Names of Accents and Diacritical Punctuation Signs in Poems by North African Jewish Poets

Rachel Mashiah
Bar-Ilan University

In several Sephardi printed editions of the Pentateuch one can find a list of thirty-four names of signs: twenty-nine names of accents in the Twenty-One Prose Books (including Pasec, Macaf and Ga'ya); four names of diacritical punctuation signs; Dagushe, Rafe, Mapie and Sibolet / Şibolet (for Šin and Sin); and Ševa. This list is called the Zarca List, named after its opening accent.

The Zarca List has been referred to in various poems written by Jewish North African poets. Some added flair to their poems by incorporating idiomatic phrases based on names of accents, and several based an entire poem on that list. I have come across only four poems belonging to the latter category:

Fradji Shawat – written by the sixteenth century Tunisian poet Fradji Shawat, and based on thirty-one names of signs (commentary by E. Hazan); and Shmu’el Elbaz, written by the nineteenth century Moroccan poet Shmu’el Elbaz, and based on thirty-two

* Several issues discussed in this paper were presented at the Fourteenth International Congress of Masoretic Studies (IOMS) 1998. I would like to thank Prof. Aron Dotan, the president of IOMS, for reading that paper and providing very insightful comments.

1 For examples, see HAZAN 1987, pp. 367–375.
2 HAZAN 1976, pp. 95–97; see also idem 1987, pp. 374–375; idem 1995, pp. 220–222.

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ISSN 037-0894
names (commentary by Sh. Adary); probably written by the nineteenth century Moroccan poet Amram Bar-Yehuda Elbaz, and containing twenty-seven of the names (commentary by Ch. R. Shoshanna); and another one (commentary by R. Mashiah and T. Lavi).

In all four poems both literal and figurative meanings may be ascribed to the names of the signs. This paper focuses on Monsoñego’s use of the Zarca List in the elegy, and compares it with the aforementioned poems.

The epigraph preceding marks the poem as an elegy for ‘the ninth of Ab,’ a day of fasting and mourning, the day on which the First and Second Temples were destroyed. It also alludes to the fact that the poem is based upon names of accents through the phrase נַבָּה נִבְּהֵ, where the word נַבָּה, from the root נָבָה, may be interpreted as ‘accents’.

The rhyming in this elegy follows the poet’s Jewish-Moroccan dialect, and it is therefore possible to find rhymes such as נַבָּה נִבְּה (lines 3,4) which demonstrate the elimination of the phonemic contrast of /l/ and /e/ in this dialect; (lines 23,24) demonstrate the elimination of the phonemic contrast of /s/ and /z/; (lines 27,28) demonstrate the weakening of the emphatic consonant /s/; (lines 3,5) which might indicate the explosive pronunciation [b] in both cases; and and (lines 2,14) both pronounced מֶלֶךְ.

4 A poem from the well-known collection יִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל which is read or sung by Moroccan Jews on Friday evenings.
6 Rabbi Rafael Aharon Monsoñego (1760–1840) wrote a collection of 90 poems titled חוג גאוז (as yet unpublished).
9 Similar rhyming, reflecting the poets’ North African dialects, can be found in the three additional poems, e.g.: In the poet rhymes נַבָּה נִבְּה (lines 23,24) with כְּכֶבֶק / כְּכֶבֶק (lines 2,14) and כְּכֶבֶק / כְּכֶבֶק (lines 3,5) which might indicate the explosive pronunciation [b].
10 Other similar rhyming, reflecting the poets’ North African dialects, can be found in the three additional poems, e.g.: In the poet rhymes נַבָּה נִבְּה (lines 23,24) with כְּכֶבֶק / כְּכֶבֶק (lines 2,14) and כְּכֶבֶק / כְּכֶבֶק (lines 3,5) which might indicate the explosive pronunciation [b].
While the original text has no vocalization signs, the marks «Guerşayim» inserted in most of the accent and diacritical-sign names, are part of that manuscript (and indicate the presence of the calembour).

