the few places in which he admits ignorance is defeated by linguistic problems, a rare word or a difficult root, Kara's declarations form a standard feature of his commentary that offers permanent testimony to his integrity and humility. At the same time, passages abound in which he conducts himself like his contemporaries and with remarkable skill fits into his commentary entire verses or parts of verses. He also makes marked use of vernacular phrases, his work as a teacher in a French-speaking country explaining his adoption of this exegetical device.

He shows hardly any interest in providing general introductions to the Biblical books or in questions of editing and so forth. In this he is typical of mediaeval commentators, but he also displays a highly developed literary grasp. His commentary shows a sensitivity to the style of verses and the ways in which they are combined - what he calls נְחִיבוֹת הַקִּרְיָה; to the structure of Biblical works; to parallelism, particular linguistic formulations, the repetition of words and concepts, and מִקְרָא קָצָר, with regard to which he defines the issues posed by an elliptical

style. He distinguishes between informative, time-fixing verses and the body of a narrative, and between genealogical lists and accounts of someone's life, and (among other points) provides discussions of parable (משל) and metaphor. In many places he must compare the different versions of an event found within a single book or in two different books in order to show that in most cases they can be harmonised.

The intensity with which he clarifies points of realia and other technical issues turns him into a precursor of the trends in study and research characteristic of later periods. In this respect he deviates from the standards of his time and differs greatly from Rashi and other commentators, who may occasionally touch on such questions but do not make a practice of it. He deals with issues connected with geography and borders, the parts and dimensions of the Sanctuary, domestic economy and agriculture, construction and medicine, war and armies, kings and courts, and chronology, displaying throughout expertise and an interesting grasp of the actual.

Like every other commentator, he drew both consciously and unconsciously upon earlier exegetical traditions like those represented by the two Talmuds and the Aramaic Targumim, grammarians and his predecessors in Biblical interpretation, as well as upon the work of his contemporaries. A detailed comparison between his work and Rashi's, with an analysis of their methods, indicates that his commentary is an independent creation marked by features in no way suggested by Rashi. The two authors influenced each other and the remarks of one may be found as an integral part of the commentary of the other, but there is no question of Kara's

work being dependent upon Rashi's. Kara also derived a great deal from his uncle, Helbo, some of whose interpretations are contained in his commentary.

His concern with questions of נדון requires special note. He makes use of parallel versions (Josh. 9:4; II Kings 22:4; Jer. 25:13) and does not prefer one or another text simply because it is supported by the Masoretes, but is willing to consider the possibility that the version before him has not been transmitted with precision.

Kara is remarkable for the way in which his commentary distinguishes and defines elements (or their first beginnings) which have become the cornerstones of modern exegesis. He is an independent commentator and the leader of other נדון commentators, with a distinctive style and an innovativeness which means that in many respects he was ahead of his generation. His commentary deserves study and would repay publication.



Appendix  
Abbreviations in Kara's Commentaries\*

<u>Reference</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Abbreviation</u>
Isa. 24:23	אומות העולם	אוה"ע
I Sam. 23:11	אחר-כך	אח"כ (ואח"כ)
II Sam. 22:3	אלקים	אלק'
Josh. 8:33; 22:20	אף על פי	אע"פ
Josh. 11:18	אף על פי	אעפ"י
I Sam. 37:18	אפילו	אפי'
Jud. 6:2	בן	ב'
end of Kings	ברוך הנותן ליעף כוח	ב' ה' ל' כ'
II Sam. 21:19	בית המקדש	ביהמ"ק
Josh. 11:2	בלשון עם זר	בל"ע
Josh. 9:5	בלשון עם זר	בלע"ז
I Sam. 17:55	במסכת	במס'
Josh. 9:16	בני ישראל	בנ"י
I Kings 5:12	בספר	בס'
Mal. 1:2	בעולם הבא	בעוה"ב
Mal. 1:2	בעולם הזה	בעוה"ז
I Sam. 14:30	בתמיהא	בתמי'
Josh. 8:33; 9:2	גומר	גו' (וגו')
II Sam. 17:9	דבר אחר	ד"א
Josh. 9:4	דכתיב	דכת'
Amos 7:2	ה'	ה"א
II Kings 20:4	הברוך הוא	הב"ה
Josh. 9:4	הדא דכתיב	הה"ד
Josh. 9:4	הכתוב	הכת'
Josh. 9:27	המקום	המק'
Jud. 5:19	הקדוש	הק'
II Sam. 22:24	הקדוש ברוך הוא	הקב"ה
Josh. 22:4	וגומר	וג'
I Sam. 7:11	ויונתן	ויונת'
Jer. 14:9	חס ושלום	ח"ו

\* This list follows S. Ashkenazi and D. Yarden, eds., Otzar Rashei Tevoth (Jerusalem 1973). References are generally to the first appearance of each abbreviation.

<u>Reference</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Abbreviation</u>
Jud. 6:28	חכמינו	חכמ'
II Sam. 6:1	ישראל	ישר'
Jud. 5:13	כדמרגמין	כדמת'
Jud. 13:25	כדמרגמין	כדמרג'
I Sam. 17:39	כן הוא אומר	כה"א
Josh. 8:30, 33	וכולי	כו' (כו')
Josh. 9:9	כלומר	כלו'
Josh. 14:4	כלומר	כלומ'
Isa. 1:31	כמא דאת אמר; or כדמת'	כמד"א
	transposed	
II Kings 15:5	as above	כמדתמ'
Josh. 4:9	כמו שכתוב למטה (Apenstein)	כש'
Josh. 9:27	כתב	כת'
I Sam. 13:21	לבדם	לבד'
I Sam. 23:22	לפיכך	לפי'
I Sam. 25:9	מתרגמינן	מתרגמ'
II Kings 17:9	עבודת אלילים	ע"א
I Kings 11:27	ענין אחר	ע"א
Isa. 2:22	על אחת כמה וכמה	עאכ"ו
II Sam. 19:21	על אחת כמה וכמה	עאכו"ב
Jud. 8:27	עבודה זרה	עו"ז
Jud. 7:5	עבודה זרה	ע"ז
Isa. 11:4	פלוני	פל'
I Sam. 13:21	פצירה	פציר'
I Sam. 13:21	פתרון/פתרונו	פת'
Josh. 10:13	פתרון/פתרונו	פתר'
I Sam. 2:21	פתרון/פתרונו	פתרו'
Josh. 10:13	רב, רבי	ר'
I Sam. 7:6	רבוננו של עולם	רבש"ע
Josh. 8:33	שנאמר	שנ'
Josh. 14:10	שנים	שני'
I Sam. 1:5	תירגמו, תירגמיה	תירג'
Josh. 9:16	תלמוד לומר	ת"ל
Jud. 14:6	תרגום	תרג'
Jud. 3:22	תרגום	תרגו'

### Notes to the Introduction

1. A. Berliner, Peletath Sofrim (Mainz 1872); cf. A. Geiger, Nitei Ne'emanim (Breslau 1847 [pub. Heilberg]).
2. Kristianpuller has published some passages from the commentary on Isaiah in Sefer Hayovel LeShmuel Krauss (Jerusalem 1937), pp. 110-116. An edition of the commentary on Jeremiah was brought out in Paris in 1881 by Schlossberg, with a later edition in Mikraoth Gedoloth (pub. Lublin).
3. See M. Littmann, Joseph ben Simeon Kara als Schrifterklärer (Breslau 1887), pp. 32-36.
4. Poznanski, Mavo al Hachmei Tzarfath Mefarshei Hamikra (Warsaw 1913), p. xxviii.
5. Perush Bechor Shor Latorah (Jerusalem 1957-1959), 3 vols.
6. A. Jellink, Perushim al Esther, Ruth VeEichah (Leipzig 1886).
7. S. Babar, Perush R. Yosef Kara al Meqillath Eichah, Tehillah LeDavid, Sefer Zikaron LeDavid Kaufmann (Breslau 1900), pp. 8-51.
8. B. Einstein, R. Josef und sein Kommentar zu Koheleth (Berlin 1886). For further editions of the commentary on the Five Scrolls, see Poznanski, op. cit., pp. xxix-xxx.
9. M. Ahrend, Perush Rabbi Yosef Kara: Sefer Iyov (Jerusalem 1989). For an extended discussion of previous editions of the commentary on Job, and particularly of the MSS on which Ahrend's edition is founded, see pp. 80ff.
10. Op. cit., pp. xxiii-xxxix.
11. Poznanski, Pithronei Rabbi Menahem bar Helbo Lekithvei Hakodesh, in Sefer Hayovel LeNahum Sokolov (Warsaw 1904), pp. 389-436.
12. Babar, op. cit.; Epstein, op. cit.; and compare Urbach, Baalei Hatosafoth\* (Jerusalem 1980), pp. 134-135, etc., and Arugath Habosem, vol. 4 (Jerusalem 1939-63), pp. 18-23, etc.
13. Perushei Rabbi Yosef Kara LeNeviim Rishonim (Jerusalem 1973), originally published in German as Studien über Joseph ben Simon Kara als Exeget, Jahrbuch des jüdischlitterarischen Gesellschaft 4 (1906), 238-268.
14. For further summaries of Kara's life and exegetical approach, see A. Berliner, Peletath Sofrim (German section), ch. III (Breslau 1872), pp. 19-25; A. Geiger, Nitei Ne'emanim (German section), pp. 1-49, esp. pp. 10-11; D. Rosin, R. Samuel ben Meir als Schrifterklärer (Breslau 1880), pp. 72-74; B. J. Gelles, Peshat and Derash in the Exegesis of Rashi (Leiden 1981), pp. 128 ff.
15. M. M. Ahrend, Le Commentaire sur Job de Rabbi Yoseph Qara - Etude des methodes philologiques et exegetiques (Hildesheim 1978).
16. A. Twyto, 'Al Heker Parshanuth Hamikra Hayehudith Tzarfatith', Tarbitz 51 (1982), 522-526.
17. See A. Gravois, 'Hanushach HaIvri shel Hamikra Vehalamdanuth Hanotzrith', Mehkarim Betoldoth Am Yisrael VeEretz Yisrael, 3 (Haifa 1970), pp. 97-116, esp. p. 103 on the contacts between Kara, Rashbam and Hugo of St Victor; cf. B. Smalley, The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages (Oxford 1984), pp. 103-104.
18. Pithronei Rambach, p. 389.

Notes to the Biographical Note

1. S. A. Poznanski, Mavo al Hachmei Tzarfath Mefarshei Hamikra (Warsaw 1913), p. xxiv.
2. A. Berliner, Peletath Sofrim (Mainz 1872), Hebrew sect., p. 24.
3. Mavo, p. xxiv.
4. A. Grossman, 'Kara, Joseph', Enc. Jud., 10 (1971), 759-760.
5. M. Ahrend has fairly recently surveyed all the available material, in Le Commentaire sur Job de Rabbi Yoseph Kara, Etude des methodes philologiques et exegetiques (Hildesheim 1978), p. 28. See also Poznanski, Mavo, pp. xxv-xxx1.
6. See Grossman (n. 4, above), p. 760.
7. For the historical background of the period see H. H. Ben-Sasson, Toldoth Am Yisrael Bemei Habenayim (Tel Aviv 1969), pp. 23-164; and more particularly B. Roth, ed., Historia shel Am Yisrael: Tekufath HaOfel (Jerusalem 1970).
8. See A. Twyto, 'Shitath Haparshanith shel Rashbam al Reka Hametziuth Hahistorith shel Zemano', Sefer Melamed (Bar Ilan University 1982), pp. 54 ff., p. 55.
9. Twyto, p. 57.
10. For a detailed account, see Twyto, pp. 60-63.
11. On the conception involved see A. Loewenstam, 'Mishkalo shel Hashem Karai', Leshonenu 38 (1974), 181-182; and the response of S. Moreg, Leshonenu 40 (1976), p. 298. See also Poznanski, 'Pithronei Rabbi Menahem bar Helbo Lekithvei Hakodesh', Sefer Hayovel LeNahum Sokolov (Warsaw 1904), p. 391, n. 2; and Mavo, p. xii.
12. A. Geiger, Nitei Ne'emanim (Breslau 1847), p. 9, n. 3; and Parshandatha (Leipzig 1857), p. 11, n. 3.
13. And see Pesahim 111a and Rashi's comment on פ"ח.
14. Compare Eruvin 21b, and see A. A. Urbach, Arugath Habosem - LeRabbi Avraham ben Rabbi Ezriel (Jerusalem 1962), vol. 3, p. 289.
15. See Rabbi Yosef Kara: Perushim al Esther, Ruth VeEichah, ed. A. Jellink (Leipzig 1855), p. vi, n. 2.
16. A. Epstein, 'Rabbi Yosef Kara Vehaperush LeBereshith Rabba Hameyuchas LeRashi', Hahoker (1891), pp. 33 ff.
17. Peskikta DeRav Kahana, ed. S. Babar, שו"ת section, 18.
18. Pithronei Rambach, p. 391.
19. Rappaport, 'Maamar al Hamunah "Kara"', Kerem Hemed 7 (1844), 4-13.
20. B. Einstein, R. Josef Kara und sein Kommentar zu Koheleth (Berlin 1886), pp. 14-16.
21. Le Commentaire, pp. 2-3.
22. M. Banitte, 'Heker Haglosarim Hamikraim shel Yehudei Tzarfath Bemei Habenayim', Divrei HaAkademia Haleumith Hayisraelith Lemadaim (Jerusalem 1967), p. 10; 'Les Poterim', REJ 125 (1966), 27-28.
23. See Rashi on Lev. 14:14; Obad. 1:20. We should further note that Rashbam too engaged in teaching, but this was not (as with Kara) his particular speciality. For Rashbam as a teacher see his comments on Num. 11:35, s.v. מקנרות התאוה and 30:2. s.v. וידבר משה.
24. And see 'Les Poterim' (n. 22, above), p. 28.

