

## THE DEPENDENCE OF RABBI DAVID KIMHI (RADAK) ON RASHI IN HIS QUOTATION OF MIDRASHIC TRADITIONS

NAOMI GRUNHAUS, Yeshiva University

### ABSTRACT

*This article demonstrates that the 13th-century exegete Rabbi David Kimhi (Radak) relied on Rashi as a source for midrashic traditions, in addition to his known use of Rashi as a resource for exegetical interpretations. This reliance shows that Radak viewed Rashi as an authoritative source for midrashic material and formulations. Furthermore, Radak's use of Rashi as a source reveals Rashi's influence on Radak's thought. It suggests that Radak learned the exegetical and pedagogical value of the quotation of rabbinic material from Rashi. Radak's dependence on Rashi can in turn be applied broadly to suggest that Radak did not check all original sources, but rather relied at times on his own memory in conjunction with Rashi's record of certain aggadic interpretations.*

*Radak's quotation of midrashic material from Rashi demonstrates the extent of the availability of Rashi's commentaries on the Prophets and Hagiographa in Radak's environment. While Rashi's commentary on the Pentateuch was widely known, the commentaries on other biblical books were less popular. Specific instances of Radak's use of Rashi as a source for midrashic traditions are investigated and offered as evidence of heavier use by Radak of Rashi's commentaries than has previously been documented.*

This paper analyzes the dependence of Rabbi David Kimhi (Radak), an important exegete of early 13th-century Provence, on Rashi, of 11th-century France, as a source for midrashic interpretations. Earlier scholars have not noted this reliance sufficiently.<sup>1</sup> Radak's dependence on Rashi in the quotation of midrashic material can be broadly applied to suggest that Radak did not check all the original sources, but relied at times on his memory in conjunction

---

<sup>1</sup>H. Cohen, ed., *The Commentary of Rabbi David Kimhi on Hosea* (New York, 1929), p. xxxii notes Radak's use of Rashi in passing but does not attempt an analysis or description of the data. L. Finkelstein, ed., *The Commentary of David Kimhi on Isaiah* (New York, 1926), p. xxxii cites two examples from Radak's commentary on Isaiah. Finkelstein states that a specific midrashic wording is found exclusively in the commentaries of Rashi and Radak on Isa 17:1(2), but the same phraseology is in fact found twice in Yalqut Shim'oni (1.764 and 2.218).

with Rashi's record of rabbinic interpretations. Rashi's role as a repository for midrashic traditions underscores the difficulty of assessing the exact makeup of Radak's library of rabbinic texts.

Scholars have generally assumed that Radak drew on Rashi's commentary for his peshat interpretations.<sup>2</sup> Radak's use of Rashi as a resource for peshat traditions widens his reliance on Rashi beyond this general dependence. Evidently, Radak viewed Rashi as an authoritative source for midrashic material and formulations, in addition to his use of Rashi as a basis for comparative exegesis. Perhaps this was the prevalent view of Rashi and his commentary in Radak's milieu.

Furthermore, Radak's use of Rashi as a source for midrashic material reveals Rashi's influence on Radak's method. It supports the hypothesis that Radak learned the exegetical and pedagogical value of quoting rabbinic material from Rashi. Rashi quotes fewer rabbinic traditions in his commentaries on the Prophets than he does in his commentary on the Pentateuch.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps Radak, who wrote mostly on the Prophets,<sup>4</sup> chose to mention so many rabbinic traditions because there was no widely available repository for them in commentary form. Indeed, perhaps the popularity enjoyed by Radak's commentaries was comparable to the popularity of Rashi's commentary on the Pentateuch<sup>5</sup> because of Radak's frequent quotation of rabbinic literature.

---

<sup>2</sup> See below, nn. 33, 36, 39.

<sup>3</sup> A. Marx, "The Life and Work of Rashi," in *Rashi Anniversary Volume, Texts and Studies*, vol. 1 (New York, 1941), p. 20.

<sup>4</sup> F. Talmage, *David Kimhi: The Man and the Commentaries* (Cambridge, 1975), p. 58. With the aim of publishing a complete edition of Radak's Torah commentary, M. Kamelhar collected Radak's comments on the latter four books of the Pentateuch in Radak's other writings and published these with his commentary on Genesis (Jerusalem, 1975). Radak's commentaries on Psalms and Chronicles are also extant. The commentary on Proverbs mistakenly attributed to Radak is discussed below in n. 35.