The second line in the opening verse is quoted directly from the Zarca List: the name of the disjunctive Zarca (from the root בַּרְכָּה - 'throwing'; Macaf from כָּפֶשׁ - 'to knock') is a connective sign that prevents the word preceding it from having independent status; and Şofar-Holej is one of the types of accents that were called by the name שופר (‘trumpet’, ‘horn’), and is equivalent to מך (an abbreviation of מָּכָה). As for the Segolta (Segol), the poet uses the sound of the word as an allusion to – the chosen people. The whole phrase שופרホールך can be read in several ways: «the chosen people are thrown (Npit) out of their country and promised land to be scattered all over the world». The expression שופר alludes to the people’s disaster, where the Macaf strikes the ‘trumpet’ (שופר), a symbol of Israel, and injures it. The phrase שופר can also refer to the destruction of the Kingdom of Judea, as the Zarca becomes a Macaf which represents the annihilation of the people’s independent existence. The names of these signs also lend themselves to an additional interpretation where the Zarca Macaf – «throwing a Blockade», refers to the seige around Israel (Segolta) that causes its ‘beauty’ (Şofar) to fade away and vanish (Holej). These various readings of the opening verse complement each other to create a multidimensional illustration of the disaster that befell the people of Israel.

The first strophe is based on four names of accents: the rare conjunctive Yare'ah ben-Yomo; Darga – ‘grade’ ‘stair’, ‘degree’, from the root יאֵר; Tevir – Aramaic, from תבירה ‘broken’ (שברוח) which illustrates Israel’s fall; and the conjunctive Şofar Mehupaj ‘inverted trumpet’. In this strophe the names of the accents enhance the contrast between the people’s past and present situation: in line 3 the people of Israel are compared to ‘a new moon’ (וִיָּה) as if the chosen

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11 It was added here following the biblical system. I would like to thank my colleague, Dr. Z. Bstzer for his insightful remarks concerning the punctuation of the words: נבירה (line 13), צעירים (line 34), ירי (line 35).
12 Some form of pun, ascribing additional meaning (see HAZAN 1995, p. 88).
13 Which functions as a prologue (anticipating the entire poem).
14 From Aramaic: ‘cluster’ (of grapes).
people were worthy of a unique status similar to that of the moon at the beginning of each month. The destruction of the Temple however transforms this holy day into a day of shame and disgrace, and similarly the people of Israel become ‘a reproach in the sight of all that pass by’ (ה’y מך ראו). This fall can also be traced in line 4, Darga (which represents a high status) is followed by a Tevir (break). In line 5 the people of Israel are compared to an ‘inverted trumpet’ (שמפר מנופף), to indicate the disorder in the people’s course of life.

The second strophe deals with one accent only, the Great Pazer (פץ זכר), from the root פֹּץ ‘scattering’\(^\text{15}\), an allusion to the Diaspora. Although in some places Pazer is called פּוּק קָט (Little Pazer) and פּוּק דֹּר (Great Pazer), this is not the case here, and this name simply refers to Pazer and not to פּוּק.

The third strophe is based on the phrase גתני: Atnah derives from רך ‘rest’, ‘pause’, but it can also be understood as ‘sigh’ (_png התְּנָה) as if it were derived from the root פֹּשׁ ‘to prolong’; and Tarha, the Sephardi name for פּוּק which precedes Atnah as well as Siluc.\(^\text{16}\) This name derives from the root שְׁפָּח ‘laboring’, and is interpreted here as ‘burden’ or ‘trouble’. Thus the ‘burden’ (גרים) and ‘prolonged’ (משחה) suffering lead to ‘groaning’ (יַגְנָה). Atnah may also be interpreted as ‘to stay’, as if to say – the burden ‘stays’ (in the sense of ‘remains’, ‘does not leave’).

The fourth strophe lists three names of accents and two names of diacritical signs: Guéris ‘banished’, ‘expelled’; Revi’a’ – Aramaic from רבי ‘couching’ (צדיב); and Yetiv – Aramaic from יטיב ‘settled down’; Rafe – ‘weak’; and Mapic be-He, from the Aramaic מִפְּכָא meaning ‘to utter’ the sound of the consonant ע. The Revi’at and the Yetiv represent Israel’s past position, as the Revi’at (couching) alludes to Judah, a lion’s whelp (as Jacob blesses his son: ‘Ju’dah is a lion’s whelp [...] he couched as a lion’ [Gen. 49:9]), and the Yetiv symbolizes the people of Israel in their promised land. Thus the day of destruction is the day Judah is ‘banished’ (רָשָׁי) from its land, and once banished it is weak (רֶפֶם) and powerless. אtnah מפְּכָא וּמשָׁמֵי corresponds to the ‘act of

\(^{15}\) Originally the name of this accent is Aramaic: פּוּק = ‘whip’.

