**Bar-Ilan University**

**Department of Translation and Interpreting Studies**

**Research Proposal for Master's Degree**

**American Reform Judaism and Translations of the Passover Haggadah: a case study of Sh'fokh Ḥamatkha**

**יהדות רפורמית בארצות הברית ותרגומים של ההגדה לפסח: חקר "שפוך חמתך"**

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1. ***Introduction and research goals***

The purpose of this research is to contribute to the understanding of ideological and theological currents in the American Jewish Reform Movement through the examination of the changing text of translated Haggadot published in the United States.

The Haggadah is a liturgical text used in the family celebration of the holiday of Passover. The laws of the celebration of Passover appear in the Bible in the book of Exodus. Although the injunction of telling the story (*vehigadta*)appears in Exodus, it was only after the destruction of the Second Temple that the formulaic text of this retelling was set down by the Sages of the Talmud (Cohen Ioannides, 2017, p. 8). As the focus of the ritual celebration of Passover shifted from the Temple service to the family celebration, the Sages found it necessary to develop new practices that would enable the Jewish people to continue to experience the connection to God (Ochs, 2020, p. 25). It has been an integral part of Jewish communal practice ever since.

The theme of freedom and redemption from slavery is one of the reasons that the celebration of Passover is widely observed by the Jewish communities in the United States, as this theme streamlines very smoothly with traditional American values (Hoffman & Arnow, 2008a, p. 47). For many American Jews, Passover is one of the few Jewish holidays that is regularly celebrated (Cohen Ioannides, 2017, p. 1). Even those Jews who have relinquished many of the practices and rituals of Judaism, who do not attend synagogue, do not affix mezuzahs on their doorways, and do not keep Shabbat, are likely to make or attend a Passover seder (Hoffman & Arnow, 2008a, p. 47). According to the latest Pew Research Center report on Jewish Americans, 62% of Americans who identify as Jewish held or attended a Passover Seder in 2019 (Pew Research Center, 2020, p. 70). However, for the generation of American Jews raised in the United States, it was difficult to follow the traditional Seder, as it was generally read in Hebrew by the family patriarch (Moore, 2009, p. 330-331). Most American Jews who were raised in the United States in the three to four generations since their ancestors arrived as immigrants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, did not speak or understand Hebrew. The ability to read Hebrew has been partially preserved by supplementary education programs offered by most American Jewish communities. According to the Pew Research Center report, approximately 60% of Americans who identify as Jewish participated in these types of programs (Pew Research Center, 2020, p. 108). However, the desire to acquire English skills by this population group combined with the broad tendency of monoglossia in the United States has led to the lack of proficiency in the language (Ergas, 2017, p. 56-57).

Although the Hebrew text of the traditional Haggadah has in general been set down and codified, numerous versions have appeared over the years. Reframing of the Haggadah was generally accomplished by changing commentary and artwork. However, in the twentieth century, changes to the Haggadah's text itself began to appear (Ochs, 2020, p. 90). In addition, numerous translations of the Haggadah into different languages have also appeared, as the Jews absorbed the language of the places in which they settled (Ochs, 2020, p. 84).

In many translations that have appeared, the traditional text of the Haggadah has been altered and rewritten over the years in order to align the ancient story with contemporary concerns. The issue of appropriating traditional Jewish texts for modern needs is of special interest in the case of Reform Judaism, which has historically been the largest and perhaps most influential Jewish stream in America, and has largely represented the more progressive branch of American Judaism.

Due to the progressive orientation of Reform Judaism, the movement’s history in America involved the elimination or reshaping of many traditional practices because of the belief that Judaism itself could be reshaped by generations in different times in order to suit their contemporary religious sensibilities (Kaplan, 2005, p. 36). The Reformers thus attempted to develop a religious system that would retain enough elements to distinguish their religion as a form of Judaism, but still prevent restriction of the American Jews' social and economic integration into American society. Those rituals that could synchronize Jewish belief with contemporary trends were more likely to be retained. The message of the holiday of Passover, in particular, accorded with the religious culture of the larger community and provided a Jewish alternative to it (Kaplan, 2005, p. 39). The almost universal celebration of Passover created a market for upgraded Haggadot (Sarna, forthcoming). These include a significant number of editions that were published by the Reform movement from the 19th century and up until the present day.