<sup>5</sup> L. Finkelstein, *The Commentary of David Kimhi on Isaiah*, p. xxi. Both Rashi's commentary on the Pentateuch and Radak's commentaries on the Psalms and Prophets were among the first commentaries to be printed at the start of Hebrew printing. See H. C. Zafran, "Bible Editions, Bible Study and the Early History of Hebrew Printing," *Eretz Israel* 16 (1982) 247\*. Zafran's table shows that Radak's commentaries on the Prophets were published (1485/6) quite some time before Rashi's (in *Miqrao't Gedolot* editions—1517 and 1525). The large number of manuscripts of both exegetes' commentaries on the Prophets as compared to those of other commentators is proof of their

Radak's dependence on Rashi illuminates another important issue. Radak sometimes records a rabbinic interpretation and then categorizes that interpretation as "remote." His reason for mentioning the rabbinic interpretations in these cases is unclear, as he considers them remote. A plausible explanation in at least some of these cases is that Radak was following Rashi, who had already stated the rabbinic interpretation of the passage. Since Radak expected that it would be familiar to his audience, he felt compelled to wrestle with the particular rabbinic interpretation.<sup>6</sup>

In certain cases, no definite source can be located in extant rabbinic literature for quotations of aggadic interpretations or certain formulations in Radak's work, but the same aggadic formulations are found in Rashi's commentaries. For example, Radak paraphrases the midrashic tradition known from GenR 60.3 and other sources that Jephthah and Phinehas were punished because they neglected to annul Jephthah's vow, resulting in the death of his daughter. The midrashic tradition states that Jephthah's limbs fell off one by one as a punishment, which is suggested by the biblical text: "He was buried in the cities of Gilead" (Judg 12:7). As each limb fell off, it was buried, hence the burial in multiple cities.

The specific formulation that Jephthah was plagued by boils (שחין) is stated by Rashi and repeated by Radak, but is not found in other rabbinic sources. While it is possible that both exegetes based their remarks on a rabbinic source that is no longer extant, the absence of any record of another source and the distinct similarity between the two formulations leads to the greater likelihood that Radak relied on Rashi in his quotation of this midrashic tradition.<sup>7</sup>

---

popularity. A case in point is the number of manuscripts of both commentaries to Ezekiel. J. Penkower, "Perush Rashi le-Sefer Yehezqel" (in press) establishes that the number of manuscripts of Rashi's commentary on Ezekiel (59/60) is roughly double the number of manuscripts of Radak's commentary on it (32). By comparison, the number of manuscripts of the other commentaries published in the Ha-Keter edition of the book of Ezekiel (Ramat Gan, 2000) ranges from one or two to seven and ten. I thank Professor Penkower for sharing with me his knowledge and conclusions on this subject, and for his critique of certain formulations in the paper.

<sup>6</sup> E.g., Josh 24:25, s.v. שכם, Josh 3:10, s.v. בזאת.

<sup>7</sup> L. Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews* (New York, 1961) does not record any mention of boils, nor is there any mention in the standard commentaries to Genesis Rabbah.

Given Rashi's dependence on rabbinic literature,<sup>8</sup> it is conceivable that Rashi did not speculate that Jephthah was plagued with boils, but rather that he came across this formulation in his study of aggadic literature. Radak in turn did not see those original aggadic traditions but rather relied on Rashi's commentary as a rabbinic source. Alternatively, Radak may have had access to the same rabbinic text as Rashi with its unique interpretation but which is no longer extant.<sup>9</sup>

To support the hypothesis that Rashi and Radak did not invent the notion that boils plagued Jephthah and others like it, S. Lieberman's line of reasoning regarding Christian debaters can be employed. Lieberman maintains that it is unlikely that Christians invented rabbinic statements for use in polemics because a consultation of the original sources would easily disprove them.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, Rashi or Radak would not invent midrashic formulations that could be questioned by checking the original rabbinic sources.<sup>11</sup>

Another case in which Radak quotes an aggadic interpretation that is not found in modern texts but is found in Rashi's commentary is

---

H. Albeck, in *Bereschit Rabba*, ed. J. Theodor and H. Albeck (Jerusalem, 1965), ad loc., based on Preuss' *Biblische Talmudische Medizin*, suggests that the dropping of limbs is an acute form of boils. See F. Rosner, *Medicine in the Bible and the Talmud* (New York, 1977), p. 33 for a synopsis of Preuss' findings. Radak's wording in his commentary on Judg 12:7 ("He was smitten with severe boils and he was dropping off his limbs limb by limb") is slightly different from Rashi's language on Judg 11:39 ("He was smitten with boils and the dropping of his limbs limb by limb"), but the relationship between the two passages is clear.

<sup>8</sup> See A. Berliner, רשי"י על התורה (Frankfurt, 1905), p. viii and nn. 15 and 19 below.