\(^{16}\) In ancient sources only פּוּק preceding מך נאות is called ‘תאַנָה», see DOTAN 1967, p. 155, 335 note 25.
sighing' as the ['ha, ha'] sound of the sigh resembles the sound of the consonant נַחַר.

The names of accents in the fifth strophe symbolize the destruction of the First and Second Temples: Tre-Ta'min – the Sephardi name for the rare conjunctive נַמֶּשׁ נַמֶּשׁ (Double Merja) – from נַמֶּשׁ, means 'two reasons' for the prolonged suffering; Cadma from קֹדֶם, is the Sephardi name for the disjunctive נַמֶּשׁ, and similarly Tre-Cadma is נַמֶּשׁ which appears twice in penultimate words 17 – both mean 'since then', since the destruction; Azla – Aramaic from עֲזֵל, 'going on', represents the 'walking' to exile, and may also indicate the people's 'helplessness' (עֲזֵל) in the face of disaster; and the rare disjunctive Carne-Para (cow-horns) can be understood as representing the enemy and its evil, harmful force. In this strophe the poet magnifies the sense of pain and suffering by using symbols that incorporate a double element: נַמֶּשׁ נַמֶּשׁ, נַמֶּשׁ נַמֶּשׁ, and נַמֶּשׁ נַמֶּשׁ.

The sixth strophe deals with Pasee – Aramaic from פַּסֵה 'cutting', which is used here in the judicial meaning of 'sentence', 'decree'; Two Gerasin – equivalent to the Ashkenazi זָרָא זָרָא (Great Teliša) – from יָרָא 'uproot'; and Shalšelet 'chain' in the sense of 'ancestry', 'dynasty'. The poet joins these signs together to create a metaphor for the expatriates, where the Two Gerasin represent two cases of banishment, two exiles, 'sentenced' (פסה) by the Lord: the first exile forced upon נבֶּר נבֶּר (Jacob's sons, the tribes of Israel), and the second on those who returned from Babylon (살שהל שטשל). 18

The seventh strophe includes four sign names: Ga'ya from גֶּאַה 'to cry aloud'; the disjunctive Tališa, equivalent to the Ashkenazi תָּלִיָּהוּ (Great Teliša) – from תָּלִיָּהוּ 'uprooting'; once again Yetiv; and Tirsa – the Sephardi name for תַּרְסָא תַּרְסָא (Little Teliša) – from the root רָזָה רָזָה, 'to want' and 'to please'. Tirsa may also be interpreted here (as in Songs of Songs) as the 'Lord's beloved': «Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tir'za» [6:4]. Thus the poet's soul, like the people of Israel – compared to Tirsa – has been 'uprooted' (תלשה) from its place, from the land of Israel, and could not find a place to 'settle in' (תָּלֶה); it therefore 'cries' (נַמֶּשׁ). Two other interpretations of Yetiv Tališa deal with Israel's inability to find a suitable place where it would be

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17 The name נַמֶּשׁ does not appear in this list.
18 As they are listed in Esr. 8.
‘wanted’ (רצוי), and with the fact that it is not yet time to ‘please’ (רשות) Israel with return to its land.

In the eighth strophe Monsoñego mentions four names: Šīva for שָׁבָא (written in this list with בִּימְי rather than בִּימ),19 Šibolet, which appears in the Sephardi list to mark the difference between מְי and מְי, and Sof-Pasuc, another name for ‘Silluc’. In this last strophe the poet uses the names of the signs to express his hope for salvation. The Lord is asked to gather his people (שם עת כן), analogous to the current of the river (or the scattered seeds from an ear of corn), and ‘lead them back’ (شبנה) with ‘upright’ and proud bearing (כף עם) to their land. Sof-Pasuc suggests the ‘end’ of exile.

The poet closes a circle through the accents in the poem. The Great Pazer and the Šofar Mehupaj, representing the sorrow and grief of exile (in the first and second strophes), are confronted at the end20 with Great Zaquef as well as with the expression ‘Great Šofar’ (following Isaiah’s prophecy: ‚היוםيمنיהוהضحאustriaיודע’ [Is. 27:13] ‘the great trumpet shall be blown’) to symbolize future salvation.