The rewriting of traditional sources has been done largely by activists in movements, such as Reform Judaism in the United States, that aimed to modify Judaism so that it would address the changing demands of Jewish life (Moore, 2009, p. 327). Specifically, the Passover Haggadah since its conception has been a vehicle for reframing the meaning of Jewish rituals, introducing new ones and promoting new theologies. The Haggadah, with its seemingly never-ending revisions, can be seen as a work in progress. Each Haggadah can provide the context for the re-interpretation of the Jewish past and its relationship to the present (Ochs, 2020, p. 91-93). As the practice of rituals may reflect the identities of those who perform them, changes in these rituals also mirror their evolving identities.

Because of the centrality of the celebration of Passover in the United States, the study of the Haggadah may provide particularly good insight into American Jews’ continuing negotiation of their identity as Jews and Americans (Hoffman & Arnow, 2008a, p. 49). The Reform movement struggled with some of the content of the Haggadah, including the emphasis on correct performance of the Seder, the idea of Judaism as peoplehood, and the messianic principles embodied by the coming of Elijah (Cohen Ioannides, 2017, p. 19-20). The section of the Haggadah which I propose to study includes the recitation of the Sh'fokh Ḥamatkha passages and opening the door for Elijah. In this section, several Biblical verses describing vengeance on the Gentile nations is recited while opening the door to welcome the prophet, Elijah. This section relates to two themes which could be deemed problematic by the Reform readership: 1) the call for vengeance on the Gentile nations, which is in opposition to the Reform Movement's ideology of universalism, and 2) the idea of the Messiah as a person, as opposed to the idea of a messianic age of universal peace and justice. In addition, the implied connection between these two ideas, that the redemption is contingent upon the wreaking of vengeance on Gentile nations, is at odds with the movement's universalist ideology.

The study of the American Reform Movement's interpretation of this section of the Haggadah may provide insight into the shifting ideology and theology of the movement and reveal ensuing textual manifestations of Jewish identity.

1. ***Corpus***

The corpus that will be examined includes ten Haggadot that have been published in the United States by the Reform Movement or by individuals or bodies identified with it. Beginning in 1892, the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) Press has published Haggadot, the first as an addition to the Union Prayer Book. Over the years, revisions of the Union Haggadah have appeared with changes in the relevant section (Sh'fokh Ḥamatkha), some minor and some significant. In addition to these editions of the Union Haggadah, four other Haggadot have been published: A Passover Haggadah (first appearing in 1974), The Open Door (2002), Sharing the Journey (2012) and Mishkan Haseder (2021). Also, the CCAR published a children's Haggadah in 1994. Another children's Haggadah was written by Rabbi Kerry M. Olitzky who is affiliated with the Reform movement and is also included in the corpus.

The wide range of Haggadot provides an appropriate corpus for examining the evolution of the different strategies over time. Upon preliminary examination of the content of these Haggadot, it is apparent that they demonstrate that there have been significant changes in the approach of the Reform Movement to the presentation of the original text.

The list of Haggadot in the corpus appears in the bibliography.

1. ***Literature review: Historical and theoretical background***

***3.1 The Reform movement in the United States***

Reform Judaism was the first of the modern responses to the emancipation of the Jews. Jews from Germany and other European countries were seeking a way to break from halakhic Judaism and avoid conversion to Christianity (Kaplan, 2005, p. 7-8). Jewish immigrants from German-speaking lands started arriving at the shores of the United States in the early years of the nineteenth century. These Jewish immigrants established the first denominational branch of Judaism in America, and Reform became the primary expression of the religion in the United States well into the twentieth century (Grossman, 2005, p. 81).

Reform Judaism can be distinguished from more traditional movements because of its willingness to adapt to modernity. Orthodox Judaism holds that the Torah was transmitted by God to Moses at Mount Sinai, and thus all Jews must observe halakha, Jewish law, as it has been interpreted by the Sages. One of the objectives of the founders of the movement in America was to protect traditional values from the adverse effects of modernity. Conservative Judaism was developed in response to the perception that the Reform movement was going too far in its abandonment of Jewish law (Kaplan, 2005, p. 7). In contrast, the guiding principle of the Reform movement is that Jewish religious beliefs and practices can be adapted to the changing needs of the Jewish people from generation to generation (Kaplan, 2005, p. 7). This is in contrast to those who decided that the best solution was to give up their Jewish identity, as a response to social and political changes in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Reform Jews had a desire to remain Jewish while modernizing their beliefs and practices (Kaplan, 2002, p. 43).