<sup>9</sup> This possibility will be considered more carefully below in the discussion of the commentary on Isa 8:8. That rabbinic literature has undergone modification through the centuries is unquestionable. See I. M. Ta-Shema, רבי זרחיה הלוי בעל המאור ובני חנוך (Jerusalem, 1992), p. 119, n. 42; I. Twersky, *Rabad of Posquieres* (Cambridge, 1962), pp. 214, n. 114; 215; 242-243; S. Lieberman, שקיעין: מדרשי תימן (Jerusalem, 1970), 2:4-6. Lieberman begins his book with the statement that "Many are the halakhot and aggadot that have been lost from us . . ." (1:5).

<sup>10</sup> Lieberman, שקיעין, pp. 52-53.

<sup>11</sup> Further proof can be mustered from the fact that charges of fabrication are nowhere leveled against the exegetes. Concerning some of the omissions in the rabbinic corpus, Lieberman suggests that perhaps Jews changed Jewish copies of rabbinic literature because some of the material in them was found to be objectionable (שקיעין, 64, 69). He theorizes that accusations by Jews of fabrication by Christians increased over time because the material quoted by later Christians was no longer included in the rabbinic books used by Jews.

Isa 16:13.<sup>12</sup> The exegetical question addressed by both commentators is the moment when God first decided to punish Moab. To the text's "since then," Rashi comments: "since the time that Balak hired Balaam to curse you." Radak recognizes the same moment as the time referred to in the verse. Such a rabbinic statement, however, cannot be located in extant sources.<sup>13</sup>

In his comment on Isa 16:13, Radak notes that this interpretation derives from the midrashic corpus, though Rashi does not. If Radak copied the interpretation from Rashi's commentary, as the recurrence of this phenomenon implies, then it was Radak who established that Rashi's source was the midrashic corpus.<sup>14</sup> This demonstrates Radak's awareness of the nature of the composition of Rashi's remarks. His

<sup>12</sup> Rashi is also the only known source for the aggadic statement that a deer wandering near the end of the cave through which Zedekiah escaped from Jerusalem led the Babylonians to discover him. Radak restates this aggadic tradition in 2 Kgs 25:4, s.v. הערבה וילך דרך הערבה. Y. Shor, "מקור חכמה" in ed. Y. L. Maimon, ספר רש"י (Jerusalem, 1955/6), pp. 394–476 is unable to locate this and many of the other quotations from Rashi's work mentioned in this paper in extant rabbinic sources. The untraceability of the sources of Rashi's quotations mentioned in this paper is also noted by L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 4:293; 6:382, n. 5; M. L. Katzenellenbogen, ed., יהושע שופטים עם פירושי רש"י (Jerusalem, 1987), p. 29, n. 1; idem, עם שמואל עם פירושי רש"י (Jerusalem, 1995), pp. 75, n. 28; 185, n. 18; 225, n. 6.

<sup>13</sup> I. Maarsen, ed., פירוש רש"י על ניד, (Jerusalem, 1971–1972), v. 1, ad loc. is unable to find a source for this interpretation, and L. Finkelstein, ed., *The Commentary of David Kimhi on Isaiah*, ad loc. states that no source other than Rashi can be found for the aggadic statement. M. Cohen, ed., מקראות גדולות הכתר, ad loc., p. 120 suggests that a possible relationship exists with GenR 41.3, in which a connection is made between the sins of Moab and Isaiah's curse. However, the sin of not offering food to the Israelites in the desert is mentioned in GenR 41.3 in addition to the sin of hiring Balaam. Therefore, Genesis Rabbah is not a precise source for Rashi's comment. Joseph Kara glosses the biblical "since then" as "a long time ago." This formulation, too, differs from Rashi's and Radak's.

<sup>14</sup> The case of Josh 9:4 is similar to Isa 16:13. The biblical text describes the actions of the Gibeonites, stating that "they also acted dishonestly." The textual question dealt with by the exegetes is: to whom does the verse compare the Gibeonites? Radak thinks the comparison is to Simeon and Levi, just as Rashi does. Rashi does not identify the interpretation as rabbinic, and no such tradition exists in the rabbinic literature extant today. Nevertheless, Radak restates Rashi's interpretation with the same wording, but in the name of the Rabbis. As in the case of Isa 16:13, either both Rashi and Radak had a text no longer extant or Radak copied the interpretation from Rashi and assumed that Rashi must have seen it in a rabbinic text. See Y. Spiegel, "על כמה מקורות וענינים בפירושי רש"י לירמיהו ויחזקאל," in *Rashi: 'Iyunim Biyyisrat*, ed. Z. A. Steinfeld (Ramat Gan, 1993), p. 204, n. 89, who cites the example of Jer 39:8, assuming that Radak was correct in locating a rabbinic origin for Rashi's comment.