Epigraph: o>Dvn y>i yr±>piTiD i^n) >D O^DVOXD tor) u’x wb yo yxt)n o> Rhyme Scheme: a/b/a/b // c/d/c/d/c/d/d/b; Acrostic: bNDi>D>DDN

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We looked ... for the time of health, and behold trouble'. • 11 «וְלָעַבְתָּם בָּעָלְתָּם» Ps. 139:24 - 'any wicked way in me'. • 13 «וְהַרְוָא אֲלֵהָם» Is. 5:29 - 'Their roaring shall be like a lion'. • 14 «וּבָא אָזְרָה כְּכַלָּה» Job 10:22 - 'A land of darkness'. • 15 «וְלָא כְּלָה» Dt. 29:17 (18) - gall and wormwood. • 20 «וַיַּתְנוּ הָאֲרוֹן הָאֵשל הָיָה» Is. 5:30 - 'and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof'. • 21 «וַיִּקְדְּרֶנָהּ» Is. 28:16 - 'Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark'. • 22 «וַיִּתְוַלַלְתָּם יַהֲדוּתָם» Gen. 15:17 - 'and it was dark'. • 23 «וַיִּקְדְּרֶנָהּ הָאֲרוֹן הָאֵשל הָיָה» Gen. 15:17 - 'and it was dark'. • 24 «וַיִּתְוַלַלְתָּם יַהֲדוּתָם» Ex. 10:2 - «and the declaration of the greatness of Mor'de-cai».

- bee and scorpion, an appellation for Babylon and Rome, the two nations responsible for Israel's destruction and exile. • 23 «רָמַשׁוּ קְרָתָה הַיָּדִים» Dt. 33:4 - 'the inheritance of the congregation of Ja'cob'. • 24 «הַרְוָא אֲלֵהָם מִדְּנָרָה» Ex. 10:2 - «and the declaration of the greatness of Mor'de-cai».

- 25 «וַיִּמְכֶּרֶנָהּ שֵׁסָף שֵׁסָף» Is. 28:16 - «a precious ... stone».

- 26 «וַיִּקְדְּרֶנָהּ הָאֲרוֹן הָאֵשל הָיָה» Is. 28:16 - «a precious ... stone».

- 27 «וַיִּתְוַלַלְתָּם יַהֲדוּתָם» Ex. 24:25 - «the joy of their glory».

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So far reference has been made about literal and contextual meaning of the sign names in Monsoñego’s Cant. 6:2. It would be interesting to see how these names of signs are used in the aforementioned poems. The following glossary provides an overview of various contextual meanings of signs in all four poems and demonstrates the relative flexibility of their interpretation on the one hand, and their shared fixed corpus of symbols on the other. Note the relative poetic freedom of interpretation in Monsoñego’s elegy when read in relation to the other three poems (see items 21, 26, 31, 32 and others in the glossary below).

The glossary includes the name of the sign, its literal meaning (and comments) and the contextual meaning it assumes in each of the four poems:

1. קיון = Q = אַוָּי = אֲדַו = א = שַׁקֵּר בָּשָׁפֶר דָּוִד

1. קיון from pšm, «to throw», «scatter»; referring to the hand movement or to the melody.

- 28 nii-in cf. «וַיְהִי הִגְדֹּל לַחֲדֹתֶךָ», «Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tir’zah, comely as Je-ru’sa-lem». • 30 nii-in cf. «וַיִּקָּחֶנָּההּ נַרִיָּה», «They will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her Sabbaths». • 31 nii-in cf. «וַיִּקֶּחֶנָּההּ נַרִיָּה», «why sleepst Thou, O Lord». • 32 nii-in cf. «וַיִּקָּחֶנָּהּ נַרִיָּה», «the Lord shall beat off from the channel of the river unto the stream ..., and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye the children of Is’ra-el». • 35 nii-in cf. «וַיִּקָּחֶנָּהּ נַרִיָּה», «the great trumpet shall be blown». • 36 nii-in cf. «וַיִּקֶּחֶנָּהּ נַרִיָּה», «Thy right hand upholdeth me».

For the names of accents, see DOTAN 1971, cols. 1453-1456; WICKES 1887, pp. 15-28. For the names of other signs, see DOTAN 1971, cols. 1447-1453.

22 See p. 350.
Q: to shoot arrows; P: to stone and to spit (as acts of humiliation and attack); V: to spit; A: - to throw; - to be thrown out (the people of Israel are thrown out of their country); - king.