25. And see A. Twyto, 'Al Heker Parshanuth Hamikra Hayehudith-Tzarfatith', Tarbitz 51 (1982), 525-526.

26. Banitte, 'Les Poterim', p. 28.

27. See further Chapter 2, sect. I, below, which deals with Kara's exegetical vocabulary. It is worth repeating that there was a parallel development among Christians and Jews in this period with regard to educational methods. The text become the focus of instruction. A teacher was called lector by Christians, and it is possible that קרא was an equivalent term among Jews. See Twyto, 'Shitato Haparshanith shel Rashbam', p. 60 ff.

28. Comment on Jud. 2:17; and see Poznanski, Al HaRambach, p. 391.

29. See Apenstein, Introduction to Perushei Rabbi Yosef Kara LeNeviim Rishonim (Jerusalem 1972), p. 9, n. 20. It is difficult to accept the view of A. Y. Aigos ('Limud Hatorah Betzafon Eiropah', in Hahistoriah shel Am Yisrael, vol. 2, Tekufath HaOfel [Tel Aviv 1973], p. 130) that the title of קרא was given to experts in נוסח and מסורה who also sought for טעם and therefore delved into grammar and syntax, and that Kara and Helbo taught such people, in view of the fact that Kara gave very little attention to questions of נוסח and מסורה, as the most cursory examination of his work will prove beyond any doubt. We should note that the title of קרא was also given to Avigdor ben Yitzhak Kara because of his expertise in the Scriptures and work as a teacher of Scripture. See A. David, 'Kara Avigdor ben Isaac', Enc. Jud. 10 (1971), 758-759.

Notes to Chapter 1

1. Abraham Geiger, Parshandatha, Hebrew sect., p. 26.
2. B. Einstein, pp. 37-38; for a dissenting view, see M. Littmann, Joseph ben Simeon Kara als Schrifterklärer (Breslau 1877), p. 15.
3. S. Apenstein, Perushei Rabbi Yosef Kara LeNeviim Rishonim (Jerusalem 1972), Introduction, pp. 11-12.
4. S. A. Poznanski, Mavo al Hachmei Tzarfath Mefarshei Hamikra (Warsaw 1913), p. xxxi.
5. And see Mavo, p. xlii, n. 1.
6. See Gen. 37:2, etc.
7. B. Smalley, The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages (Indiana 1970), pp. 155-156.
8. L. Rabinowitz, The Social Life... (London 1938); and see the list of references at the end of this study.
9. She would not have made this claim had she read the previously published work of Kristianpuller, Likutim Miperushav shel R. Yosef Kara LeYesheyahu, in Sefer Hayovel LeShmuel Krauss (Jerusalem 1937), p. 110, as Ahrend also remarks in Le Commentaire sur Job de Rabbi Yoseph Qara: Etude des Methodes Philologiques et Exegetiques (Hildesheim 1978), p. 9.
10. A. A. Urbach, Arugath Habosem, vol. 4, p. 18.
11. Ahrend, Le Commentaire, p. 8.
12. Ibid, bottom of p. 9; Twyto raises objections in Al Heker Parshanuth Hamikra, pp. 522-523.
13. Ahrend, op. cit., pp. 5-6.
14. Kara quotes the glossed phrase as ה' בצאתך משדה אדום, which is erroneous.
15. Here we can discern the difference between Rashi and Kara, and Kara's advance upon Rashi, in relation to the critical analysis of Scripture.
16. His rejection of the Sages in Jud. 5:4, critical but delicately expressed, should also be noted: ואני אוסיף להפליא הפלא ופלא מה עניין מתן תורה לכאן.
17. On this point see B. J. Gelles, Peshat and Drash in the Exegesis of Rashi (Leiden 1981), p. 129.
18. See Gelles, op. cit., p. 130.
19. According to Geiger, Parshandatha, Hebrew sect., p. 26, לי should appear here (it is missing in Apenstein), and the later חזלתי לי should be חזלתי לו. There are some other differences: for example, the והוא מעות of I Kings 7:33 should be מעקש, and ואל תשיבהו should be ואל תשיבני; and in I Kings 8:8, אני ינ"ש אני יוסף בר' שמעון should read אני ינ"ש אני (see the texts in question).
20. I Kings 18:26, at ויקחו את הפר אשר נתן להם.
21. As against the Sages in Yoma 53b. Similar language is to be found in verse 2, after Kara has explained a Midrashic citation from Targum Jonathan: ואני יוסף בר' שמעון אומר לי לבי [here follows a פשוט interpretation] והמקים יאיר עינינו. Here the nature of the problem and his inclination towards the פשוט are quite evident. See also I Sam. 9:9.
22. I Sam. 13:21; and see Josh. 24:27; I Kings 8:2. In these instances the Targum Jonathan is pure דרש.

23. I Kings 10:19 (ed. S. Babar).
24. See Yalkut Kings, sect. 214.
25. Isa. 4:6; 6:13; 8:4; 9:6; 10:32; 17:11; 22:14, 25; 40:31; 41:12; 45:8; 51:9, 16; Ezek. 11:1, 13; 19:7. In each instance there is a collection of Midrashim, some complete and others fragments drawn from various sources.
26. And in Isa. 17:11:....וּמִדְרָשׁ חֲכָמִים.
27. I Kings 5:13 (cf. I Kings 5:12). See Jud. 9:13; II Sam. 14:2; and the similar Isa. 23:4.
28. There is one instance, II Sam. 22:38, in which a Midrash is placed between two נִשְׁט interpretations.
29. For comparable passages see Isa. 64:1 (מִים תִּנָּעַה אֵשׁ) and Job 14:19 (אֲנִיִּים שֶׁחָקוּ מִיָּם).
30. The root י"ע is an active verb only in the Piel (Josh. 7:3) or Hifil conjugations (Isa. 43:23, 24; Mal. 2:17).
31. קָמִי (those who rise up against me) = enemies. See Exod. 15:7; II Sam. 18:31; Ps. 3:2; etc.
32. And note Y. Heinmann, Darchei HaAggadah (Jerusalem 1954), pp. 28-32.
33. I Kings 13:1: אִישׁ הָאֱלֹקִים is Ido the prophet; I Sam. 4:12: הָאִישׁ is Saul; Mal. 3:23: הַמַּלְאָךְ is Elijah.
34. II Sam. 12:30; and note Avodah Zarah 44a. An additional example: I Sam. 21:7.
35. B. Einstein, Rabbi Josef Kara und sein Kommentar zu Koheleth (Berlin 1886), p. 45.
36. Mavo, p. xxxv.
37. M. Ahrend, Le Commentaire, p. 23, sect. 7; and note his Yahas Perusho shel R. Yosef Kara Lesefer Iyov el Perusho shel Rashi: Iyunei Mikra Veparshanuth (Ramat Gan 1980), pp. 187-188.
38. Mavo, p. xvi.
39. He then offers examples from the Prophetic Books and Job (Mavo, p. xxxv). Kara himself uses the expression סֵדֶר הַמִּקְרָאוֹת (see Jer. 15:6, 8).
40. See also verse 15 and Jud. 5:15, 16.
41. I Sam. 13:17: the word מַצֵּב appears only in v. 23 and in 16:14, where he explains part of verse 13 so as to create a unified topic. Compare II Sam. 4:8, where he explains part of v. 6. II Sam. 21:1 is explained only at v. 4; and 22:7 at v. 5. And see Apenstein's comments in various places, such as II Kings 25:27 (וְעֹשֶׂה לְחֹדֶשׁ), and other instances.
42. Other examples: Isa. 58:14; Jer. 12:3; Hos. 4:6; Zech. 5:6; Mal. 2:9. Tyre is compared to the sea in Isa. 23:4.
43. Commenting on Isa. 42:1, Abarbanel identifies the prophet as Ibn Ezra, Cyrus as Saadiah Gaon and the Messiah as Rashi.
44. Isa. 40:3; Jer. 2:5, 9; Job 23:16-17.
45. Jer. 34:17, 46:13; Job 17:9; 39:5.
46. Isa. 2:1; 39:8; 42:3; and see Kristianpuller, Likutim Miperushei R. Yosef Kara, and A. Epstein, Hahoker, p. 31.
47. Additional examples: Isa. 29:17; Hos. 6:5; 13:5.
48. Everywhere the phrases אֵין לוֹ דּוֹמָה or פִּתְרוֹנוֹ לִפְנֵי עֵינָיו are repeated.
49. In Isa. 37:31 he says, וּמִתּוֹךְ הָעֵינִין אַתָּה לִמַּד שֶׁהוּא כֵן.
50. See further Isa. 26:7; 34:4; Jer. 48:12; Hos. 2:7; Mic. 4:1.
51. And note Mal. 3:23 for the identification of the angel as Elijah; cf. Ezek. 31:18.

52. He writes on Hos. 2:7, הרבה דברים תמצא שסתומין בתחלתן, ולעולם תמצא פתרוןן וחסרוןן כולן לפי תשובתן 1:10.
53. Compare II Sam. 22:16; and note I Sam. 25:11. See A. Berliner, Peletath Sofrim, on this verse. See also I Kings 5:32; Isa. 22:16; 28:7; Ezek. 27:9; Joel 3:3. It is possible that Rashi too was aware of this approach (see Isa. 52:12), if we assume that phrases from Kara have not been interpolated into Rashi's commentary. In any case it is clear that Rashbam learned the technique from Kara. See Y. Razin, Perush HaRashbam Hashalem (Breslau 1882), note 12.
54. Compare Jud. 3:17; I Sam. 2:18; 21:8.
55. See I Sam. 1:3, 9; 25:1; 28:3; I Kings 11:29-30; 18:3; 22:10.
56. See further Gen. 26:15-17; Jud. 3:17, 22; 15:1, 5; I Sam. 1:9, 14, 3:1, 10; 28:3, 5; I Kings 18:3, 12; II Kings 17:1, 3.
57. Additional examples: I Sam. 1:3 as against 2:12; 13:22 against 14:13; 21:8 against 22:9.
58. On this point, Poznanski comments (Mavo, p. xvi), that the phrase לשנר את האוזן in Rashi's use does not have its customary sense, and it is likely that it is an addition of Kara's. See Peletath Sofrim, p. 17.
59. See also Gen. 9:18 (והם הוא).
60. Gen. 1:1; 9:18; 24:1; 25:1, 28; etc. For a detailed list, see Melamed, Mefarshei Hamikra, vol. 1, pp. 461-464; and Poznanski, Mavo, p. xvi.
61. This way of formulating the point is typical of Kara, as we have remarked. In another instance (Gen. 19:15), we find והוצרך להקדים כאן, נכתב פסוק זה בשביל שכתב לפניו ואחנת יצחק לעשיו... להודיע מה שכתב לפנינו.
62. And see Ahrend, Le Commentaire, p. 105; Melamed, Mefarshei Hamikra, vol. 1, pp. 461-464.
63. Berachoth 10a; Yevamoth 4a; Midrash Sifri on בלק, para. 131.
64. Exod. 17:1; Num. 13:1.
65. And note Isa. 2:1; 11:13 (an opposite example is to be found in Isa. 33:23); and also Jer. 3:15, 18; Hos. 2:17-18; Joel 2:20; Amos 9:13; Mic. 4:1; Zech. 1:15; Mal. 3:12.
66. Le Commentaire, pp. 8, 9.
67. Ibid, p. 10.
68. A. Twyto, Al Heker Parshanuth Hamikra..., p. 524.
69. Twyto points out that a parallel development occurred among Christians. See his 'Shitato Haparshanith shel Rashbam', pp. 61-63. To my mind the suggestion made by Gelles, op. cit., p. 130 (see n. 17, above), that the dual value given by Kara to פשט is a consequence of two schools of influence, operative in his youth and in adulthood respectively, should not be accepted.
70. I Sam. 1:20; and see Josh. 17:16, where Kara appeals to המשכיל.
71. Perhaps these are also אנשי לבב (Rashbam on Deut. 7:7). See Ahrend, Le Commentaire, p. 6, n. 48.
72. See Rashbam on this point (Gen. 37:2).
73. Lev. 13:2. Gelles claims that in theory Kara's position regarding פשט is more radical than Rashbam's (Peshat and Derash, p. 133).