impression was that such a comment was necessarily derived from a midrashic source.<sup>15</sup> Radak read Rashi's commentary with the understanding that Rashi had based certain segments of it on rabbinic sources, while other portions consisted of Rashi's own interpretations. When he saw midrashic material in Rashi's commentary—even when Rashi had not labeled it as such—he assumed that Rashi had taken it from the midrashic corpus, not that he had invented it.<sup>16</sup>

In short, Rashi's commentary served Radak as a repository not only for interpretations but also for midrashic traditions.<sup>17</sup> In many cases, it is impossible to reconstruct the textual history of the midrashic passages. Nevertheless, an unmistakable and distinctive similarity between the two commentators' midrashic formulations suggests that

<sup>15</sup> Ibn Ezra, *שפה ברורה* (Jerusalem, 1966), p. 5 summarizes his view of Rashi's method: "He explained the Bible by way of *derash*, which he thinks is *peshat*, but there is no *peshat* in his book, only one in a thousand" (שפירש התנ"ך על דרך דרש, והוא חושב כי הוא) (על דרך פשט, ואין בספריו פשט רק אחד מני אלף). Whether or not Radak accepted Ibn Ezra's disdain for Rashi's *peshat* interpretations, he may well have recognized the wealth of rabbinic traditions contained in Rashi's commentaries. Radak appears to be interested in the makeup of Rashi's commentary. He records the identified sources of Rashi's interpretations in five of the cases in which he mentions Rashi by name. These are at I Sam 25:18, s.v. רחמש, in which an interpretation is quoted in the name of R. Kalonymus of Rome; Hos 3:2, s.v. רחומר שעורים, in which Hai Gaon is quoted; Amos 3:12, s.v. בפאת מטה, in which R. Menahem is quoted; Ezek 38:20, s.v. שמעתי, in which Radak notes that Rashi claimed to have "heard" the interpretation that he recorded; and Ezek 41:25, s.v. רעב עץ, where Radak repeats Rashi's claim to have found a certain interpretation in the Mishnah.

<sup>16</sup> Radak's dependence on Rashi as a midrashic source is even more interesting when one considers that Rashi did not have every rabbinic work available to him. For example, it is known that Rashi did not always have a complete copy of the Yerushalmi. See M. Higger, "The Yerushalmi Quotations in Rashi," in *Rashi Anniversary Volume*, pp. 191–192; L. Ginzberg, *פירושים וחיידושים בירושלמי* (New York, 1941), p. 110. Some passages attributed to the Yerushalmi by Rashi are not found in the Yerushalmi extant today. Just as Rashi's talmudic library was incomplete, so too his library of midrashic texts may have been lacking. For a complete study of the rabbinic works used by Rashi, see Y. L. ha-Cohen Maimon, "רבן של ישראל," *דיוקנותא* in *של מעלה* (Jerusalem, 1955/6), pp. 123–239.

<sup>17</sup> Other cases in which Radak quotes a rabbinic interpretation found in Rashi's commentary but not extant in the rabbinic corpus are at Isa 21:8, s.v. כל הלילה; Hos 9:8, s.v. משטמה; Josh 24:26, s.v. תחת האלה. In all three cases, Rashi does not attribute his interpretation to rabbinic sources, but Radak does. In the case of Josh 24:26, Radak derives the interpretation from rabbinic literature, even though Rashi had introduced the comment as "There are those who say" (*יש אומרים*).

Radak depended on Rashi's commentary as a source of midrashic information.<sup>18</sup>

Radak's assertion of the rabbinic character of certain statements made by Rashi is not surprising. Rashi often incorporates rabbinic interpretations in his remarks without identifying their character, while Radak usually prefaces rabbinic interpretations with an introduction that identifies them as rabbinic, such as "And in the midrash" (ובדרש) or "And in the words of our rabbis" (ובדברי רז"ל).<sup>19</sup> This type of explicit identification arises from Radak's profound awareness of the differences between the *peshat* and *derash* modes of interpretation, and his effort to clearly differentiate the two for his readers. This concern is also manifest in the much greater prevalence of twofold interpretations (פירושים כפולים) in Radak's works, compared with Rashi's exegesis.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> In his comments on 2 Kgs 23:17, s.v. מה הציין הלו, Radak copies a unique rabbinic tradition from Rashi. At 2 Kgs 22:8, s.v. ספר תורה מצאתי, Radak paraphrases Rashi's quotation of a unique rabbinic tradition, clarifying it slightly more than Rashi himself had done. Since Radak does not add new information, he most likely copied the aggadic statement from Rashi but spelled out its usage more clearly, as is his style.