2. שפר: from בקקטיל, «binder»; referring to the duty of the sign.
Q: surrounding; P: defending walls; V: blockade, siege; A: symbolizes the annihilation of Israel’s independent existence; - to knock down, strike, beat up; - blockade, siege.

3. סֵפָר = «trumpet», the Sephardi name for שפר = ש פר זמר חמד; referring to the form of the sign.
Q: a symbol of beauty (of Israel), שפר זמר – the beauty vanishes; P: the messiah’s trumpet; V: a trumpet that lost its beauty; A: - a symbol of Israel; - the beauty vanishes.

4. מֶשְמָה: Aramaic: «cluster» (of grapes); referring to the form of the sign.
Q: an allusion to the chosen people = Israel; P: an allusion to the messiah... V: an allusion to the messiah... A: an allusion to the messiah...

5. כָּרְחֵם: from כָּרְחֵם, to scatter; an allusion to Israel’s displacement; P: from כָּרְחֵם, to scatter... V: from כָּרְחֵם, to scatter... A: from כָּרְחֵם, to scatter...

6. שְׁלוֹשׁ מִשְׁמֶר: «a day old moon» (new moon); referring to the form of the sign.
Q: new moon; P: an allusion to the messiah; V: new moon; A: Israel is compared to a new moon – the symbol of rebirth and fertility.

7. כֶּלֶד זֵיתְנוֹ: «the horns of a cow»; referring to the ancient form of the sign.
Q: כֶּלֶד זֵיתְנוֹ = an allusion to beauty, זֵיתְנוֹ = my beauty, זֵיתְנוֹ = a cow; P: a cow, an allusion to the people of Israel in the Diaspora; V: resemblance in the act of falling, where the descending moon beans correspond to a cow whose horns were removed; A: an allusion to the enemy and its harmful force.

8. נָבִא: from נָבִי, «to low», «cry aloud»; referring to the way of the performance.
Q: lowing; P: lowing, crying aloud; V: a misleading call (line 15); crying aloud (line 42); A: crying aloud.

9. נִנְחַת: from נִנָח, «to pluck out»; might refer to the hand movement. Q: to be uprooted from the Land of Israel; P: the uprooted people; V: to pluck (hair); A: to be uprooted as an emotional displacement.

10. אָשָר: Aramaic: לְהָעָת, «to go on»; perhaps because it often occurs before וָהָר.
Q: aspectual verb: becoming; P: to pass away, cease; V: aspectual verb: becoming; A: – to be exiled; – from Hebrew: לְהָעָת, weakness helplessness, impotence (עָעָתָה).

11. נַשְמָה: from נַשְמַה, «expulsor»; referring to the duty of the sign. Q: to expel the enemy; P: banishment; V: to banish, exiling the people of Israel; A: to be cast away, banished, the people of Israel were exiled.

12. גֶּשֶם: Aramaic: «to cut»; referring to the duty of the sign. Q: to sentence, decree; P: from Heb. גֶּשֶם: to stop, cease; V: from Heb. גֶּשֶם: to stop, cease; A: to sentence, decree.

Q: to lie down like a lion – a symbol of the enemy; P: to crouch, stay in the Diaspora; V: to lie down like a lion – a symbol of the enemy; A: to lie down peacefully like a lion – a symbol of Israel.

14. יִמְסַרֵה: the Sephardi name for מִסְמַר; referring to the form of the sign. Q: to convert the beauty (of the enemy) into ugliness; P: מִסְמַר = trumpet, מִסְמַר = to convert in the sense of «changed fate»; V: מִסְמַר = a symbol of beauty, מִסְמַר מִסְמַר = Israel’s beauty turns ugly once it becomes the property of the enemy; A: a symbol of disruption and disorder in Israel’s course of life.

15. מַהֲגוֹרָה: from מַהֲגוֹר, «before»; the Sephardi name for מַהֲגוֹרָה (not equal to the Ashkenazi מַהֲגוֹרָה = מַהֲגוֹרָה, see 10). Q: before, before the destruction of the temple; P: before, the people of Israel followed the «Mizvot» before all other nations; V: before, the
people of Israel followed the «Mizvot» before all other nations; A: since then, since the destruction.

16. מִיְּמָה: the Sephardi name for מִיְּמָה which comes twice in penultimate words. see מִיְּמָה (15).
V: twice earlier, the people of Israel followed the «Mizvot» long before other nations; A: like מִיְּמָה (see 15), with specific reference to the destruction of the first and second temples.