The movement was built on the intellectual foundations of the German *maskilim* and offered an ideological and theological basis for religious change (Kaplan, 2002, p. x). The emphasis of Classical Reform Judaism's beliefs is based on the understanding of the message of the prophets as being the need to advocate for social justice. The Reformers believed that the prophets stressed universalism rather than particularism, and that the mission of Judaism was to bring the message of ethical monotheism to the world. With changing social trends, the movement continued to change in different ways, for example, by adopting a more egalitarian stance towards the role of women in the synagogue, reaching out to interfaith couples and accepting patrilineal descent in establishing Jewishness (Kaplan, 2002, pp. 15-25).

Since the period of the Haskalah, Jews in Western societies and countries have tended to frame Judaism in an equivalent context to the way modern Christians saw their religion. The focus of attention for modern Judaism was no longer the observance of the commandments, but the foundations of the faith. This paradigm shift was a major influence on the Reform movement to create a formulation of their beliefs. This was done through a process of extensive debate that culminated in the publication of a series of platforms, the first of which was issued at Pittsburgh in 1885. A new platform was adopted in 1937, revising dramatically some of the beliefs expressed in the Pittsburgh Platform. This trend continued with the publication of the San Francisco Statement in 1976 and the new Pittsburgh Platform of 1999 (Kaplan, 2002, pp. 2-6).

Reform Jewish theologians have sought to define and clarify the nature of Judaism, and specifically, the nature of American Judaism. The issues that have preoccupied Reform Judaism are deeply theological. These changing theological perspectives are represented by the various platforms, which have had a direct impact on the role of liturgy, ritual and observance within the movement (Sherwin, 2005, p. 120).

Changes in ritual and practice that are consequences of the changing ideology of the Reform movement have been reflected in American Reform prayer books from the early nineteenth century through today (Kaplan, 2002, p. xi). One of the major changes in the Reform movement's liturgical literature can be traced by examining the use of Hebrew. During the period of the emancipation of the Jews in the nineteenth century, the Reformer's practice of replacing Hebrew in the liturgy with the vernacular, especially with German, was a sign of the change that Judaism was undergoing in response to the increasingly modern, secular world. (Aberbach, 2006, p 141). It was also feared that the use of Hebrew would indicate Jewish national aspirations, which would arouse the suspicion of the German people about the loyalty of the Jews to the country (Aberbach, 2006, p. 146). In the United States, the founders of Classical Reform Judaism saw the elimination of Hebrew from the liturgy as a way of distancing the movement from ceremonialism and minimizing the role of synagogue and ritual (Meyer, 1995, p. 280). In more recent times, there has been an increased interest within the Reform movement in the use of Hebrew, both as a signifier of Jewish identity and as a means of accessing classic Jewish texts (Ergas, 2017, p. 65). The more recent Haggadot published by the Reform movement indeed contain more Hebrew text than the earlier editions (Ochs, 2020, p. 96-97).

It would be expected that the Haggadah, the liturgical component of the Passover Seder, would also reflect, to a certain extent, these changes in ideology and theology that have been explicated in the platforms and in Reform thought. Systematic study of even small sections of the Haggadah's text can shed significant light on American Jewish beliefs and sentiments (cf. Sarna, forthcoming).

***3.2 Translation and religious history***

3.2.1 Translation and Religion

Translation fulfills a social and cultural role, and thus it is an important element in the study of history. The understanding of the historical context in which translations are made can lead to better understanding of the significance of the changes over time in these translations. The fundamental changes that can be observed in translation over time can be correlated with social, political and cultural changes (Hermans, 2022, p. 27, 34).

Specifically, the study of translation can shed light on the study of religion, as much of the practice and theory of translation was developed in religious contexts. The history of translation studies is inextricably entwined with the translation of religious texts, especially Christian sacred writings. The first thinkers to write critically about translation were themselves translators of the Bible or Christian theologians (Israel, 2023, p. 2-3). One of the founders of modern translation studies, Eugene Nida, devoted much attention to the translation of the Bible in his scholarship (Nida, 1969).