74. And see his comment on Gen. 37:2.
75. Al Heker Parshanuth Hamikra, p. 526.
76. Raphael Loewe, 'The "Plain" Meaning of Scripture in Early Jewish Exegesis', in Papers of the Institute of Jewish Studies, ed. J. G. Weisse, vol. 1 (London 1964), pp. 181, 183.
77. Sara Kamin, 'Todaato Haparshanith shel Rashi Leor Hahavchanah bein Peshat Lederash' [dissertation] (Jerusalem 1979), pp. 300-303; p. 302.
78. A comparable view was expressed at the beginning of this century by A. H. Weiss, in Dor Dor Vedorshav (Vienna 1911); and cf. Kara on II Sam. 21:4.
79. S. Kamin, p. 108.
80. Ibid, p. 109.
81. S. Kamin, p. 137; she adds that Rashi has no specific term to denominate an interpretation which is not לפי פשוטו.
82. Ibid., p. 195.
83. Ibid., p. 196.
84. This is derived from Kara's use of the word. Just as we have seen that he uses the phrase פשוטו של מקרא, so we find פשוטו של דבר in the same sense (Jud. 1:3; I Sam. 10:22; I Kings 10:7; 20:7).
85. There is a consensus that Kara borrowed from Rashi the term פשוטו של מקרא and the root יש"ב (see the discussion, below, and Gelles, Peshat and Derash, p. 132, n. 22, and also p. 14 ff.).
86. S. Kamin, p. 292.
87. Compare Kara's remark, לא ידעתי הדבר לישובו על אופניו ואין ואני לא באתי אלא (Jud. 4:5) with Rashi on Gen. 3:8: לפשוטו של מקרא ולאגדה המיישבת דברי המקרא דבר דבור על אופניו.
88. The word מליצה connotes the Biblical manner and language, as in מליצתו של מקרא (I Sam. 25:18) or וכה מליצת הנבואה (I Sam. 2:10; and see Prov. 1:6).
89. Compare 5:11, 13. It is worth noting that in three adjacent verses he uses similar language; this is the sort of thing that happens when someone is lecturing. For an analogous case, see his remarks on I Kings 8:2 and v. 8.
90. S. Kamin, p. 299.
91. Gen. 25:17; 46:8; Exod. 6:14; etc.
92. Exod. 22:6; 24:4.
93. Gen. 18:8; 25:19; and see further E. Z. Melamed, Mefarshei Hamikra - Darkeihem Veshitotthehem (Jerusalem 1975), vol. 1, pp. 456-460; and A. Twyto, 'Shitato Haparshanith shel Rashbam', pp. 64, 65. In addition see Gelles (n. 17, above), pp. 123-127.
94. See A. Y. Aigos (Biographical Note, above, n. 29), p. 131.
95. Kara's addition of באותו דור (missing in the Talmud) should be noted. He introduces few such changes.
96. For an allusion to a Midrash associated with this topic, see Midrash Samuel, ed. S. Babar, p. 44.
97. Midrash Samuel, ed. Babar, p. 114.
98. Note Midrash Samuel, pp. 109-110, and Yevamoth 76b.
99. On the topic of kingship, see Midrash Tanchuma, Leviticus (ed. Babar), sect. 2, p. 4.
100. Jud. 5:26, from Genesis Rabba, chap. 48 (ed. H. Albeck); I Sam. 7:9, from Midrash Samuel, p. 83; II Sam. 10:16, from

Midrash Psalms, sect. 4 (ed. Babar).

101. Jud. 11:22, from Gittin 36a; I Sam. 14:45, from Eruvin 81b; II Sam. 2:23, from Sanhedrin 49a; I Kings 7:23, from Baba Bathra 14b.

102. In the Midrash: Josh. 22:7, from Genesis Rabba chap. 35; I Sam. 25:18, from Genesis Rabba chap. 69. In the Talmud: I Sam. 4:19, from Bechoroth 45a; II Sam. 14:26, from Nazir 4b-5a; etc.

103. Section נ"י, sect. 19. The Midrash explains the parable and its meaning together, at length; Kara condenses the relevant part and omits the rest.

104. Jud. 11:26, from Seder Olam, chap. 12 (ed. B. Rattner); I Sam. 1:17, from Midrash Samuel, p. 52; II Sam. 24:1, from Pesikta Rabbathi 43a (ed. M. Ish-Shalom). From the Talmud: Jud. 5:21, from Pesachim 118b; Jud. 13:5, from Niddah 30b; etc.

105. Midrash Samuel, p. 59, and compare Mechilta נשלח 15 (ed. Ish-Shalom; compare the edition of H. S. Horowitz).

106. I Sam. 22:4, from Tanchuma, Numbers 28; I Kings 7:51, from Yalkut Shimeoni, sect. 186. From the Talmud: Jud. 14:14, from Kethuvoth 2a; I Sam. 1:11, from Nazir 66a; II Sam. 3:27, from Sanhedrin 49a.

107. The Mechilta of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai (ed. Epstein and Melamed); it should read ישמעאל 'ר and not עקינא 'ר. See the Jerusalem Talmud, Pesachim 34a.

108. Tanchuma on נ"י, sect. 25.

109. Midrash Shocher Tov, end of sect. 3, lyric 3.

110. II Sam. 21:5, from Genesis Rabba, sect. 40; 24:9 from Midrash Samuel, sect. 30, end (in Kara the Midrash is several times longer; see also v. 15); II Kings 9:29, from Seder Olam, chap. 17; 25:27, from Seder Olam, chap. 28.

111. From the beginning of נ"י, in Josh. 22:19; and see S. Apenstein ad loc., n. 6.

112. I Sam. 7:9; and see Midrash Samuel, p. 83; Leviticus Rabba 22:9 (ed. M. Margalioth).

113. I Sam. 25:18; and see D. Z. Hoffmann, Mechilta DeRabbi Shimon ben Yochai (Frankfurt a.M. 1905), p. 12 and the notes there. Elsewhere (I Kings 8:12), when Kara says, כן שנויה ופסוק, it appears that he means the Mechilta of Rabbi Ishmael, which is also called 'Sifri'; and see Apenstein, p. 128, n. 7. Compare Hoffmann, x. All this shows that these works were available to Kara, which is an important piece of information.

114. And see Jerusalem Talmud Pesachim 34a. The references to the book in Kara's commentary should be added to Hoffmann's work (n. 113, above), to chap. 1, pp. v, viii.

115. II Sam. 24:15, from Midrash Shocher Tov, lyric 17; Berachoth 62a.

116. I Kings 22:17 directs us to the Mechilta for what is not to be found there; and Josh. 11:21 similarly directs us in vain to the Talmud.

117. I Kings 17:6; Kara produces two opinions, only one of which appears in Sanhedrin 113a.

118. As in Josh. 22:7 and most instances in the Early Prophets. Out of about 110 instances in the Early Prophets in which he cites a Midrash, in only about 35 cases does he mention the source; and out of about 150 Midrashic citations

in the Latter Prophets, the source is given in only about 40 cases.

119. As we have noted, Twyto's view is to be rejected here (Al Heker Parshanuth Hamikra, p. 525).

120. The name of the Midrash is given in I Kings 17:18; Isa. 21:15.

121. Compare מדרש חכמים (Jud. 6:1; Isa. 15:1); מדרש רבתי (Isa. 55:4).

122. Compare אמרו רבותינו or מדרש שאמרו רבותינו (I Sam. 4:12) or סמכו רבותינו (II Sam. 12:12, and before the collection of Midrashim in Isa. 45:8).

123. Compare ולפי מדרשי (II Sam. 19:21; Isa. 43:22).

124. Jud. 11:26; Isa. 19:18; and in various combinations like וזו היא ששנינו (Josh. 15:8); כאותה ששנינו (Josh. 22:19); כשם ששנינו (I Sam. 1:22); כמו ששנינו (I Sam. 10:22; Jer. 52:6); כן שנויה (I Sam. 2:27; Isa. 37:36); ותניא (I Kings 15:22); וזהו ששנינו (Isa. 7:7); וזהו ששנינו (Amos 3:12).

125. I Kings 17:1; 18:31 (ed. S. A. Luria); Hos. 10:6.

126. Or אמרו רבותינו (Hos. 1:1, 2).

127. Or חכמינו (Jud. 8:28), or רבותינו פירשו (Mic. 5:1).

128. And note Melamed, vol. 1, pp. 372-373.

129. Jud. 14:9 (ed. Albeck, Shishah Sidrei Mishnah [Jerusalem, Tel Aviv 1957-1959]).

130. II Kings 12:10 (ed. Zukermann).

131. I Kings 8:4, 32; II Kings 2:17; 9:29 (ed. Liebermann).

132. Josh. 15:8 (ed. Schechter); Hag. 2:16.

133. I Kings 7:16 (ed. Gruenhut).

134. Here Kara complains, ואין לי מקרא ממי ללמוד; cf. Jer. 25:9.

135. There are many more references in the Early Prophets, and 9 in the Latter Prophets, as in Isa. 16:4.

136. In the edition of D. Z. Hoffmann; and note I Sam. 25:18. The Mechilta of Rabbi Ishmael should perhaps be mentioned as well; see above, n. 113.

137. In the edition of S. Babar; Isa. 6:13.

138. In the edition of Y. Z. Yadler.

139. Midrash Zuta al Hamesh Megilloth, ed. S. Babar.

140. For example: Sota, Berachoth, Temurah, Gittin, Niddah, Megillah, Nazir, Baba Kama, Zevachim, Moed Katan. On occasion Kara quotes from the Talmud without making his source clear; see Josh. 11:21; I Sam. 7:9; II Sam. 16:10, II Kings 1:17.

Notes to Chapter 2

1. Josh. 9:4, 16; 22:19, 23.
2. Josh. 9:9; Isa. 5:9.
3. Josh. 14:11; 18:7; Isa. 1:18.
4. Josh. 22:22.
5. Josh. 9:4; I Kings 6:34.
6. This argumentative style may reflect a method of teaching through questions which developed during this period. See A. Twyto, 'Shitato Haparshanith shel Rashbam', pp. 60-61.
7. Jud. 5:23; Isa. 9:13; and in the combinations of דע והבן in Isa. 1:18 and ודע על נכון in Jer. 36:23.
8. Josh. 18:13, 15.
9. Jud. 13:12; and see Josh. 16:4; Isa. 9:14.
10. Josh. 9:27; Jer. 50:11.
11. Josh. 18:15; Ezek. 35:13.
12. I Kings 7:33.
13. S. Apenstein, Mavo, p. 17.
14. Josh. 15:2-3; Jer. 47:1.
15. Josh. 14:4; Jer. 14:1.
16. Jud. 11:26; Hos. 2:7.
17. Jud. 1:7; Isa. 37:31.
18. II Sam. 12:30; Jonah 1:3 (למדת בענין).
19. II Sam. 4:8; Isa. 19:22.
20. Jud. 13:12; Isa. 7:23; Jer. 25:10.
21. Josh. 10:10; Hos. 2:1.
22. הוי (Josh. 14:7-10); כאן למדנו (Josh. 10:10); לימדך (I Kings 22:21); למדתי (Isa. 8:23); יש ללמוד (Isa. 35:5); למוד מכאן (I Kings 7:14); מיכן למדו (Josh. 18:15); למדתה (Josh. 15:2-3); מלמדך (Jud. 5:4; Isa. 7:17); הכתוב מלמדך (Jud. 12:4); למידין (I Sam. 1:11; Isa. 23:13); קדם ולימדך (Jud. 4:11); למד (Jud. 13:12; Isa. 7:23); צא ולמד (I Sam. 17:55; Isa. 15:1); שכלמדנו (Isa. 1:15); מלמדנו (Isa. 7:4); אתה למד (Isa. 3:16); אני למד (Isa. 6:5).
23. II Kings 7:23; I Sam. 10:12, ואני למדתי.
24. I Sam. 13:21; II Sam. 23:5.
25. I Kings 7:16 - Midrash; I Sam. 9:24 - Talmud; Isa. 19:18 - Midrash; Joel 2:23 - Talmud.
26. II Kings 9:39 - Talmud; I Sam. 2:27 - Midrash; Isa. 37:36 - Midrash; Hos. 1:2 - Talmud.
27. I Kings 7:16 - Midrash; I Kings 8:4 - Talmud; ויכמו שנינו: I Kings 15:22.
28. I Sam. 3:3; Isa. 1:28, 5:9, 11; and especially 18:7: והבן המקרא הזה על הצדק.
29. Jud. 2:17; and in Isa. 37:31, ...והשמר לא תפרש ותאמר...
30. Josh. 11:8; Isa. 63:19; in 16:1 we read, וזוהו עיקרו ולו תסור ממנו.
31. Josh. 10:13; I Sam. 9:20, 21; 17:55; II Sam. 12:14.
32. I Sam. 1:17; I Kings 1:5, שלא תפרש, והזהר בך; and note Isa. 8:4, ולא יפנה לבבך לשמוע דברי הפותרים.
33. I Kings 7:33; and see Jer. 50:11 for more opposition to Rashi.
34. I Kings 7:15, 16; Ezek. 21:20.
35. I Kings 8:2, 8; also II Kings 19:25.
36. Isa. 34:16; similarly 2:22.
37. II Sam. 21:4; or לאחר מליצת הנבואה (Isa.