17/18 יִזְכַּר יִזְכַּר from יִזְכַּר, «erect», «upright»; referring to the hand movement or to the form of the sign.
Q: יִזְכַּר is oppressive guard; everyone, with no exception; P: יִזְכַּר: humiliation; V: יִזְכַּר: upright, salvation; A: יִזְכַּר: upright, salvation; only: to be proud.

19. שְׁלֵשָׁה: «chain»; referring to the form of the sign or of the melody.
Q: a chain, noose, tied tight around the neck (for killing); P: a chain, an allusion to the anger of the Lord; V: ancestry, genealogy, dynasty; A: ancestry, genealogy, dynasty.

20. הַנּוֹךְ הַנּוֹךְ: the Sephardi name for הַנּוֹךְ (see הַנּוֹךְ, 11).
Q: reference to the two exiles; P: reference to the two exiles; V: in contrast to הַנּוֹךְ (see 11), to drive the enemy out with magnified efficacy (double portion); A: like הַנּוֹךְ (see 11), with specific reference to the two exiles.

Q: high status, high position; P: high status, high position; V: extremely severe (punishment); A: high status, high position.

22. מַעַרִיך: Aramaic: מַעַרִיך = «broken»; referring to the melody.
Q: destruction of Israel’s beauty; P: collapse; A: collapse.
24. מָאָרֶץ: from מָארֶץ, «prolonging»; the Sephardi name for מָאָרֶץ.
Q: prolonged suffering; P: prolonged suffering; V: prolonged suffering; A: prolonged suffering.

25. מַסִּפְּרָה: from מַסִּפְּרָה, «burden», «trouble»; the Sephardi name for מַסִּפְּרָה.
Q: hard work, burden, trouble of exile; P: hard work, burden, trouble of exile; V: hard work, burden, trouble of exile; A: burden, trouble of exile.

26. מַרְאַר: from מַרְאַר, «to rest»; referring to the duty of the sign.
Q: to rest peacefully; P: rest and tranquility; V: rest, pause; A: to overstay; to sigh.

27. מַרְעָה: from מַרְעָה, «weak»; diacritical sign; referring to way of performance.
Q: feeble, powerless; P: emotional weakness; V: feeble, powerless; A: feeble, powerless.

P: hard work, burden, trouble of exile.

29. מֶלֶת: Aramaic: (בֶּלֶת = בֶּלֶת), «settled down»; referring to melody or duty (pause).
P: to sit, reference to the enemy; V: from Hebrew: בֶּלֶת, bring back the people of Israel; A: from בֶּלֶת, allusion to Israel's safe, assured dwelling on its land (line 15); from Hebrew: בֶּלֶת, to return, bring back (line 28).

30. מַלְפִּיא: from מַלְפִּיא, «wanted», «to please»; the Sephardi name for מַלְפִּיא.
P: a symbol of Israel; V: to want, to please; A: a symbol of Israel.

31. מַלְפִּיא: mnemonic device for בֶּלֶת.
P: an allusion to the fall of the enemy: it will dry like an ear-of-corn and be washed down the river; V: an ear-of-corn, reference to the enemy; A: an allusion to Israel's dispersed state which resembles a channel of a river, or seeds scattered from an ear-of-corn.

32. מַלְפִּיא: Aramaic: פְּעֹמָה, to utter the ה sound; diacritical sign; referring to the performance.
33. מפי: the punctuation sign מפי; borrowed from the Syriac accentuation system; שewaya = divisional accent.

34. שבד: «end of verse»; another name for פס.

V: to put an end, say enough; A: symbol of the end of exile.

Monsoñego uses almost all the names of the signs appearing on the Zarca List (except for Dagues and Zaquef Caton), yet he changes their order. This is not the case in the three other poems mentioned above (by Fradji Shawat, Shmu’el Elbaz and Amram Bar-Yehuda Elbaz), in these three poems the order of the list is strictly followed.