The translation of scripture is only one aspect of translation that comes to play when dealing with religious texts. A wider range of 'sacred' literature, as so defined by different religious traditions, is translated for the purposes of prayer and ritual. 'Sacred texts' can thus be defined as any text that is perceived as sacred or holy or used for any purpose considered as such by a faith community (Israel, 2019, p. 323). Religious texts also include many genres in addition to what can be defined as "scriptural" or "revealed" texts, for example, poetry, philosophy, history and theological discussion. The particular sensitivities of religious texts present specific challenges to the translator (Williams, A, 2007, p. 484-485). Thus, the translation of sacred texts and their study should be treated as a special case (Long, 2013, p. 464).

Likewise, the study of religion would not be complete without the consideration of the role that translation has played in its formulation. As most religions rely on scriptures or sacred texts to convey their messages, the status of the translations of these texts is a critical issue (Israel, 2023, p. 5-6). Translations serve a major function in the ongoing interpretation of religious traditions, and thus the study of the concepts and methods of translation is essential for the study of religion (Israel, 2019, p. 326).

The conceptual approach of Descriptive Translation Studies highlights the importance of the study of the historical and social factors which dictate the conditions under which the translations are produced and received. This perspective sees translation as not ideologically neutral, but governed by various forces at different historical periods. It is thus applicable to the study of translated sacred texts (Hermans, 1999, p. 84).

The major methods and strategies employed in the translation of religious texts range from compensation, explication, adaptation, appropriation and borrowing to deliberate or inadvertent omission, mistranslation or over-translation (Israel, 2019, p. 328). The analysis of these strategies over time may show how they may have affected the development and direction of religious communities, and how religious meaning and identities have been negotiated. Studies of this kind may contribute both to a history of translation as well as a history of religion. Moreover, both religion and translation operate within political and material contexts. Translation takes place with regard to issues of power, patronage and censorship, and entails negotiations with many factors, including ideology and value judgments (Hermans, 1996, p. 2). All translations reflect a certain ideology and serve specific functions within the society in which they are written. (Lefevere, 1992, p. vii). The leverage of translations may differ in different faith communities and may be boycotted or promoted for extensive circulation. Lastly, translation has the potential to construct, maintain or contest different ways of understanding the world. The translation of sacred texts, the status of translators, and the religious institutions may all play a role in this construction, maintenance or contestation of religious identities (Israel, 2023, p. 11-12).

Another function of translating religious texts is the preservation of those texts throughout time and space, thus in a sense preserving the source language (Engler et al., 2007). This is especially true for translations that retain the source in the final product, as is prevalent in many publications of the Passover Haggadah.

Ultimately, the translation of religious texts demonstrates well that boundaries exist between different cultures, but that these boundaries may be crossed. It has been shown that at different historical moments, the manner in which these texts are translated may change, reflecting the shifting religious meanings and conflicts of the time (Kavka, 2011, p. 204).

3.2.2. Translation and Judaism

Translation has played a central role in Jewish life over the centuries. The use of Hebrew as a spoken language was superseded over the years by the use of Aramaic and Greek, during those periods when Jewish national independence was not existent. Later, after having been forced from the Land of Israel, the Jews began speaking the language of the people among whom they settled. Although they adopted the language of their neighbors, Hebrew continued to be used as the language of prayer and ritual (Toury, 2002, p. x). Translation of religious Jewish texts has always been prevalent for the purpose of providing access to Hebrew scripture, first and foremost the Torah. The study of Torah is the most central commandment of the Jewish religion, and the translation of the scriptures into the vernacular were thus important for the continuation of this study. Although written translations of the Torah were initially forbidden, the dispersion of the Jews throughout the world made it necessary to provide translations into the vernacular alongside the Hebrew text (Gillman, 2022, p. 252).

While the Hebrew text of the Torah was still considered to be sacred, in general the Jewish communities were not averse to the use of translations into the vernacular. These translations served not only as a linguistic transformation of the Hebrew text, but also as aids to comprehension of it. These translations could be seen more as commentaries and explanations than as direct translations (Seidman, 2002, p. 14-15).

The history of Jewish translation can be shown to be aligned with the history of Jewish migration and the changing cultural landscape that the Jews encountered in their various communities. Translators of sacred texts were influenced by the theological and political concerns of their times (Waligorska & Kohn, 2018, p. 2). The act of translation has taken place in numerous contexts and historical periods. In the Jewish American experience, translations of the Bible into English aided in the transformation and acculturation of the Jewish community into the general American society (Seidman, 2002, p. 15).