- 51:9).
38. I Sam. 13:21, on Helbo's gloss.
39. Josh. 9:4; Jer. 28:1.
40. II Sam. 8:18; see Isa. 22:24 for slightly different phrasing.
41. I Kings 6:34; Jer. 7:31 (this contradicts his gloss on II Kings 23:10).
42. I Kings 18:29.
43. II Kings 9:27; Josh. 17:5.
44. Josh. 17:5; Jud. 8:18; Isa. 3:24.
45. I Sam. 10:22; Ezek. 29:1, 21.
46. This is the only time that the word פֶּשֶׁר appears in Kara's commentary; note I Kings 22:21; Isa. 15:1.
47. Where topics follow one another rapidly: Jud. 10:8; Isa. 1:25.
48. II Sam. 22:7-12; Isa. 22:16; or מִסְפָּר וְהוֹלֵךְ (Jer. 11:15).
49. I Kings 1:7, and note 6-8; Jer. 50:11.
50. Josh. 16:6; מִשְׁפִּירֵשׁ לֶךְ (v. 8).
51. I Sam. 13:7; Isa. 27:1, on his commentary to Job.
52. I Sam. 1:3 on Gen. 26:15, and note A. Berliner, Peletath Sofrim, p. 15, and II Kings 25:17.
53. Or in the abbreviated form 'כלום' (I Sam. 14:43) or 'כלו' (I Sam. 14:41; Jer. 2:3).
54. II Sam. 7:23, and note I Sam. 1:17 (הִיָּה חֹקֵר אַחֲרֵי פֶשֶׁר זָכָר), and Eccles. 8:1.
55. Harikmah, p. 352 (ed. M. Vilenski), and also Sefer Hashorashim, pp. 414-416 (ed. B. Z. Becher).
56. II Kings 11:2; I Kings 10:28; and note Isa. 24:22.
57. Hapothrim, pp. 27-28.
58. A. Twyto, 'Shitato Haparshanith shel Rashbam', p. 62; M. Banitte, Halaazim shel Rashi..., p. 168.
59. I Sam. 1:3; 10:12; II Sam. 8:18; 23:1. Jer. 49:19 (but this is rare in the Latter Prophets).
60. I Kings 16:9; Isa. 23:13 (פְּתֻרֹנֵי הַקְּרָאִים).
61. I Kings 2:5 on Rashi; Hag. 2:15.
62. See the section in Chapter 3, below, on Kara's relationship to the various commentators.
63. Josh. 10:13 (כִּיּוֹם תָּמִים); Hos. 4:17.
64. I Sam. 1:17; וְאֵל תִּפְתּוֹר (I Sam. 16:12); שִׁתְפוֹר (I Sam. 1:1; Isa. 1:28).
65. I Sam. 1:1; Jer. 8:23 (בְּפִתְרוֹנֵי הַפּוֹתְרִים).
66. I Sam. 1:11; Jer. 22:28 (חֲכָמִים פְּתֻרוֹהוּ).
67. II Sam. 5:21; or יֵשׁ פּוֹתְרִין (I Sam. 4:19; Isa. 8:4).
68. Gen. 40:5, 8, 12, 16, 18, 22; 41:11, 12, 13, 15.
69. Glass, pp. 14-20; S. Kamin, p. 243.
70. For additional terms in other books of the Bible, see M. Ahrend, Perush Rabbi Yosef Kara: Sefer Iyov, pp. 163 ff. See also the Appendix, below, on abbreviations and shortened forms in Kara's commentary.
71. Josh. 12:8; I Sam. 15:2; Isa. 16:1.
72. I Kings 5:17; Isa. 5:9; cf. דִּכְתִּיב (II Sam. 1:16); כְּמוֹ שֶׁכֵּת (II Sam. 6:7); וְכֵת' בְּסֻמוֹךְ (II Sam. 7:2).
73. מה שֶׁנִּי (Jud. 13:23); כַּעֲנִין שֶׁנִּי (Jud. 13:12); וְכֵן הוּא אֹמֵר (II Sam. 8:4); כִּמְה דְתִימָא (Jud. 14:9); כִּשֶׁם שְׁאֹמֹר (II Kings 17:1); וְזֶהוּ שֶׁנִּי (Josh. 9:16); תִּ"ל (Jud. 6:11); לְמַעַלָּה (I Sam. 2:26); כִּיּוֹצֵא כּוֹ (Josh. 9:4); הֵה"ד (I Sam. 15:2); כִּשֶׁם

שְׁתַּמְצָא בִּסְפָר (II Sam. 7:14); וְכֵן מְפֹרֵשׁ בִּסְפָר (I Kings 1:1); מְצִינֵנוּ בַּמָּקוֹם אַחֵר (I Kings 16:7); מְגִזֵּרֶת (Jud. 6:38); לְשׁוֹן (Jud. 14:9); כְּגוֹן (Isa. 43:6).

74. Note also I Sam. 17:39 (וְיֹאֵל לִלְכֹת).

75. In explaining the singular and plural he exemplifies the rules from other passages.

76. II Sam. 24:12; and see the section on the Early Prophets and Chronicles, below.

77. Jud. 1:8 in comparison with II Sam. 5:6-8.

78. Josh. 8:29; the quotation is from Deut. 21:23.

79. Josh. 9:4; the quotation is from Deut. 20:10.

80. I Kings 10:26; the quotation is from Deut. 17:16.

81. I Kings 10:28; the quotation is from Deut. 17:16.

82. The quotation is from Deut. 11:25.

83. Josh. 10:8; 14:9; 18:1; II Sam. 16:22; Isa. 16:14, and note 37:36; Ezek. 4:6.

84. Jud. 5:11; the quotation is from Gen. 49:23. Cf. Jud. 5:13, אִזְרָא שְׂרִיד.

85. I Sam. 4:8; II Sam. 13:5 (אֶת הַבְּרִיָּה); I Sam. 31:12 (וְיִשְׂרָאֵל).

86. Jud. 1:18: וְיִחְנוֹן should be וְיִחְנוֹן. I Sam. 1:1: אִישׁ הָאֱלֹקִים should be אִישׁ אֱלֹקִים. II Sam. 22:44: וְהָיִיתָ לָנוּ should be לָהֶם. Ezek. 1:24: הַנִּשְׁבָּע should be כְּנִשְׁבָּע; Isa. 40:21: תִּמּוֹט should be בְּלִי תִּמּוֹט.

87. In Josh. 18:1 he quotes from Deut. 12:10, 11; the word בֵּן is missing. In Josh. 15:2, 3 he quotes from a previous chapter (3:16). More than half the verse is missing, apparently because of the repetition of the word הַיּוֹרְדִים. In I Kings 5:4 he quotes from I Chronicles 22:9; three words are missing.

88. I Sam. 7:2, quoting from Ps. 68:60; Hos. 12:5, quoting from Gen. 32:27-28.

89. I Sam. 26:5, quoting from Deut. 20:5-7; Jer. 51:39, quoting from Daniel 5:1 ff.

90. Apenstein suggests in a note that he may have had Jud. 20:38 or 40 in mind.

91. M. Banitte, 'Ha-"Laazim" shel Rashi veshel "Sifrei Hapithronoth" Hatzarfatiim Lamikra', Hahistoriah shel Am Yisrael, vol. 2, Tekufath HaOfel (Tel Aviv 1973), pp. 170 ff. A brief examination of Kara will confirm that the word בָּלַע usually follows the vernacular term and only rarely precedes it (Josh. 11:2; 12:7). On the meaning of בָּלַע, see Banitte, 'Ha-"Laazim"', note 1, and also his 'Judeo-French' and 'La'az', Encyc. Jud. 10 (1971), 423-425, 1313-1315.

92. M. Banitte, 'Ha-"Laazim" shel Rashi..., p. 171.

93. He relies on Megillah 2, Mishnah 1, and the note in Mahzor Vitri (ed. S. L. Horowitz) which disallows this custom.

94. Compare his article, 'Heker Haglosarim Hamikraim...', pp. 5-6.

95. Pithronei Rabbi Menahem..., p. 401.

96. And note ibid., p. 402 and n. 4.

97. This ought to read בָּלַע.

98. See Poznanski, Pithronei Rabbi Menahem, p. 407 and n. 6.

99. Poznanski, op. cit., p. 403, notes 11-13.

100. We shall offer only two examples for each category. It should be noted that Kara always translates a particular word

in the same way.

101. Tant quand fut; cf. also v. 16 (וְיִשְׁעֵם), and verses 17 and 18.

102. Par cela est ce; note v. 25 and also 15:7; and Jer. 15:18; Hos. 1:6.

103. And note I Sam. 20:30; Ezek. 11:11, 16:16, 20:4, 23:8, 27:9; Hos. 1:6.

104. Isa. 3:19. Once he even speaks of a gold coin of his own times: מִשְׁקְלוֹ זָהוּב רֹמַנ"ט שֶׁלֵנוּ (Jud. 8:26). It is possible that Kara contributed from his own storehouse of words to the collections of French vernacular terms; see M. Lambert and L. Brandin, Glossaire Hebreu-Francais du XIII<sup>e</sup> siecle (Paris 1905), pp. 60-83. It emerges that at least one third of Kara's French terms appear in this book, which, as a work of the 13th century, postdates Kara. For a supplement, see M. Lambert, 'Habiurim Hanimtza'im Besefer Halaazim', in Zikaron LeAvraham Eliyahu (A memorial book for A. A. Harkabi) the second Hebrew section (St Petersburg 1909), pp. 368-390; and compare Moshe Katan, 'Gloses Francaises', in M. Ahrend, Perush R. Yosef Kara: Sefer Iyov, pp. 120 ff.

105. Jud. 16:13; I Sam. 17:6; II Sam. 7:8; I Kings 5:23; 6:8, 9; 10:28; Jer. 2:21; Ezek. 27:24.

106. According to Geiger, Parshandatha, p. 33, this is an interpolation by Kara's students and copyists. See also A. Berliner, Peletath Sofrim, German section, p. 20; and Isa. 3:18, 22; 28:4; Hos. 10:7.

107. M. Banitte, 'Ha-"Laazim" shel Rashi, p. 132.

108. As we have noted, בִּלְשׁוֹן עִם זֶר בִּלְע"ז means זֶר בִּלְשׁוֹן; see Ps.

114:1. Also relevant are I Sam. 1:15; 17:18; Isa. 2:4.

109. It sometimes appears as בִּלְע"ז (Josh. 11:2; I Sam. 7:2; Isa. 44:25).

110. I Sam. 9:17; I Kings 6:9; Ezek. 16:16; it is found particularly in the Early Prophets. Sometimes לְשׁוֹן appears alone (Isa. 28:16).

111. II Kings 8:15; 12:12; 25:1; Jer. 2:23; cf. לוֹעַז (Jer. 23:32).

112. I Kings 7:4, 17, 32, 33; or שְׁקוּרִין בִּלְע"ז (frequently found in the Early Prophets); Isa. 17:6; Ezek. 1:22, or וְנִקְרִין (Isa. 3:23).

113. I Sam. 13:21; 19:24; I Kings 10:28; Isa. 3:22; Jer. 2:21.

114. Cf. I Kings 18:37; Jer. 28:6: כְּפִי שְׁמֵיבֹו ב' תְּשׁוּבוֹת כְּתֹב. כִּי אֵין וְיֹאמֶר וְיֹאמֶר ב' פְּעָמִים. See also Hos. 5:14. In Ezek. 34:31 Kara says of a repetition, כְּפִילוֹת דִּיבּוֹר הוּא.

115. Cf. Jud. 17:4; 20:39, where the text repeats the subject in order to add details.

116. We shall return to this when we discuss the relationship between the books of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles.