The following table illustrates this point:

The Order of Sign Names in the Sephardi Zarca List & Poems

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>קד機會ותייחה</th>
<th>פס</th>
<th>חותייחה ייחadh</th>
<th>Zarca List</th>
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<tr>
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</table>

23 With few exceptions only.
According to Zafrani 1984 (p. 81) the connection between Jewish thought and poetry has two representations, and it is therefore possible to distinguish between poetry based on Jewish tradition in general, and poetry based on one specific traditional subject. The latter category (according to Zafrani) is purely pedagogical and is used predominantly as a mnemonic device. Thus, the four poems discussed in this paper: «n)DKn npm ^D >I», «'>n>n>p ^NbD» and «>nD!7>n n*np» as well as «qpD >D >!7V nnn» belong to the second category, for they all focus on the specific subject of biblical accentuation.

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24 In the Zarca List מסע is always combined with שעון, שעון, to indicate the location of שעון: before or after the מסע.

25 כפר ירלט光纤 is a sixteenth century reference to the Sephardi Zarca List. I am unfamiliar with any earlier texts referring to this list; however, it is important to mention that considerable parts of this list can be found in Sefer ha-Zohar (tiquinim).
However, as already mentioned, the first three poems follow the Zarca List almost accurately, and therefore clearly illustrate their didactic goal – «form» is an important element in these poems, and it seems as if their purpose is to help memorize the Zarca List. 26 As for «אמרא עלי כ נקף», the epigraph does indeed suggest a reference to the accentuation system «תַּנְשֵׁשׁ נִצְּאוּ מִפָּשְׁמוֹ», and the opening sentence «וַיִּשָּׂא מָכָה מָשָּׁר הַזְּכָרֵת סֵלֶלָה», as well as the use of the «Geršayim» in the sign names are an explicit reference to the Zarca List. Yet, the poetic freedom concerning the order of their appearance (and to a certain extent their contextual interpretation) creates a more balanced poem in terms of the relationship between «form» and «content», a poem in which the names of accents and diacritical signs serve as a mnemonic device, as well as an illustration of the people’s agony and hope for salvation.

26 Rabbi Ja’acov Ben-Me’ir (Rabenu Tam) specifically claims to have written אתכלמה (an essay) for accentuation rules according to the «Massora» (אתכלמה), in this case the poem deals with biblical accentuation, and these signs are its subject: ואתכלמה על צורה / על יד שופר / עלים עלם / עלים עלם / עלים עלם / עלים עלם / עלים עלם / עלים עלם (see WEINFELD 1972).
Appendix 27

28 by Fradji Shawat

Since I have not seen the manuscripts, the songs are quoted from the sources mentioned below (without the punctuation). The names of the signs are written here in a different font.

Quoted from HAZAN 1995, pp. 220-222.
Sef 62:2 (2002) NAMES OF ACCENTS AND DIACRITICAL PUNCTUATION SIGNS IN POEMS... 365

Knědr hakholim

Kodar hacker / Le amma hetzom uli kikar
Beyn amatim / Mesho shevur hara Zoguko
Mekh kabbatu / Shevur hakik adol kemak
Noch matan / Leim shemot hashokha
Cem zametim / Roi moyi lagn hallot hakuk
Avar hara mat im / Vey kom hetzemim
Bemef koiron / Culef leion
Beyt melon / Shef pire imit
Tefehir idun / Tsemae befehida

10 Ani hayavThuha / Meulah ubi melo / Anicel halah
Beydorid galah / Assan historia melsho / Sefia melki halah
Vim la tza / Hich lemelsho hazah halalah
Bem mel chizz / Pesch halah ben chana
Honge fitzeh / Heng mel zeluk halah
Beyt melsho / Rara hineh tam
Yif meleha / Shef melk hunen roteh
Halal kedem shekna / Ari bimokum unne
Kodar beyt leneh / Nor shehah wonne
Gush baryon / Etzadot memn man / Yishal wonne

20 Khaf byad / Ktest vodi beym koreh
Kol vodi beym shemti / Shelomoth betzat roshurah
Yarusha mishil / Belet vodi bishereh
Shevun rosh / Hiri shemei lemol halah
Kesel cheh / Eishat doro boshorah
Yik nezir / Yishe yiti rov neshonah

25 Yis hayam meyique / Shirah bevedot mrk
Honek balid hiti sant / Alcell mishk commandeen
Nor kih aira li meku ren / Hiri mishk bera
Kesh eri ata smot / Nor mishk badeen
Nor meyer li / Tiqiv symek 30

Quote from SHOSHANNA 1979, pp. 322-324.