The Passover Haggadah contains the narrative of the Exodus from Egypt and is intended to be a teaching tool to impart the story to the participants of the Seder and especially to the younger generations. The Haggadah can be seen as serving a similar purpose to the study of Torah and therefore the text of the Haggadah had to be made accessible to Jewish communities throughout the world. To this end, a plethora of translated Haggadot has appeared, whose study could lead to insights into the theological and ideological context in which they were produced.

3.2.3 Paratexts in religious translations

The material which accompanies a text and contributes to the formation of a book comprises what has been defined as the paratext of the work. In essence, the paratext is the manner that the text presents itself to the reader (Genette & Maclean, 1991, p. 261).The paratext can thus be regarded as any appended material which is external to the core text and has the function of explaining, defining, instructing, supporting or adding background information. The paratext may also come in non-verbal forms, including illustrations, photos and diagrams, in the choice of fonts and layout of the text. (Pellatt, 2013, p.1-3).

In translated works, especially in the translations of religious texts, paratextual content, also defined as metatexts, is a critical component, explaining the relevant concepts and assumptions to the target audience. These paratextual components emphasize the critical role of the translator in shaping the interpretation of the text theologically and ideologically (Naude & Miller-Naude, 2019, p. 286-287). The study of paratexts can reveal implicit expectations about the translation at a particular time and space (Haroun, 2023, p.169).

Paratextual material can also serve as interpretive commentary on the text (Keskinen,1993, p.164). As such, paratexts may function as mediators between the text and the reader, for which the historical and cultural context of this process of mediation is relevant (Kovala, 1996, p. 120). The role of institutions in promoting certain translation or particular political or ideological agenda to their communities of believers may come to light through study of the paratextual material (Haroun, 2023, p. 169).

In particular, the study of paratextual material in the Passover Haggadah may provide insight into the historical context and focus of the translators and publishers. Many new Haggadot are published every year, and while the text itself is generally unchanging, the paratexts, including commentaries, explanations, illustrations, etc. are very often the justification for their appearance (Roos, 2022, p. 9).

1. ***Research questions***

The investigation of the different translations of the Haggadot that were published by the Reform movement or otherwise identified with the Reform movement will be focused on the comparison of the different approaches taken in translating the section of opening the door for Elijah, which is accompanied by the recitation of the Sh'fokh Ḥamatkha paragraph. Nearly all the haggadot produced by non-Orthodox Jews maintain the motif of the Cup of Elijah and supplement the traditional text with one or another expression of hope for the future (Friedland, 1997, p. 294).

In the traditional Haggadah, at the conclusion of the section called Barekh, the blessing of grace after the meal, the participants are instructed to fill a cup of wine for Elijah the prophet, open the door and recite the following verses from the books of Psalms and Lamentations:

שְׁפֹךְ חֲמָתְךָ אֶל־הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יְדָעוּךָ וְעַל מַמְלָכוֹת אֲשֶׁר בְּשִׁמְךָ לֹא קָרָאוּ. כִּי אָכַל אֶת־יַעֲקֹב וְאֶת־נָוֵהוּ הֵשַׁמּוּ. (תהלים עט)

שְׁפָךְ־עֲלֵיהֶם זַעְמֶךָ וַחֲרוֹן אַפְּךָ יַשִּׂיגֵם. (תהלים סט)

תִּרְדֹּף בְּאַף וְתַשְׁמִידֵם מִתַּחַת שְׁמֵי יהוה. (איכה ג)

English translation (JPS):

Pour out Your fury on the nations that do not know You, upon the kingdoms that do not invoke Your name, for they have devoured Jacob and desolated his home.

Pour out Your wrath on them; may Your blazing anger overtake them;

Oh, pursue them in wrath and destroy them from under the heavens of the LORD!

In most traditional Haggadot, there are no explanations for the opening of the door at this point in the Seder, and there is no explicit connection made to Elijah, aside from the instruction to pour the cup of Elijah. Likewise, there is generally no explanation in the body of the text as to the recitation of the verses of Sh'fokh Ḥamatkha. However, a perusal of the extratextual material, including commentaries and essays, demonstrates an almost universal understanding that the opening of the door at this point is to welcome Elijah the prophet, who is the harbinger of the messianic age. For example, in Goldin (2019, p. 172), the commentary on this section states that "the door of the house is opened and all gaze expectantly as we welcome the harbinger of the redemption to our Seder table". Even-Israel Steinsaltz writes that "we open the door to demonstrate the strength of our faith in the imminent coming of the Messiah. We are always waiting for him, in constant anticipation of the coming redemption" (2016, p. 184). The verses of Sh'fokh Ḥamatkha are an allusion to the measure of divine retribution and punishment that will presumably precede the redemption. This reflects the placement of these verses immediately preceding the *Hallel* section (reading chapters from the book of Psalms). This group of chapters has been identified with the era of messianic redemption (Hoffman & Arnow, 2008, p. 138) and thus modern scholars have suggested that it was thought appropriate to preface the Hallel section with the call of God to avenge his people as part of the future redemption (Tabory, 2008, p. 56). One justification for the call to wreak revenge upon those nations who do not acknowledge God is that we cannot move on to the future without confronting evil and its underlying causes (Goldin, 2019, p. 174).