<sup>19</sup> A. Berliner, רשיי על התורה, pp. viii, xviii, notes that Rashi does not document most of his rabbinic sources in his commentary on the Pentateuch. This problem is not as severe in Rashi's commentaries on the Prophets, as there are both less rabbinic quotations in the commentaries on the Prophets (see above, n. 3) and more identification of rabbinic sources. Penkower, "Perush Rashi," discusses the frequency of identification of Rashi's rabbinic sources in his commentary on Ezekiel. According to Penkower, in his commentary on Ezekiel Rashi identifies the source of his comments in approximately half of the cases that are based on rabbinic traditions. In cases in which Rashi does not identify his interpretations as rabbinic, the Ha-Keter edition does not note the rabbinic sources (this was corrected in Penkower's edition of Rashi's commentary on Ezekiel and will be corrected in future volumes of the Ha-Keter series). Since Radak usually identifies the rabbinic character of aggadic passages, the Ha-Keter edition attempts to locate and note the rabbinic sources of Radak's interpretations. Therefore, the identical aggadic interpretation would merit no reference in the edition when quoted by Rashi, but a reference would be provided when it is quoted by Radak.

<sup>20</sup> On Radak's distinction between the *peshat* and *derash* modes of interpretation, see M. Cohen, "The Qimhi Family," in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament*, ed. M. Saebo (Göttingen, 2000), 1/2: 397–398; Talmage, *David Kimhi*, p. 76. A complete discussion of the dual interpretations in Radak's commentaries will be included in my dissertation, "The Interplay of Peshat and Rabbinic Traditions in the Exegetical Works of Rabbi David Kimhi" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 2003).



The difference between Rashi's wording of rabbinic passages and that of extant rabbinic statements might result from Rashi's adaptation of rabbinic traditions for use in his commentary.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, Radak's employment of Rashi's unique formulations is unaffected by the question of whether these formulations result from an intentional modification by Rashi or from the loss of a rabbinic passage.

Sometimes a record of the basic midrashic statement exists, and it is clear that Radak adopted Rashi's version of it rather than the midrash itself. For example, Rashi quotes a midrash to explain why the names of the mothers of the rebellious servants of Joash are recorded in 2 Kgs 12:22, s.v. ויזכר. The extant version of the midrashic text reads as follows:

וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר " . . . זָבָד בֶּן שְׁמֵעַת הַעַמּוֹנִית וַיהוֹזָבָד בֶּן שְׁמֵרִית הַמּוֹאֲבִית" (דה"ב כד: כו), יָבוֹאוּ אֵלָיו כְּפוּי טוֹבָה וַיִּפְרְעוּ מִיּוֹאֵשׁ כְּפוּי טוֹבָה שְׁנֵאמַר "וְלֹא זָכַר יוֹאֵשׁ הַמֶּלֶךְ הַחֲסֵד . . ."

So the verse states ". . . Zabad son of Shimeath, the Ammonitess, and Jehozabad son of Shimrith, the Moabitess" (2 Chr 24:26)—Let those who were ungrateful come and punish Joash who was ungrateful, as the verse states, "And King Joash did not remember the kindness. . . ."<sup>22</sup>

Rashi attributes the midrashic statement to Sifre but it does not exist in the version of Sifre extant today.<sup>23</sup> The midrashic statements quoted by Rashi and Radak are similar to one another, and they differ in the same way from the extant version of the midrash. Both Rashi and Radak state that the rabbis explicitly noted the seemingly extraneous reference to the mothers' names. According to them, the midrashic comment states: "And why did the text explicate this

<sup>21</sup> Rashi's adaptation of rabbinic material is described in Y. Raḥaman, "עיבוד מדרשים, Te'uda 3 (1983) 261–268. Raḥaman claims that Rashi's deliberate revision of some midrashic and talmudic statements in order to clarify them for the reader is the cause of the differences between Rashi's version of those statements and the version extant today. Rashi stated explicit assumptions that are implicit in the rabbinic corpus and pointed out clearer biblical proof-texts than those given by the Rabbis.

<sup>22</sup> Tanḥuma, *Be-shallah* 25. The same midrashic statement is also found in Yalqut Shim'oni 1.261.

<sup>23</sup> A thorough search in B. Kosowsky, *ספר המתאימות לספרי* (New York, 1970–74), confirms that the passage is not found in L. Finkelstein's edition of Sifre (Jerusalem, 1966–69). The Ha-Keter edition, ad loc. cites a variant of the statement from Tanḥuma in Mekhilta, 'Amatek 1. The association of Sifre with Mekhilta is also found in Maimonides' introduction to the *Mishneh Torah*.