117. I Sam. 2:10; Isa. 51:9; Jer. 8:22. It is odd that Kara does not gloss מְלִיצָה in Hab. 2:6.

118. In each pair of dashes here, the first dash stands for a word or phrase from the text and the second Kara's explanation.

119. I Kings 1:33; here he offers an example from Esther 8:8. There is an additional instance in II Sam. 2:6.

120. Isa. 22:16; and note 49:2; 50:7; Ezek. 1:1.

121. He offers examples from Josh. 9:14; Obad. 1:23.

122. He repeats this in Josh. 22:34; Ezek. 30:6.
123. I Sam. 28:16; I Kings 7:18; Jer. 6:27; Ezek. 2:5; 22:3.
124. And note I Sam. 11:12; 14:30; 22:15; 24:19; 19:17 with 44; II Kings 5:26.
125. See also II Sam. 19:12; I Kings 11:7; Jer. 8:4; Ezek. 15:5; Amos 2:11; Mic. 3:10, and many other instances.
126. Cf. also II Kings 5:7; Amos 6:12; Job 21:4; and many other instances.
127. In the parable of the vineyard in Isa. 5:1-7 Kara does not point out that this is a parable; instead he says that the vineyard is not a real one, אלא הכרם הם בית ישראל.
128. Isa. 10:34, 14:29, 43:2, 44:27; Jer. 31:21.
129. Ezek. 1:24, in the comparison for the sound of the wings. At times Kara uses other phrases like ודמיון הוא (Ezek. 23:25; Hos. 1:6), or מדמה הכתוב (Ezek. 28:13), or מדמה (Jer. 10:19), or מופת ודמיון (Hos. 1:2).
130. II Sam. 6: 5, 7, 16; 7:5; 21:20; 24:3.
131. II Sam. 6:10; 5:9, 21, 24:17; I Kings 15:15.
132. II Sam. 5:21; 6:7, 10, 17; 7:5, 9; 24:3, 12.
133. I Kings 8:22, immediately after the introductory words, as against II Chronicles 6:12.
134. I Kings 7:23 (קומתו).
135. I Kings 7:38 (כיורות נחושת); cf. II Kings 22:4.
136. And note also II Sam. 5:9; 21:20, where again he explains the passage from Chronicles.
137. I Kings 9:24 (עלתה מעיר דוד).
138. For example, I Kings 9:18, 25; 22:40; and in most places. A systematic examination, in line with A. Bendavid, Makbilothe Bamikra, gives an impressive view of the instances in which Kara adds to our information.
139. II Sam. 7:23 (אשר פדית).
140. And note II Kings 12:22 (ויוזכר בן שמעת).
141. All the more as II Sam. 3:16 and 16:5 also mention נחורים, and Kara notes that it is a place name and is not to be identified with עלמת / עלמון. Possibly Kara's identification stems from an analysis moving from עלמון / עלמת to עלם, to the synonymous נחור צעיר and נחורים.
142. We should note some other passages on which Kara should have commented, and does not: I Sam. 31:10; II Sam. 5:8; 8:4; I Kings 3:4-15 - and this is only a sample.
143. I Kings 5:30; 9:23.
144. The resolution of contradictions within the Early Prophets is discussed separately.
145. See his able explanation, which deals both with the contradiction in question and with the contradiction as to the number of governors.
146. And see II Sam. 6:13 on the settling of the contradiction as to the offering of sacrifices while the Ark was being carried.
147. I Kings 8:65 - Midrash Genesis Rabbah 35; 15:22 - Seder Olam 16; II Kings 9:29 - Seder Olam 17.
148. I have counted dozens of such instances and one exception, I Kings 2:28, where Kara reconstructs events incorrectly; see Apenstein ad loc.
149. He returns to this in II Sam. 5:6-8 and also in Josh. 15:63. It is also worth looking at Jud. 1:7 (ויבאוהו) (ירושלים); Josh. 19:47 (וילחמו על לשם); 15:45 (עקרון).



150. On the following שהיתה גבוהה, והציב לו מצבת בקומתו, Kara writes
151. Compare I Kings 19:9, where it seems that God Himself speaks to Elijah, yet as the text continues it emerges that God only appeared to him afterwards; note Kara's solution.
152. And note Jud. 17:7; II Sam. 1:13 for the identity of the Amalekite youth.
153. For support on this point, see I Kings 22:48.
154. Note also II Kings 25:27 (בעשרים ושבעה לחדש).
155. He returns to the topic in II Kings 25:17; and note the calculation as to the duration of the feast, Jud. 14:14, 15, 17.
156. Note also II Kings 9:29; and I Kings 15:24, 25, 33; 16:23.
157. Cf. also II Kings 15:30 (בשנת עשרים ליותם); II Kings 17:1 (בשנת שנים עשרה לאחז); and compare Jud. 11:36 (שלש מאות שנה).
158. II Kings 13:10 (בשנת שלשים ושבע ליואש).
159. I Sam. 23:22; II Sam. 2:29; I Kings 5:12; II Kings 14:26.
160. I Kings 2:5; 6:31; 7:7; 8:12; II Kings 19:25; but Kara seems to give his own view a slight preference, despite the fact that Rashi's opinions form both the first and the second explanation.
161. Josh. 18:1; I Sam. 14:27; 15:9; I Kings 1:12; 7:33; 8:8; 18:26.
162. In only two instances, it would seem, does he adopt an explanation which he has 'heard' (I Kings 6:34; Isa. 22:24), but of whose correctness he is unsure.
163. I Sam. 10:7; 11:5; I Kings 7:14; 9:24; 19:19. In I Sam. 20:25 and II Sam. 15:7 he does not explicitly reject the offered gloss, but the recording of a second explanation indirectly reveals his own view. In Isa. 16:1; Jer. 7:11, 31; 19:11 he repeats an aggada which he has 'heard' as to a burial cave in Jerusalem.
164. Isa. 63:19: שמעתי מפי ר' יצחק בן אשר. This explanation, which is acceptable to him, is glossed with דבר אחר. There is one exception in I Sam. 10:12: ויען איש משם ויאמר מי אביהם. Kara (1) points out נבואה אינה באה לאדם ירושה; (2) says of an explanation he has heard, ואני למדתי; it asks איזה שבת נמצא; and (3) offers a different interpretation from the Targum, of which he says, לשון זה נראה יותר מכולם; that is, he gives it the preference. But as I have remarked, this is a unique case.
165. Jud. 5:10. He uses the expression מצינו four times (I Kings 1:52; II Kings 16:14; Isa. 13:2; 7:17).
166. I Kings 6:34. On one occasion he says, לא מצאתי פירוש, מקרא זה (Ezek. 29:21).
167. Josh. 24:26; II Kings 4:35; Jer. 51:1; Zech. 9:9 - four times in all.
168. Jud. 8:18; I Sam. 15:32; II Kings 4:39; 20:13; 22:14; Isa. 8:4; 14:12; 15:5; 18:2; 22:5; Jer. 50:11; Ezek. 21:20; 29:20; Hos. 11:7; Nahum 3:18 - a total of fourteen times.
169. Isa. 32:19; Jer. 48:9; Nahum 2:8; Hab. 1:9; Zech. 10:5; 11:16 - a total of 6 times.
170. Usually in the abbreviated form ח"ל (fifty times in Prophets).

171. Usually in the abbreviated form ע"א (three times in the Early Prophets: Josh. 23:13; I Kings 11:27; 18:30). In the commentary on Ezekiel, which is attributed to a student of Kara's, I have counted twenty-five occurrences, and an additional instance in Amos 3:12; but this latter is an explanation from Rabbeinu Shmuel. Kara once uses the expression לשון אחר (Isa. 40:12) and once פירוש אחר (Mal. 2:15).

172. A clear rejection is also to be found in the following places: Isa. 15:5; 22:5; Hos. 11:7. In Isa. 32:19 an explanation glossed יש מפרשים is offered. In the other places, the explanation ranks as a possible interpretation, following Kara's own view and second in importance to it.

173. So also in Josh. 24:26; II Kings 4:35. Here Kara clearly dissociates himself from the view of האומרים.

174. I Sam. 13:6 (the phrase comes from the gloss on v. 7).

175. I Kings 9:23; also II Kings 25:17; Jer. 10:16.

176. I Sam. 1:3, in reference to Gen. 26:15; and see A. Berliner, Peletath Sofrim, p. 15.

177. I Kings 11:38 (בית נאמן); and note II Sam. 7:11 and I Sam. 15:6, where he repeats the explanation from Jud. 1:16; 4:11.

178. II Kings 1:2 = 25:17; I Kings 18:32 = II Kings 18:17.

179. A single exception exists of Kara's not explaining a difficult expression (הכה שאול באלפיו) on its first appearance (I Sam. 18:7), but only later (21:12).

180. This principle is repeated at v. 12; see further I Kings 2:5.

181. See Y. Aharoni, Atlas Karta Letekufath Hamikra (Jerusalem 1964), p. 17, maps 110, 111. Shilo is located between the distant Shechem in the north and the distant Beth-el in the south, and south-east of Lebanon.

182. His second explanation is glossed with ואני אומר.

183. S. Schwartzfuchs, Tzarfath Bemei Hakapatingim Harishonim, in Hahistoriah shel Am Yisrael, vol. 2, Tekufath HaOfel (Tel Aviv 1973), pp. 85-94.

184. The explanation is based on Isa. 6:6 (ובידו רצפה).

185. I Sam. 17:18 (חריצי החלב).

186. Josh. 11:8 (משרפות מים); see also Rashi (following Targum Jonathan) on this verse.

187. Jud. 16:13; Isa. 38:12; Ezek. 27:18. Dyeing: Isa. 1:18.

188. Flattened: II Sam. 1:24; I Kings 6:32; Isa. 3:24. Drawn into a thread: I Kings 10:16. Refined: I Kings 8:51; Jer. 6:27.

189. I Sam. 8:13; Isa. 54:11; Jer. 4:30; 22:6; Ezek. 27:22.

190. Isa. 54:16; Jer. 18:3. See II Kings 9:13; 20:9-11 for the sun-dial, and Josh. 10:13 on the calculation of time.

191. II Sam. 8:1; II Kings 19:28; and note Jud. 6:25 (בר השור).

192. I Kings 5:6 (פרשים).

193. Jud. 5:22; on the stables: I Sam. 5:6.

194. I Sam. 12:17; Ezek. 34:26; note especially Jud. 6:2 on storage.

195. Isa. 18:5; on the influence of wine, see II Sam. 11:8, 13.

198. Jer. 10:5; see Ezek. 26:5 for fishing in regions covered by the sea.

199. I Kings 5:13; II Kings 4:39; Isa. 37:27; Jer. 1:11; 11:16; Ezek. 17:5; 31:5-6.
200. In almost every verse dealing with construction in I Kings chapters 6-7.
201. II Kings 21:13; Isa. 28:17; and note Josh. 17:16.
202. Jonah 4:6; for the differences between a woman who is virgin and a woman who is not, see further I Kings 1:2.
203. II Sam. 1:21; Isa. 21:5: משחו מגן שיחליק חרב מעליו.
204. And note II Sam. 21:16; I Sam. 17:5 (על and ומצחת נחושת) (רגליו).
205. II Kings 5:2; 9:17 (perhaps on the model of המשחית of I Sam. 13:17).
206. I Sam. 1:1 (מן הרמתיים צופים); Jer. 6:17; Ezek. 3:17; 33:2-3, 6.
207. Jud. 5:16; for capitulation following a siege, see particularly Jer. 50:15.
208. I Kings 1:19; for a king's characteristics, see I Kings 3:8.
209. I Kings 1:5; in Isa. 36:9 the פרשים are the horses, not their riders.
210. I Kings 1:22; note also II Sam. 14:12, from וכי יש אדם.
211. II Sam. 8:17; and note Jud. 5:14; Isa. 36:3.
212. II Sam. 8:16; I Kings 4:3; II Kings 18:18; Isa. 36:3.
213. II Kings 25:19. Note I Kings 1:2 (סכנת) on this function, and Jer. 12:28.
214. And note his explanation of the holy vessels, such as the יעים, סירות, and מלקחיים (I Kings 7:40, 49, 50).
215. Jud. 4:11. The Targum explains מישור as אלון.
216. Josh. 13:27; he calls it גניסר. Cf. Isa. 28:2; Ezek. 39:11.
217. II Sam. 23:25 (שמה החרודי); Isa. 15:6.
218. Isa. 19:5; 23:3; Ezek. 30:12; 29:3; Amos 9:5.
219. Note Jer. 47:2: שעזה עומד בדרומה של מצרים ובקרן דרומית מערבית.
220. Jer. 49:7; Amos 1:3; Obad. 1:1. An identical location is given to Jerusalem in Ezek. 21:2.
221. He writes on Bashan and Gilead in similar terms (Mic. 7:14).