In sum, the text of Sh'fokh Ḥamatkha has been chosen for various reasons:

1. The text is provocative and presents a theological and ideological challenge to the Reform movement's beliefs, as it seems to promote pursuing revenge on our oppressors.
2. The text has been intertwined throughout many generations with the custom of opening the door for Elijah the prophet, who has been representative of the messianic idea and the harbinger of the messianic age. The Reform movement's stand on the idea of a personal messiah can be examined by surveying the changes in this section of the Haggadah.
3. The juxtaposition of the text with the opening of the door for Elijah allows the exploration of the connection between the two ideas, how that connection has been approached in the different Haggadot, how the figure of Elijah has been represented, and how this representation has been seen to be connected to the text of Sh'fokh Ḥamatkha.

It can be seen that this section of the Haggadah presents a particular challenge for the Reform movement. Firstly, the call for vengeance is quite dissonant with the humanistic attitudes that the movement embraces. In addition, the place of Elijah is problematic as the Reform movement has dropped the concept of a person as Messiah (Cohen Ioannides, 2017, p. 19). The incongruence is especially evident as messianic redemption is presented in the text as contingent on the destruction of non-Jews, with whom most members of the Reform movement share a social space and life in modern American society.

Like many religious texts, the text of the Passover Haggadah has been retranslated many times and for various purposes, thus we encounter many different approaches and strategies that translators employ. Translators of religious texts have been shown to use deliberate or inadvertent omission of the text, compensation, explication, adaptation and borrowing, mistranslation and paraphrasing (Israel, 2019, p. 328).

I aim to examine those Haggadot that have been published by the Reform movement or by individuals affiliated with it and the modifications that have been introduced into the text over the years. My hope is to discover the underlying perspectives of the publishers, authors and translators in order to deepen the understanding of the changes and developments that have occurred in American Reform Judaism's ideology and theology.

The questions that I propose to address in my thesis are therefore:

1. How has the Reform Movement in the United States addressed the challenges that the section of the Haggadah of opening the door for Elijah and reciting the Sh'fokh Ḥamatkha paragraph raises?
2. How does the evolution of this section of the Haggadah reflect the changing ideology of the Reform Movement in America?

The assumption is that the various translational approaches to this text will reflect aspects of the underlying ideology and theology of the American Reform movement. However, translations do not only reflect religious history but also actively participate in it, and may be seen as factors that reinforce particular religious perceptions and trends. The widespread observation of the Passover Seder by American Jews has increased their exposure to the various texts of the Haggadah. These texts used year after year have influenced the manner in which the Seder was performed, specifically relating to the section of Elijah's Cup, opening the door and the reciting of the Sh'fokh Ḥamatkha section. This evolution may have in turn influenced the Reform Movement's stance on the issues that this section raises. Changing norms of observance by Reform Jewish communities in the US may have impacted the outlook of the Rabbinic branches of the movement and the changes in the platforms may reflect these changing norms of observance (Ioannides, 2017, p. 2)

The chronology of the platforms and the publication of the different Haggadot may reveal this mutual influence.

1. ***Methodology***

The research will be conducted by examining the Haggadot in a chronological fashion and characterizing the different approaches that were taken to address the challenges that the Sh'fokh Ḥamatkha section presents. Characterizations of the strategies implemented in the translations will be analyzed along the lines of the categorization suggested by Hephzibah Israel, including omission, adaptation, transformation, or similar manipulations (Israel, 2019, p. 328).