[their mothers' names and origins]? To teach that God repaid him by the hands of people like himself." The perception, however, that the names of the mothers were included in the text in order to teach the rabbinic lesson is not explicit in the extant version of the midrashic remark.<sup>24</sup>

Similarly, both Rashi and Radak record the specific act of ungratefulness by the Moabites and Ammonites, which is not found in extant midrashic literature. According to both exegetes, the midrashic passage states: "Let the ungrateful Ammonites and Moabites, who were ungrateful for the kindness of Abraham our father that he did to Lot, that he fought with the kings to save him [Lot], and yet they hired Balaam to curse his children. . . ." In addition, while the midrashic statement is associated with 2 Chr 24:26, which identifies the Ammonite and Moabite origin of the mothers, Rashi and Radak quote it in their comments to 2 Kgs 12:22, in which the mothers' nations are not mentioned. All of this suggests that Radak relied on Rashi for the midrashic formulation.

In the cases presented up to this point, one might still explain the similarity and exclusivity of their midrashic formulations by maintaining that both Rashi and Radak were in possession of a common midrashic tradition or a version of one that no longer exists. Since, on occasion Radak quotes rabbinic statements for which no source can be located, either in rabbinic compilations or in Rashi's commentary,<sup>25</sup> Rashi is not Radak's only source for unique quotations of aggadic material.

In one case, though, Radak mistakenly includes Rashi's own words in his quotation of a midrashic passage. This case supports the hypothesis that Radak used Rashi as a source for midrashic interpretations. Isa 8:8 describes the depth of Sennacherib's invasion of the

<sup>24</sup> Another example in which Rashi and Radak use identical language that differs from the extant midrashic formulation is at Ezek 16:20, s.v. אשר ילדת לי. In commenting on 2 Sam 8:2, s.v. וימדדם בחבל, Radak employs the same wording that Rashi used at 1 Sam 22:4, s.v. וישבו, which differs from Tanhuma, ed. Buber, *Va-yera*<sup>9</sup> 25. At 1 Sam 21:8, s.v. לפני ה', Radak's verbatim quotation of Rashi's comment makes it clear that he copied from Rashi. While in his Talmud commentary on Sanhedrin 93b Rashi makes a comment similar to his comment on 1 Sam 21:8, the fact that Radak quotes the comment verbatim in his remarks on 1 Sam 21:8 indicates that Rashi's biblical commentary was his source, not Rashi's Talmud commentary. Even when an aggadic statement is not quoted verbatim but only paraphrased, it is possible to see that the underlying rabbinic tradition used by Rashi or Radak differs from extant rabbinic sources.

<sup>25</sup> E.g., Radak's comments on 2 Kgs 9:33; Gen 9:10, s.v. לכל חית הארץ.

land of Judah in the time of Hezekiah. The biblical text employs the metaphor of a bird's wingspan to depict the infiltration of Sennacherib's camp into the land: "the span [lit. radial bones] of his wings will be the fullness of the breadth of your land" (היה מטות כנפיו) (מלא רחב ארצך). The Rabbis (Tanḥuma, *Tazri'a* 8) declared: "One sixtieth of his population would strike down Israel, as the verse states 'and the radial bones of his wings'. This radial bone of the rooster is one sixtieth of its wings." Rashi comments:

וראיתי בתנחומא: כמה הם מוטות כנפי התרנגול? אחד מששים בכנפיו, אחד מששים באוכלוסי סנחריב. "מלא רחב" ארץ יהודה.

And I saw in Tanḥuma: How many are the radial bones of the wings of the rooster? One sixtieth of its wings,—[thus] one sixtieth of the population of Sennacherib. "The full width" The land of Judah.

Radak attributes Rashi's entire comment to the Rabbis:

ובדרש: כמה הם מוטות התרנגול? אחד מששים בכנפיו, אי מששים באכלוסי סנחריב, מלא רחב ארץ יהודה.

And in the midrash: How many are the radial bones of the rooster? One sixtieth of its wings,—[thus] one sixtieth of the population of Sennacherib, the full width of the land of Judah.

As in the previous cases, the wording of the midrashic passage used by Radak is the same as Rashi's, yet different from the Tanḥuma passage extant today, making it likely that Rashi was Radak's source. The end of the comment confirms this with certainty. Even though Radak had already explained the phrase מלא רחב with the same interpretation, Radak transmitted Rashi's own interpretation of the biblical phrase. Radak's quotation of the midrash extends beyond the midrashic portion of Rashi's comment and includes also Rashi's own explanation of the verse. While Rashi presents the explanation of מלא רחב in a new lemma, Radak erroneously assumed that it was part of the quotation from Tanḥuma.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup>No variants for Radak's comment are noted in Finkelstein's edition, and Maarsen's edition of Rashi's commentary to Isaiah records, with no variants, a new lemma for מלא רחב. It is clear that Radak thought that the entire comment came from the midrash Tanḥuma, including the clarification that מלא רחב is ארץ יהודה, since the rabbinic portion of the entry for the root מט in his *Book of Roots* is identical to the passage in the commentary. In the commentary, one could argue that Radak repeated his