perhaps it is the poet’s way of alluding to iteneh.
רב כח תקיפה

25 יוצק חוחק האמה על משלוח
26 והבדל חוחק זה מה אחר
27 רבים הם בין חוחק שבף
28 וסמלים ליווי תוכנה
29 ננופים קדשים ורכים פوسائل
30شروוא לארɜ רכז על איש ממלאה
31לאויבי תרגש מהר ביל הינו

5 שאגי הנה על מסגרת
32בראשה התפידי אדם—he שופר
33瑁 חוחק ידלጣ
34בת החותם שבאן העניזוןديل
35מָקְרֶד שמעני כל חומם
36מלך אד דוד בי גוים עים
37ועיל קמיס לדידי למחים
38אני מריחים עלבי שלע
39inand ימי החשש ארגיoli
40כל חוכ מירון תפלתiculo
41רשא ואיבד תמסיט תכובאן לא עבר
42ויל חוחק מפקב בשחתות לכל
43אותו החיה בכל פנימי
44אנחת בשיבת מכונים מ払い
45לא פסייק פס תמצוי ויו מכונים
46גוהנה הבה יראיה עלרה
47אלא ולאי לאלה עלוי או אדיד
48שאר טמכ אדום על פניו פפי
49יכננת טמכ אדום רכז לכל גוים
50בשומינת המשנה גוזו מஓי המילה

31 Quoted from Adary 1997, pp. 207-209.
32 Perhaps here comes as a pun for (since should be located between ובר and מפרים).
33 comes as a pun for (since should be located between רא and יהו).
REFERENCES


SHOSHANNA 1983: Ch. R. SHOSHANNA, העדות לשירה (Jerusalem 1983) [in Hebrew].


ZAFRANI 1984: H. ZAFRANI, Poésie Juive au Maroc (Jérusalem 1984) [in Hebrew].

RESUMEN

En varias ediciones impresas sefardíes del Pentateuco hay una lista de treinta y cuatro nombres de acentos y de signos diacríticos de puntuación. Esta lista se denomina la Lista de Zarca, por el nombre del primer acento que se menciona. He hallado cuatro poemas basados en esta lista: >n>ii>p îN^û, escrito por el poeta tunecino Fradji Shawat (siglo XVI); HDNH np

o >i, escrito por el poeta marroquí Shumu’el Elbaz (siglo XIX); >TiDb>n mip, probablemente escrito por el poeta marroquí Amram Bar-Yehuda Ezbaz (siglo XIX); y np) o ^l^v nnN, cuyo autor es el poeta marroquí Rafael Aaron Monsoñego (siglo XIX). En los cuatro poemas se atribuyen significados literarios y figurados a los nombres de los signos.

Los tres primeros poemas siguen casi exactamente la Lista de Zarca, y en ellos la «forma» es un elemento importante, ya que parece ser que su propósito es ayudar a memorizar la Lista. Respecto a ^p3 o >t7V nriN, la libertad poética que caracteriza el orden de los nombres de los signos (y, en cierta medida, la interpretación contextual) se traduce en un poema más equilibrado en cuanto a la relación entre «forma» y «contenido».

PALABRAS CLAVE: Lista de Zarca, Monsoñego, poetas marroquíes, acentos, signos diacríticos, puntuación.

SUMMARY

In several Sephardi printed editions of the Pentateuch one can find a list of thirty-four names of accents and diacritical punctuation signs. This list is called the Zarca List, named after its opening accent. I have come across four poems based on this list: >n>ii>p îN^û, written by the Tunisian poet Fradji Shawat (sixteenth century); HDNH np

o >i, written by the Moroccan poet Shimu’el Elbaz (nineteenth century); >TiDb>n mip, probably written by the Moroccan poet Amram Bar-Yehuda Ezbaz (nineteenth century); and ^p3 o >t7V nriN, written by the Moroccan poet Rafael Aaron Monsoñego (nineteenth century). In all four poems both literal and figurative meanings may be ascribed to the names of the signs.

The first three poems follow the Zarca List almost accurately; «form» is an important element in these poems, and it seems as if their purpose is to help memorize the Zarca List. As for ^p3 o >t7V nriN, the poetic freedom concerning the order of the sign names (and to a certain extent their contextual interpretation) creates a more balanced poem in terms of relationship between «form» and «content».

KEYWORDS: Zarqa List, Monsonyego, Moroccan poets, accents, diacritical signs, punctuation.