Notes to Chapter 3

1. Poznanski notes (Mavo, p. xxxv) that (in contrast to Rashi) Kara also makes use of the Jerusalem Targum. Geiger (Parshandatha, Heb. sect., p. 33) owns that while he once thought that Kara knew nothing of the Jerusalem Targum, he does in fact cite it in connection with II Sam. 17:19. There is a further reference in Jud. 5:13 and Hos. 7:5. We may therefore conclude that either the Jerusalem Talmud or a source containing passages from it was available to him, and that he simply calls it 'the Jerusalem Targum'.
2. Jud. 3:22; 5:11, 13, 28; 13:25; I Sam. 2:14; 21:3; 24:11; II Sam. 22:46; I Kings 5:23, 9:7; 11:26; Isa. 1:4; 3:15, 19, 24; 11:14; 33:12; Jer. 17:11; 20:7; 48:9; Amos 2:8; Nahum 3:17; Hab. 2:4.
3. Jud. 5:11.
4. Whereas Rashi constantly uses the same phrases: כְּתַרְגֻּמוֹ פִּירוּשׁוֹ, פְּשׁוּטוֹ כְּתַרְגֻּמוֹ, וְכֵן תַּרְגֻּמוֹ יוֹנָתָן.
5. Josh. 8:13.
6. (Jud. 8:21) מִתְּרַגְּמִין (Jud. 3:19) תַּרְגֻּם יוֹנָתָן (Jud. 9:27); תַּרְגֻּמוֹ שֶׁל יוֹנָתָן (Jud. 5:11); etc.
7. I Sam. 3:3.
8. II Sam. 23:1.
9. Jud. 1:15, 2:1, 3:23, 31.
10. Jud. 4:21.
11. Jud. 3:21, 24.
12. Josh. 24:27; Jud. 20:38.
13. Josh. 11:1; I Kings 10:22; II Kings 18:7.
14. Jud. 3:22.
15. Jud. 8:2; I Kings 2:11.
16. II Sam. 17:13, 21:19.
17. Isa. 1:8; 54:12; Jer. 2:31; 12:1; 14:8; 32:19; 38:5.
18. Isa. 5:5; 41:23; 54:17; Jer. 4:31; 51:39.
19. See Targum Jonathan to II Sam. 22:9: גַּחְלִים בָּעָרוֹ מִמֶּנּוּ - כְּגֹמְרִין דָּנֹר - and the phrasing of Mishnah Berahoth 6:6.
20. Pesikta de-Rav Kahana, p. 137.
21. Cf. Jud. 5:11.
22. So everywhere in the Bible in connection with human beings. See, e.g., Lev. 26:30; I Sam. 17:46; Isa. 14:19; Amos 8:3; Nahum 3:3.
23. Gen. 15:15; cf. Jer. 48:2.
24. For other instances see Mic. 7:4; 5:13; Nahum 1:12; Zech. 11:12; etc.
25. Gen. 7:11; 8:2; II Kings 7:2, 19; Isa. 24:18; Mal. 3:10.
26. Eccles. 12:3.
27. Isa. 60:8.
28. See further Jud. 3:25, 29; Jer. 25:38; etc.
29. See further Jud. 5:11; 6:38; I Sam. 1:5; I Kings 8:2; 19:21; Jer. 17:13; 22:6; 25:20; 31:20; 33:13; 37:16; 46:15; 50:34.
30. Jud. 18:6.
31. II Sam. 23:1.
32. And see Josh. 24:27; Jer. 49:19.
33. I Kings 5:3; and see Jer. 31:14; 48:36.
34. II Sam. 8:18, and the similar I Kings 1:38.
35. See further Hos. 10:15; Mic. 4:8.

36. See also Komlosh, p. 282.
37. See A. Y. Aigos, 'Limud Hatorah Betzafon Eiropah', Hahistoriah shel Am Yisrael, vol. 2, Tekufath HaOfel (Tel Aviv 1973), p. 123.
38. It must be remembered that Kara was younger than Rashi by twenty years (or more). See B. J. Gelles, Peshat and Derash in the Exegesis of Rashi (Leiden 1981), p. 131, n. 21, and p. 20.
39. Compare Rashbam on Gen. 37:13: זה שמעתי מר' יוסף קרא וְהִנָּה לִי.
40. See Poznanski, Al HaRambach, pp. 389-391 and n. 6 (p. 391).
41. A. Berliner, Peletath Sofrim, p. 21. Kara also acknowledges on several occasions that Rashi has heard his opinion and agreed with it. See Peletath Sofrim on Gen. 19:9 (p. 13), and on Num. 17:5 (p. 21), etc.
42. Jud. 2:15; I Kings 5:12.
43. Op. cit., p. xxx; and see Rashbam on Gen. 37:13.
44. M. Ahrend, in his article in Iyunei Mikra Veparshanuth, p. 184.
45. See Berliner, Rashi al Hatorah, p. 10; Apenstein, Mavo, pp. 13-21; Poznanski, Mavo, p. 32; Ahrend, op. cit.
46. Geiger, Nitei Ne'emanim, pp. 18 ff.
47. Littmann, pp. 9-10.
48. B. Einstein, R. Joseph Kara und sein Kommentar zu Koheleth (Berlin 1886), pp. 39-40.
49. In articles published between 1906 and 1920, now collected as an introduction to Kara on the Early Prophets.
50. Apenstein, op. cit., p. 21ff. When I made a comparative examination of the commentaries of Rashi and of Kara on the Latter Prophets, I found in Rashi comments upon about 60 verses or part-verses which in content resembled Kara's. These comments are preceded by a distinctive opening or heading like יש פותרים (18 times), דבר אחר, לשון אחר, ואמר אני (4), ואני אומר, ואומר אני (3), and several other headings found 8 times in all. We may reasonably suggest that some at least of these glosses are Kara's and that Rashi worked them into his commentary, or that they were interpolated into it by a later copyist. The references are as follows:  
יש פותרים: Isa. 2:20; 5:30; 6:13; 9:4; 14:20, 21; 40:2; 46:11; 54:12 (see Kara's commentary, printed in Nithei Ne'emanim); 57:8; 59:10 (see Apenstein's assertion in his introduction to Kara on the Early Prophets, p. 21: "Rashi, after setting down his own gloss, adds his opinion in the form of יש פותרים"); 65:11; Joel 2:20; Nahum 3:15, 18; Zeph. 3:12; Zech. 9:7; Mal. 2:15.  
דבר אחר, לשון אחר: Isa. 3:9, 19; 5:12; 30:23; 33:6, 14; 36:3; Jer. 17:4; 48:27; Hos. 5:4; 7:12; 10:4, 13; 11:4; 13:8; 14:3; Amos 4:6.  
ואמר אני: Isa. 3:24; 21:1; 45:2; 34:4; Hos. 8:9; Mic. 4:8.  
כך שמעתי: Isa. 9:10; 26:7; Jer. 6:28; 17:5; 23:32, 36; 48:28.  
ואומר אני: Isa. 3:4; 33:20; Hos. 13:15; Mic. 1:8;  
 see also Berliner's introduction to his scholarly edition, Rashi al Hatorah, p. 10, n. 20.  
ואומר אני: Isa. 39:2 Hos. 9:9; Joel 1:1 (found in Rashi's commentary on Taanith, s.v. אמר ליה).

Miscellaneous: Isa. 32:19; 33:1; 34:4; 40:13; 51:17; Jer. 31:20; Amos 6:5; Mic. 4:6.

51. Mentioned by Rashi on I Sam. 1:24.

52. Mentioned by Rashi on II Kings 20:13; and see I Kings 10:7, where Kara quotes from Ecclesiasticus and Rashi does not.

53. See Orbach, Arugath Habosem, vol. 5 (Jerusalem 1973), pp. 3-5.

54. See the section on Kara's use of the Aramaic Targumim, above.

55. Jud. 5:11.

56. Here are the places in the Early Prophets alone in which Kara cites Targum Jonathan and Rashi does not: Josh. 12:7; Jud. 5:11; 6:4, 38; 8:1; 13:22; 14:4; 15:5; 18:6, 13, 16; I Sam. 6:19; 12:21; II Sam. 1:19; 17:13; 19:28; 23:1; I Kings 1:52; 2:24; 4:5; 5:3; 6:21; 7:45; 8:2; 19:11; II Kings 3:11; 5:9, 11, 26; 10:27; 11:2, 6. There are also places in which Rashi quotes the Targum in Hebrew and Kara in the original (I Kings 14:14). To all these must be added the places where Kara quotes the Targum without any remark, which is not found in Rashi.

57. I Kings 7:33.

58. Josh. 10:13; 15:8; 22:7, 19; Jud. 1:26; 5:5, 10, 19; I Sam. 1:1, 3, 17; 2:30; 7:2, 9; 16:12; II Sam. 1:16; 6:6; 8:1; 10:16; 12:12; 20:18; 21:5; 22:29; 24:1; I Kings 5:15; 7:17; 8:65; 10:27; 15:7, 22; 16:1, 4, 13; II Kings 12:7.

59. E.g. I Sam. 2:30; 13:33; I Kings 17:18; 22:38; II Kings 11:12, etc.

60. The Midrash cited by Kara on Jud. 12:7 resembles Rashi's on Jud. 11:39, and Kara's Midrash on Jud. 9:13 resembles Rashi's on 9:8, 10, 12. Occasionally two different books are involved. Kara on Josh. 19:47 recalls Rashi on Jud. 18:29, Kara on I Sam. 15:6 recalls Rashi on Jud. 1:16; Kara on I Sam. 28:21 recalls Rashi on 28:14; Kara on I Kings 10:7 recalls Rashi on 10:13. On I Kings 22:17 both cite an identical Midrash from different sources.

61. On I Sam. 22:35 Rashi cites a Midrash in 28 words and Kara in 62 (double length); on II Sam. 24:9 Rashi's Midrash is 19 words long and Kara's 75 (four times as long); on I Kings 5:10 Rashi's Midrash is 48 words and Kara's 257 (five times the length).

62. It may be worthwhile to point out a consistent variation in terminology: wherever Rashi writes עכו"ם Kara uses the term אומות. See, e.g., Jud. 11:26; I Kings 7:51; II Kings 19:25; and see Gelles, p. 132.

63. Josh. 8:33; 9:5; 11:21; 14:10; 15:12, 17; 24:15, 32; Jud. 1:3; 3:31; 5:4; 11:22; 13:5; 14:14; I Sam. 1:11, 21; 2:10; 3:3; 6:13; 7:6; 10:2, 5; 14:45; 16:1; 19:10; 21:7; 22:10; 24:4, 10; 25:11; II Sam. 3:27; 6:6, 13; 10:16; 12:30; 14:26; 15:7; 19:49; 21:4, 8; 22:38; I Kings 2:30, 33; 6:5, 8, 21, 24; 7:14; 8:2, 14, 66; 10:7; 11:37; 12:28; 15:34; 17:4, 6. It should be noted that this feature ceases with II Kings, where there are 12 citations from the Talmud.

64. Poznanski asserts that the Jerusalem Talmud was available to Kara but not to Rashi (Mavo, p. xxxv), but this is not correct. See Rashi on II Sam. 21:4, etc.

65. II Sam. 3:34, and see Ezek. 5:7, where Kara provides

evidence of a different text (compare Zech. 14:5). In Hos. 2:8 there is a different vocalisation.

66. II Sam. 3:35.

67. It is worth adding that in I Kings 10:26 Kara sees an apparent contradiction with Chronicles, while Rashi does not, for he writes **אלף וארבע מאות רכב**, which is what we find in Chronicles. He offers a gloss as if the figure were 1700,

68. while he himself says that it was only 1400! 68. For **מקרא קצר** and **מקרא מסורס** see the chapter on Biblical style, where we observe that both terms relate to identical and different passages written in similar and different language.

69. II Sam. 5:21; 6:1, 5, 7, 10, 16, 17; 7:5, 9; 8:13; 10:16; 12:24; 24:1, 3, 12, 17, 36; I Kings 1:1; 5:25; 8:16; 15:7; II Kings 22:4 - 22 instances in all. It is of interest that Kara's comment on II Sam. 7:19 resembles the gloss attributed to Rashi on I Chron. 17:17.