The language of the textual material that appears at this point in the Haggadah will be explored. Characterization of the language used in the Sh'fokh Ḥamatkha section may be an additional indication of the underlying beliefs of the authors and editors of the various Haggadot). The use of the vernacular would presumably indicate the desire of the authors to produce a text that would primarily be directed to assimilated Jews in America. In contrast, the use of Hebrew could indicate a desire to return to a more traditional Jewish ceremony at the Passover Seder.

In addition to the language used in this section, I will examine the paratextual material that appears beside and around the Sh'fokh Ḥamatkha section. In some of the Haggadot, there have been additions to this section, taking the form of Biblical readings, modern poetry and anecdotes, among others. Other material added to the text of the Haggadah itself includes prefaces, commentaries and added essays. It would be beneficial to explore the sources of these additions, which could help to clarify the ideology and theology of the editors and authors of these Haggadot. It will be attempted to identify the underlying themes expressed by the different approaches.

The different paratextual material in the Haggadot will be examined to determine if the editors and translators of the Haggadot explain the approach taken in the presentation of this section and to attempt to uncover the ideological, cultural and theological basis of their choices.

In this fashion I hope to obtain a timeline that will demonstrate the different approaches to this section in the Haggadot found in the corpus under examination. Non-linear development of this section of the text may demonstrate that at certain periods of time, different approaches and trends prevailed simultaneously. These findings can then be compared to the evolution of the ideological and theological principles of the American Reform movement. The study of the historical development of this movement's ideology and theology can shine light on the changing perspectives of the editors of the Haggadot, in the context of the changing ideological and theological environment in which the Haggadot were produced.

1. ***Research hypotheses and initial findings***

Subsequent to the publication of each of its platforms, the American Reform movement has published new versions of its prayer books, whose content reflects the changing ideology and theology expressed in these platforms (Kaplan, 2002, p. 8). It could be that the religious beliefs expressed in the changing platforms have also found expression in the changing shape and form of the Passover Haggadot published by the Reform movement.

The research hypotheses in relation to the research questions stated above are:

1. It is likely that the Reform movement has addressed the challenges of the section of the Passover Haggadah which prescribes opening the door for Elijah and reciting the Sh'fokh Ḥamatkha verses, in a variety of approaches, including omission of the entire section, reinstituting a part of it, and recasting it completely. These changes are expected to be reflected in the paratextual material accompanying the text, either as explanatory comments with the text itself or as introductory expositions in the preface.
2. The evolution of the Passover Haggadah is expected to reflect the changing ideology and religious beliefs of the Reform movement, especially in relation to the messianic idea. The rejection of the idea of a personal messiah most likely led to the rejection of the ritual of opening the door to welcome Elijah the prophet, the harbinger of the messianic time. The changes in the Reform movement's theology as expressed in the changing platforms, will be reflected in the changing text of the Passover Haggadah, both in the language and in the content.

My preliminary findings show that the initial response of the Reform movement to the challenge of the expression of messianic ideas in the form of the visit by Elijah at the Passover seder has indeed been to eliminate the relevant section from the Haggadah (CCAR, 1892). This is clearly a reflection of the Reform view that rejects a personal Messiah. In later Haggadot the ritual of opening the door for Elijah was reinstituted, but without the recitation of the Sh'fokh Ḥamatkha verses (CCAR, 1923, Yoffie, 2012, CCAR, 2014, Bronstein, 1994). Initial findings also indicate that the Sh'fokh Ḥamatkha section does appear in at least two of the more recent Haggadot, either as an optional reading (Elwell, 2002) or in a completely reinterpreted version which reflects more modern sensibilities (Person, 2021).

This initial investigation of the corpus under consideration has thus revealed the translators' use of various techniques, including outright excision of the text and the custom of opening the door, maintaining the custom of opening the door while eliminating the reading of the Biblical verses, and replacement of the "problematic" text with a wide variety of readings, ranging from modern poetry to recitation of different Biblical verses, expressing more "palatable" sentiments.

***7. Contribution of this research***

The study of the evolution of the English translations of the Passover Haggadah by the Reform movement in the United States can contribute to the understanding of the development of American Reform Judaism. The small section of the Haggadah that will be examined contains material that significantly challenges the ideological and theological stance of the Reform movement. The changing manner in which the authors, translators, editors and publishers have dealt with this material, which had not been described or studied before, can shed light on the process of reworking the Platforms which express the theological and ideological beliefs of the Reform movement. This study may therefore add to a growing body of research that demonstrates how the study of translated texts can contribute to the understanding of historical changes in religious traditions.

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