I. M. Ta-Shema maintains that the sages in 11th-century Ashkenaz altered rabbinic literature to correspond with oral and written traditions prevalent in their environment at the time.<sup>27</sup> For this reason, the talmudic and midrashic corpora in Ashkenaz at the time of Rashi differ from contemporaneous versions of the same literature found in other parts of the world. If the unique versions of aggadic traditions mentioned by Rashi were in fact customized purposefully in the Ashkenazi environment, then Radak's imitation of them suggests that he accepted the authority of the distinctive Ashkenazi formulations.

It is necessary to establish the extent of Radak's dependence on Rashi's commentaries in general in order to evaluate completely Radak's dependence on Rashi in his employment of midrashic material. The pervasive influence of Rashi's Bible commentary on medieval Jewry has often been discussed.<sup>28</sup> The fact that R. Zerahiah ha-Levi of Lunel (in the generation before Radak) refers to Rashi's comments without quoting them in full demonstrates that Rashi's Bible commentary was widespread in Provence at the time.<sup>29</sup>

---

explanation of מלא רחב, once for the midrashic portion of the comment and once for the *peshat* portion. However, this cannot be said about the *Book of Roots* entry, in which Radak's interest is in explaining the word מוטה, and not the biblical verse. Therefore, Radak must have believed that the explanation of מלא רחב derived from Tanhuma, even though it is not found in modern editions of Tanhuma and most likely was not found in medieval editions either. Radak's use of Rashi as a source for midrashic material in the *Book of Roots* implies that Radak thought of Rashi's work as a repository for midrashic interpretations even in an early period when he was writing grammatical works (Talmage, *David Kimhi*, pp. 54–58), and not only when he began to write commentaries.

<sup>27</sup> I. M. Ta-Shema, "ספרייתם של חכמי אשכנז בני המאה הי"א והי"ב," *Qiryat Sefer* 60 (1984) 298–309; idem, "The Library of the French Sages," *Rashi 1040–1990: Hommage à Ephraïm E. Urbach: Congrès Européen des Études Juives*, ed. G. Sed-Rajna (Paris, 1993), pp. 535–540.

<sup>28</sup> A full discussion of the extent of the acceptance of Rashi's commentary in Spain is found in A. Gross, "רש"י ומסורת לימוד התורה שבכתב בספרד," in *Rashi: 'Iyunim Bi-yirato*, pp. 27–56. Gross concludes that the clash between Rashi's less sophisticated rabbinic approaches in his commentaries and prevailing philosophical, exegetical, and rationalistic attitudes towards aggadah in Spain did not hinder the widespread acceptance of Rashi's commentary there (pp. 35, 53–54). He proposes that the positive stance towards Rashi found in Radak's works, as opposed to Ibn Ezra's, is a function of Radak being rooted in the rabbinic tradition (p. 55). See also M. Gudeman, *ספר הימים* (Warsaw, 1897), 1:6, n. 1.

<sup>29</sup> M. Liber, *Rashi* (1906. Repr. New York, 1970), p. 205.

Very few supercommentaries or analyses of Rashi's commentaries on the Prophets and Hagiographa exist, suggesting that they were less studied than Rashi's Torah commentary.<sup>30</sup> In addition, the number of existing manuscripts of Rashi's commentary on the Pentateuch is significantly greater than the number of manuscripts of his commentaries on the Prophets and Hagiographa.<sup>31</sup> One cannot, therefore, assume that all of Rashi's commentaries on the Prophets and Hagiographa were always accessible to Radak.<sup>32</sup>

E. Z. Melamed and H. Cohen have catalogued various ways that Radak incorporates Rashi's comments. Radak mentions Rashi by name less frequently than instances in which he quotes Rashi's comments but does not transmit them in his name.<sup>33</sup> Many of the approximately forty references to Rashi's interpretations by name in Radak's works appear in clusters in certain biblical books.<sup>34</sup> The greatest number of these references occur in the final chapters of Radak's commentary on Ezekiel. Explicit use of Rashi in the other biblical books is uneven. His name is not mentioned at all in Radak's commentaries on Judges, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, or Psalms, but there is a disproportionately high number of five references in Radak's commentary on the book of Hosea and four on the book of Amos.<sup>35</sup> In Radak's commentaries on those biblical books in which Rashi *is*

<sup>30</sup> See Y. Spiegel, "על כמה מקורות," pp. 185–186.