70. Rashi does not deal with the contradiction between Joshua and Isaiah; see Josh. 10:14.

71. In I Kings 5:6. Rashi explains the contradiction as to the number of stables in 18 words and Kara in 140!

72. Jud. 1:8; 8:24; I Sam. 10:2; II Sam. 18:18; 23:39; I Kings 4:4; 5:28; II Kings 3:19.

73. II Sam. 23:39.

74. Josh. 12:7; 15:9; 17:18; 18:5; 22:11; 23:13; Jud. 1:19; 2:16, 17, 18; 3:23; 5:21, 22, 26; 6:40; 8:26, 33; 13:5, 25; 15:7; 16:13, 30; I Sam. 1:15, 16, 17, 20; 2:3, 14, 32; 5:6; 7:2; 14:16; 16:1; 17:6, 18, 40; 18:6, 8, 21; 20:20, 30; 25:17; 30:12; II Sam. 2:14; 7:8; 13:20, 26, 32; 14:9, 14; 24:19; I Kings 1:5, 5; 5:6, 6, 25; 6:9, 15, 34, 35, 38; 7:4, 9, 46; 9:8, 11, 13, 18; 10:22, 26, 28; 15:23; 20:27; II Kings 4:35, 42; 8:12, 15; 12:10, 12; 16:14; 17:17; 23:33; 25:1.

Rashi offers about 60 instances missing in Kara, according to A. Darmesteter, 'Les Gloses Francaises de Rashi dans la Bible', REJ 54 (1907), pp. 11-28.

75. Isa. 1:14, 18; 2:4; 3:18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24; 5:26; 13:2; 14:31; 17:6; 22:6; 23:13; 24:12; 27:9; 28:4, 16, 17; 33:23; 34:11; 36:9; 37:3; 38:14; 44:13, 25; 47:2; 49:22; 51:17, 21; Jer. 2:21, 23; 4:10, 11; 5:16; 7:18, 20; 8:7; 9:14; 10:3, 5; 11:16; 15:18; 17:9; 20:7, 9; 23:32; 25:34; 32:30; 33:1; 38:11, 22; 43:9; 45:15, 16; 48:31; 49:4, 25; 50:39; Ezek. 5:1; 9:2; 11:11; 20:4; 23:8, 14, 15; 24:24, 25; 27:6, 14; 19, 20, 24; 31:3; 34:31; 35:13; 36:37; 38:21; 39:16; Hos. 1:6; 4:5, 13, 14, 19; 10:7; 13:15; Joel 1:17; Mic. 1:10, 16; Zech. 11:8. It should be noted that in many verses more than one **לע"י** appears.

76. Josh. 9:5; Jud. 6:2; 8:7; 9:14, 46; I Sam. 9:17; 13:21; 14:27; 25:18; I Kings 2:11; 6:5; 22:3; II Kings 1:2; 5:23; 9:13; 19:27; Isa. 1:20; 3:23, 24; 34:11; 44:13; 49:22; Jer. 4:10, 11; 10:3; 23:32; 25:34; Ezek. 1:22; 2:6; 16:16; 23:34; 26:9; 27:6, 7, 9, 11, 24; 36:3.

77. E.g., Jud. 3:31, where Rashi renders **מלמד הנקר** with **אנויל"ן** and Kara with **אנולו"ן**, or I Kings 11:4, where for **לכרי** Rashi writes **ברנ"י** and Kara **ברנ"י**.

78. Josh. 11:2; Jud. 3:31, 4:11, 21; 18:21; I Sam. 19:24 (here Rashi acknowledges his source in Helbo, transmitted through Kara); II Sam. 21:19; I Kings 2:11; 6:8; 7:16, 17, 24, 32, 33; 10:11; 12:33; 17:12; II Kings 4:39; 11:4; 18:23;

21:12; 25:17; Isa. 2:4; 22:18; 30:6; 34:15; 37:27; Jer. 8:7; 17:11; 18:3; 38:11; 43:9; 51:27; Ezek. 1:16; 10:12; 23:41; 24:6; 27:5; 28:24; Hos. 10:7.

79. E.g. I Sam. 2:3; 18:8; 19:30; Isa. 44:21; Ezek. 11:11; 20:4; 23:8.

80. Melamed, Mefarshei Hamikra, vol. 1, p. 490.

81. M. Banitte, Halaazim shel Rashi, p. 173.

82. I Sam. 19:24; I Kings 6:9; II Kings 4:39.

83. Jud. 2:15; I Kings 5:12; etc.

84. I Kings 2:5; 6:31; 7:7; 18:37; II Kings 11:2. In different variations: I Kings 8:12; II Kings 8:21; 16:14; 18:20; 19:4, 25; Isa. 11:8; 25:11; 26:7; 34:14; Hos. 8:6; Mic. 2:7, 11; 6:9; 7:12; Hag. 2:15; Zech. 4:12; 6:11.

85. I Kings 6:31; 7:7; 18:37; II Kings 11:2; and once וּבִפְתָּרוֹנִי רִנָּה שְׁלֵמָה רְאִיתִי (II Kings 16:14).

86. I Kings 2:5.

87. II Kings 18:20; 19:4; and in II Kings 19:25, כִּן פִּירַשׁ רִנָּה שְׁלֵמָה.

88. Mavo, p. 16.

89. Isa. 11:8; 25:11; 26:7; 34:14; 36:5 (parallel to II Kings 18:20); 37:4 (parallel to II Kings 19:4); 37:26 (parallel to II Kings 19:25); 38:19 (Kristianpuller); Jer. 35:4 (Paris MS.); 44:30 (Paris MS.); 49:3 (Paris MS.); Hos. 8:6; Mic. 2:7-10 (Breslau); 7:12; Hag. 2:15; Zech. 4:12; 6:11.

90. Isa. 2:20 (Kirchheim MS.); 8:1 (Kirchheim); 5:1; 8:4 (Kirchheim) 14:21; 18:2; 42:3 (Kirchheim); 22:18; 37:31; Jer. 50:11; Mic. 7:12 (Breslau); Nahum 3:18; Zech. 9:9; 10:5.

91. Isa. 1:2, 4; 5:1; 6:4; 5:9; 6:10; 7:8, 9, 12; 8:23; 8:1, 5, 6; 19:13; 22:18; 26:3, 4; 28:15, 16, 18, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29; 29:1, 3, 9, 17; 30:2, 6; 31:2, 9, 20; 33:1, 4, 6, 7, 18; 34:4, 11, 15; 35:1; 37:27, 29, 36; 40:12, 15, 20; 41:7; 47:1; 49:15, 20; 51:20; 55:13; Jer. 9:25; 15:4; 22:17; 30:21; 46:16; Hos. 10:1; Amos 8:10; Jonah 1:6; Mic. 1:2, 3, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15; 2:4; 3:3, 6-7; 4:6, 8, 10; 5:1, 2, 4, 6, 9-10; 6:3, 10, 13, 14; 7:1, 4, 11, 12; Hag. 1:13; Zech. 1:10.

92. Isaiah 1:1, 8, 12, 16, 21, 23, 28, 31; 2:10; 3:8 (as Rashi on Isa. 8:18), 16, 20, 24; 4:4; 5:2, 8, 12, 14, 17, 25, 28, 30; 6:2; 7:2, 11, 13, 17, 19, 20; 8:8, 9, 16, 21; 9:1, 2, 4, 9, 13, 17, 19; 10:1, 7, 25, 26; 11:5; 12:2; 13:2, 3, 5, 10, 15; 22:1, 14, 15, 18, 20, 23, 25; 26:1, 7, 21; 27:1, 8, 11; 28:1, 17, 28 (in Helbo's name); 34:17; 35:8, 10; 36:2, 3, 9, 10; 37:30; 38:11 (as Rashi on 38:1), 15, 17; 40:3, 19, 26, 27; 41:21; 42:9 (as Rashi on 41:22); 43:24; 44:13; 47:1; 48:12; 52:4, 12; 53:4; 54:17; 57:8, 15; 59:13; 60:9; 63:11; 65:4, 20; 66:5, 9.

Jeremiah 2:17, 20; 12:9, 16; 14:14; 15:1, 11; 7:4, 5; 23:12; 31:5, 17, 20; 35:2, 4, 7; 39:6; 43:9, 10; 44:14; 48:6, 30, 32; 50:17; 51:11.

Hosea 2:5, 15; 4:2, 7, 14, 16, 18; 5:7, 11; 6:5; 7:12, 13, 16; 8:9, 13; 9:9, 14; 10:9, 12; 11:7; 13:5, 8, 10, 15.

Joel 4:13, 19.

Amos 1:10, 13; 2:6, 7, 11, 12, 16; 3:3; 12, 15; 4:2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13; 5:2, 9, 23; 6:2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10; 7:2, 11, 12, 14; 8:4, 5, 8, 9; 9:1, 8 (as Rashi on Amos 8:8).

Obadiah 1:6, 11, 13, 19.

Jonah 1:3, 6, 8; 2:1, 7, 9; 3:9 (cf. Joel 2:14).

Micah 1:15 (Lublin); 2:7, 8; 3:3, 9, 14; 7:13.



- Nahum 3:7, 10, 12, 15, 18.  
Habakkuk 1:3, 4, 12, 16; 2:4, 5, 6, 8, 19; 3:2, 3, 6, 7, 10, 16, 19.  
Zephaniah 1:5, 9; 2:6, 11, 14; 3:10, 15 (cf. Rashi on Isa. 32:7); 3:17, 19.  
Haggai 1:1, 2, 7, 8 (see Rashi on Hag. 2:9), 11, 13; 2:3, 12, 19.  
Zechariah 1:8, 10; 2:10, 13; 3:3, 7, 9; 4:3, 10, 14; 5:3, 6, 8; 6:2, 6, 7, 12, 15; 7:2, 5, 13; 8:23; 9:5, 7, 8, 12, 16; 10:1, 3, 5, 6, 10; 11:1, 2, 7, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16; 12:2, 5, 12; 13:1, 4, 5; 14:2, 5, 17, 18, 20.  
Malachi 1:2, 7; 2:2, 4, 5, 8, 15, 17; 3:2, 11.  
93. Mavo, p. xxxiii; and see Ahrend, Yahas Perusho, p. 190 and n. 59.  
94. I Kings 7:15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27.  
95. I Kings 5:3, רע"י; 7:39, 46.  
96. Cf. I Kings 5:11, ויחכם מכל אדם.  
97. Mavo, p. 19.  
98. Iyunei Mikra Veparshanuth, pp. 180-189.  
99. He suggests that Apenstein was of the same opinion.  
100. See verse 12.  
101. Geiger's reading is מעקש. See Parshandatha, Heb. sect., p. 26.  
102. According to Geiger the reading is תשיבני, and this seems more reasonable (Parshandatha, Heb. sect., p. 26).  
103. Kara's remarks also involve an attack upon method: can one learn what is known from that which is not known? See also I Kings 18:26, where in cynical fashion he rejects a מדרש אנדה cited by Rashi.  
104. And see Littmann, pp. 10-11.  
105. The meaning of this word is also disputed by Ben Saruk and Dunash. See Machbereth Menahem, p. 68, and Teshuvot Dunash, p. 58 (and see also Rabbeinu Tam and Kimchi). Cf. Kara on I Sam. 14:27; 15:9.  
106. See also I Kings 6:31; 7:7; 8:12, 21; etc.  
107. Citing Rashi's glosses on Exod. 25:9; Lev. 11:34; Deut. 4:44, Poznanski regards Kara as Rashi's successor in this area (Mavo, p. xvi). This would seem to be correct, but what in Rashi is an occasional exceptional remark becomes in Kara a regular approach.  
108. See especially the Book of Kings, in which the two commentaries overlap considerably - and in most of the cases Kara seems to have copied from Rashi, whether in accord or dissent. His distinctive qualities, however, remain apparent.  
109. Poznanski (who collected Helbo's glosses), Sefer Hayovel LeSokolov, pp. 389-391; and A. Grossman, 'Menahem b. Helbo', Enc. Jud. 11 (1971), p. 1304.  
110. Poznanski suggests that Helbo's commentaries disappeared two generations after his death as a result of the huge success of Rashi's.  
111. Isa. 29:9 (Kirschheim MS.); and see Poznanski, op. cit., p. 391, n. 2, and Mavo, p. xii.  
112. I Kings 16:9; 18:25, 37; II Kings 8:21.  
113. I Sam. 19:24; I Kings 6:9; II Kings 4:39.  
114. Jud. 2:15; I Kings 5:12.  
115. I Kings 8:27; II Kings 18:20; and see Poznanski, Mavo, p. xi ff.

116. II Kings 19:29. Helbo's text is here identical with that in Ben Saruk's Machbereth. It is possible that when the gloss was cited in the name of מנחם 'ר a copyist mistakenly supposed that this referred not only to Helbo but also to Ben Saruk, who bore the same first name. Careful comparison with passages in the Machbereth proves that even in those places in which only the name מנחם is used the reference is to Helbo. In three places (II Kings 19:29; Nahum 3:6; Amos 7:7) a gloss is ascribed to Helbo which belongs to Ben Saruk; either that, or Helbo's simply resembled Ben Saruk's and Kara preferred to quote it in his uncle's name. See Poznanski, Pithronei HaRambach, p. 409, n. 5.

117. Poznanski, op. cit., p. 399; and see also II Kings 14:26, in which Helbo's text is identical with Ibn Janach's. See Poznanski, p. 408.

118. I Sam. 1:5.

119. Jud. 2:15; 10:2; I Kings 6:9, 18; II Kings 16:14. For German, see I Sam. 13:21; I Kings 6:9.

120. Jud. 2:15; I Sam. 1:5; II Sam. 23:5; II Kings 16:14; Isa. 2:22; 5:5; 13:2; 29:19; 34:16; 38:10; Jer. 35:19.

121. Jud. 6:6; I Sam. 13:21; II Sam. 24:4; I Kings 1:37; II Kings 4:39; Isa. 30:20; Jer. 4:13; Hos. 4:19; etc.

122. I Sam. 23:22; I Kings 5:12; 6:2; II Kings 14:26; Isa. 29:4; Mic. 1:14; etc.

123. II Sam. 2:29; 24:6; II Kings 19:29; Isa. 1:8; Jer. 4:29; Amos 7:9; etc. In II Kings 8:31 the text is confused: ראיתי פתרוני בפתרוני ר מלכים בר חלבו. This should presumably read פתרוני מלכים בר חלבו. Kara occasionally quotes from Helbo without acknowledgment, as in I Sam. 19:24; II Sam. 17:2; I Kings 6:9 (see Poznanski, op. cit., pp. 402-404), or fails to understand him, as he admits in I Kings 16:9.

124. II Sam. 24:4, 6; I Kings 5:12; 8:27; 14:14; II Kings 7:9; 13:4.

125. I Sam. 23:22; II Sam. 2:29; I Kings 1:37; 6:18; 8:32; 19:21; II Kings 14:26; 15:25; 16:14; 18:20; etc.

126. Jud. 2:15.

127. I Sam. 1:5; I Kings 6:2; Isa. 5:5.

128. I Sam. 13:21; II Sam. 23:5.

129. II Sam. 24:6; II Kings 4:39; Jer. 35:19; 36:23.

130. I Kings 16:9; 18:25, 37; II Kings 8:21.

131. Jud. 2:15.

132. And see M. Ahrend, Yahas Perusho shel Kara, p. 190, n. 59; and A. Twyto, R. Haim ben Atar Veperusho Or Hahayim al Hatorah (Jerusalem 1982), p. 134.

133. Jud. 2:15; 6:6; I Sam. 1:5; 13:21; 23:22; II Sam. 2:29; 23:5; 24:4, 6; I Kings 1:37; 5:12; 6:2, 18; 8:27, 32; 14:14; 16:9; 18:25, 37; 19:21; II Kings 4:39; 7:9; 8:21; 13:4; 14:26; 15:25; 16:14; 18:20; 19:4, 29; Isa. 2:22; 5:5; 13:2; 29:19; 30:20; 34:16; 35:8; 38:10; Jer. 4:13, 29; 10:5; 17:3; 30:21; 31:5, 21; 33:16; 35:19; 36:23; 38:7; 46:18; 47:5; 49:20; Hos. 4:19; 10:15; 13:17; Nahum 3:6; Hag. 2:16; Zech. 6:11. In the Kirschheim MS. there are more instances: Isa. 8:8; 9:18; 29:9; 36:5; Hos. 9:13; 10:1, 2, 10; 11:7; 13:5; Mic. 1:12, 14; 2:10, 12; 5:6; 6:9; 7:12; Zeph. 1:10; Zech. 11:8.

134. In a number of cases they form the sole gloss: II Sam. 24:4; I Kings 1:37; 18:25.

135. In II Kings 19:4 Kara sets down Helbo's gloss side by side with Rashi's, without indicating his own preference, while in his commentary on Isa. 37:4 he explains the same phrase, citing Rashi alone. (Cf. also II Kings 18:20, in parallel with Isa. 36:5.) In this indirect manner he expresses his opinion. In II Kings 16:14 he explains המזבח, cites Helbo for the view that this was משה משה, and juxtaposes Rashi's rejection of this interpretation.
136. גִּדְדִי = (1) a deliberate baldness, as in Deut. 14:1; I Kings 18:28; and Jer. 16:6; and (2) an assembly or group, as in Gen. 49:19; Ps. 94:21.
137. See further I Kings 8:27. For other glosses by Helbo which Kara finds unacceptable because of their שו"ט character, see Isa. 29:19; 30:20; 34:16; 35:8; Jer. 31:5.
138. Helbo's interpretation is in fact found in the Talmud (Yoma 10a).
139. I Kings 19:21; 20:27; II Kings 5:23; 19:29; Isa. 11:8; 27:11; 38:14; 40:12; Jer. 11:19; Hos. 4:14.
140. Jud. 5:21; II Sam. 13:20; I Kings 19:21; Isa. 10:30; 14:19; 19:10; 27:11; 38:14; Jer. 11:19; Hos. 2:9; 8:6; 13:7, 10; Joel 4:11; Amos 7:7; Hab. 2:11.
141. On this point, compare Rashi and Kara on Isa. 19:7; Hos. 10:14; Amos 6:5. See also Kara on Zech. 2:12, where a gloss is cited in the name of Dunash which in fact belongs to Ben Saruk (Machbereth Menahem, p. 78).
142. Dunash: Hos. 5:5; 7:12; Amos 1:13; 4:2; etc. Ben Saruk: Hos. 10:15; 13:1, 14, 15; Joel 2:8; Amos 4:13; 5:9; Jonah 1:6; Nahum 3:10. Geiger too remarks that in matters of grammar Kara follows Dunash and Ben Saruk (Parshandatha, Heb. sect., p. 30; Ger. sect., p. 19). See also Filifavsky, Sefer Teshuvot Dunash ben Labrat (London and Edinburgh 1851).
143. The formulation is generally השיבו דונש (Isa. 27:11) or ושיבו לו דונש (Isa. 38:14).
144. Amos 7:7, Machbereth Menahem, p. 28, and Teshuvot Dunash, p. 12; Ezek. 23:24; etc.
145. Isa. 13:22; 28:28; Amos 6:8; Job 33:24; 38:32; and (like the present example) Mic. 1:11.
146. Machbereth Menahem, p. 76; Teshuvot Dunash, pp. 9-10.
147. A. A. Orbach, Arugath Habosem, vol. 4, pp. 3-5; it should be noted that he is mentioned by Rashi and Kara adds the word הקליר (see Orbach, p. 18).
148. See Geiger, Parshandatha, p. 26.
149. It should be noted that in Jer. 9:1; Zech. 9:16; and Mal. 3:20 he is called ר' אליעזר הקלירי, in II Kings 11:2 ר' רבי אליעזר, and in Isa. 24:22 only רבי אליעזר.
150. Isa. 28:16; 33:1, 18.
151. And see II Kings 11:2; Mal. 3:20.
152. I Kings 8:2, 8; II Kings 19:25; Isa. 2:22; 34:16; Jer. 8:23; Hos. 10:15; and see Poznanski, Mavo Leperush al Yehezkel VeTrei Asar, pp. 23, 28; and Perush Rashi al Nach, ed. Y. Maharshan (Amsterdam 1935), photocopied ed. (Jerusalem 1972), p. 8, n. 9.
153. Yalkut Shimeoni, photocopied ed. (Jerusalem 1960), p. 4; and Y. L. Zunz, Haderashot Beyisrael, ed. H. Albeck (Jerusalem 1974), p. 148, and his notes on Chapter 18 (notes 66, 68).
154. A. Apenstein, 'R. Shimon Kara Vehayalkut', Hahoker, 301,

pp. 85 ff.

155. See Tosafoth on Yevamoth 55b, from תשא, and Shabbath 85b. He also wrote liturgical poems; see Rabbenu Simhah's Mahzor Vitry, I-II, ed. S. Halevi Horowitz (Nurnberg 1923), p. 64.

156. II Kings 18:20; 19:4; Hos. 8:6; Zech. 4:12; 6:11; etc.

157. Introduction to Mahzor Vitry, pp. 51-57.

158. And see A. A. Orbach, op. cit., vol. 5, pp. 4-5.

159. As Ahrend holds (see his scholarly edition, Le Commentaire sur Job de Rabbi Yoseph Qara: Etude des Methodes Philologiques et Exegetiques [Hildesheim 1978], pp. 48, 49); he suggests that his commentaries were brought to Northern France by Jewish travellers from the East.

160. S. Poznanski, 'Mi Hu Rav Saadiah Shenizkar etzel Hamefarshim Hatzarfatiim Lemikra', Hagoren, 9 (1923), 69-89; and 'Citations de Saadia ou attribues a Saadia chez les exegets de la France septantrionale', REJ, LXXII (1921), pp. 113, 134.

161. He is mentioned by Rashi in I Sam. 1:24. It should be noted that the phrase which Kara applies here to R. Yitzhak's commentary, וְדַרְשֵׁי נִרְאִי, is also used by him in Jud. 5:23 in connection with a quotation from an unstated source, which is therefore conceivably R. Yitzhak.

162. Isa. 63:19; Ezek. 10:20.

163. Perush Hatorah asher Katav HaRashbam (Breslau 1882), p. xxx; and see n. 1, p. xxviii.

164. This is doubtful, however (see Ahrend, Le Commentaire, p. 3, n. 29), especially as his remarks come as עֲנִין אֶחָד.

165. And see Rashbam's commentary on Gen. 10:15, where Kara is called חֲנַרְיָנוּ, just as in 37:13.

166. See Ahrend, op. cit., p. 4.

167. Poznanski, Mavo, p. xlvi, notes 2, 3.

168. Ahrend concludes that Kara and Rashbam each studied in a different Beth Midrash and were influenced by a different school of thought. As a follower of Helbo, Kara was a 'reader' (קָרָא) of the Torah, while Rashbam was a Talmudist (Le Commentaire, p. 5). Compare A. Twyto, 'Al Heker Parshanuth Hamikra', pp. 525-526.

169. Sefer Josippon, ed. D. Flusser, Jerusalem 1978.

170. Sefer Josippon, vol. 2, pp. 142-143; this is also cited by Rashi in slightly different language. Ecclesiasticus (ed. Steinschneider, Berlin, 1858), which Kara calls סֵפֶר בֶּן סִירָא, is mentioned at I Kings 10:7, and seems to have been on his desk.

171. Parshandatha, Heb. sect., p. 32.

172. Josh. 9:4.

173. Because the word צִידָה recurs in verses 13, 14.

174. Ezek. 5:7, and see R. Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, Stuttgart, 1937.

175. He does not note in which book.

176. See also the apparent contradiction in I Kings 10:26, the different טַעֲמִים in II Sam. 3:34 for כִּנְפוֹל, and the problem of קָרִי וְכַתִּיב in II Sam. 3:35. Special interest attaches to I Sam. 9:24, וְהָעֶלְיָה; Kara reads this as אֶלְיָה, which seems astonishing.

177. Jud. 2:6; 13:18.

178. Baba Bathra 14b.

179. Baba Bathra 109b; cf. II Kings 8:20, מומה.
180. Cf. I Sam. 20:16; I Kings 21:13; Ezek. 36:7.
181. 9:12.
182. Apenstein says that he does not understand the word כמוס, but I think its meaning is as I have suggested; see also Deut. 32:34, כמס עמדי.
183. Out of the approximately 350 instances of various types of וכת'ב which I have found in Prophets, Kara deals with only four: II Sam. 23:20; II Kings 3:24; 18:27; Jer. 2:3.
184. In Zech. 3:3 he reads דרך נקיה תפס המקרא.
185. See Kimchi ad loc.; R. Yona ibn Janach (Ribag), Sefer Hashorashim, שורש כ.ר.ה; and also Minhath Shai ad loc. For the Sages, see Sanhedrin 20a.
186. Biblia Hebraica states that some such form appears in eleven manuscripts.
187. Hullin 9b; in the Talmud's thirty-two exegetical principles (ל"ב מידות), the principle of סדר שנחלק possibly hints at this.
188. Compare I Sam. 18:26-27, ולא מלאו הימים ויקם דוד.
189. Isa. 26:11; 32:6, 10; 49:7; Amos 9:13; Hab. 1:8.
190. Isa. 43:6; Ezek. 16:6.
191. Jud. 6:25; 12:4; I Sam. 11:6, 7; 24:11; Isa. 26:7; Jer. 9:12; 28:1; Ezek. 1:11, 18; Est. 2:1.
192. Jud. 13:18; II Kings 14:25; and see I Sam. 3:3; Hos. 11:6.
193. תביר: Isa. 2:20. רביע: Isa. 1:7.
194. Jud. 6:25; 13:18; Jer. 9:12.
195. Jud. 6:25; and see the similar Jer. 25:1; Est. 2:1.
196. See also Jud. 13:18.
197. I Sam. 21:7.
198. Biblia Hebraica does not record any such reading.

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