<sup>31</sup> D. S. Blondheim, "Liste des manuscrits des commentaires bibliques de Raschi," *Revue des Etudes Juives* 91 (1931), p. 72, n. 2. In addition to seventeen manuscripts of Rashi's commentary on the entire Bible, Blondheim lists 224 manuscripts of Rashi's commentary on the Pentateuch, fifty manuscripts of his commentaries on the Prophets and sixty-eight of his commentaries on Hagiographa. Blondheim's numbers are used here only as a model. Since many manuscripts contain only part of Rashi's commentary, Blondheim's charts must be probed carefully to arrive at an accurate count for each biblical book. In addition, they must be supplemented by the information found in the catalog of the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts at the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem, which is more up to date.

<sup>32</sup> It is interesting to note that Radak's explicit mention of Rashi in his commentary on Genesis (Gen 1:1, 30:30) is no more frequent than his explicit references to Rashi in most of his commentaries on the Prophets. This implies that Rashi's commentary on the Pentateuch did *not* influence Radak more than most of his commentaries on the Prophets.

<sup>33</sup> E. Z. Melamed, *מפרשי המקרא* (Jerusalem, 1978), pp. 738–741. Cohen, *The Commentary of Rabbi David Kimhi on Hosea*, pp. xxv, xxxvi.

<sup>34</sup> A complete list is found in Cohen, *The Commentary*, p. xxv, n. 1.

<sup>35</sup> Cohen, *ibid.*, cites only three references to Rashi in Radak's commentary to the book of Amos—2:6, 3:12(2). He appears to miss a reference in Amos 9:7, s.v. הלא כבני

named, there are fewer references to Rashi's commentary in which he is named than in which his comments are used without attribution.<sup>36</sup>

One might reason that Radak possessed a copy of Rashi's commentary only to those works in which he mentions Rashi by name. However, stray anonymous references to Rashi's explanations in Radak's other works show that Radak knew interpretations from Rashi's other commentaries even if he did not have access to them or own them.<sup>37</sup>

The explanation that is offered for the uneven mention of Rashi in Radak's commentaries on the biblical books is that he might have had particular need of Rashi's explanations for those biblical texts in which Rashi is mentioned most often. This is plausible for the difficult final chapters of the book of Ezekiel, as Melamed suggests. However, it is more difficult to explain why Radak found Rashi's commentary to be so crucial in the books of Hosea and Amos, and had no need to mention Rashi at all in the entire book of 1 Kings.

Radak's quotation of midrashic material from Rashi helps answer whether Radak had access to Rashi's commentary for those works in which he does not mention Rashi by name. For example, there is no explicit reference to Rashi in Radak's commentary on Judges.<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless, a very few possible anonymous references have been identified, although these are mostly inconclusive.<sup>39</sup> The use of Rashi as a source of rabbinic midrash in Radak's commentary on Judges

---

כושיים. The use of Rashi in the commentary on Proverbs attributed to Radak (F. Talmage, ed., *The Commentaries on Proverbs of the Kimhi Family*, Jerusalem, 1990, pp. 328–427) is not relevant to this discussion, as I demonstrate in “The Commentary of Rabbi David Kimhi on Proverbs: A Case of Mistaken Attribution,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* (forthcoming, 2003) that the commentary on Proverbs is mistakenly attributed to Radak.

<sup>36</sup> See N. Goldberg, ed., *The Commentary of Rabbi David Kimhi on the Book of Joshua* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1961), p. xxi; Cohen, *The Commentary*, p. xxxvi, for lists of undisclosed references to Rashi's interpretations in the books of Joshua and Hosea respectively.

<sup>37</sup> See J. Bosniak, ed., *The Commentary of Rabbi David Kimhi on the Fifth Book of Psalms, 107–150* (New York, 1951), p. 17 and below, n. 39.

<sup>38</sup> M. Celniker, ed., *The Commentary of Rabbi David Kimhi on the Book of Judges* (Toronto, 1983), p. iv.

<sup>39</sup> Celniker, *ibid.*, p. xcvi, n. 33, lists three cases (Judg 8:27, 11:40, and 15:3); Melamed, *מפרשי המקרא*, p. 738 lists one (Judg 5:14), in which Radak appears to be summarizing Rashi's comment without identifying his source. In his comments on Judg 15:3 Radak seems to be quoting Rashi, as Celniker proposes. While possibly mirroring Rashi, the wording in the commentary to Judg 8:27, however, is not so unique

can provide more conclusive proof of Radak's dependence on Rashi. The reference to Jephthah's boils is more convincing evidence than the few allusions to Rashi's commentary that have been noted, and may help determine whether Radak possessed Rashi's commentary to the book of Judges. At a minimum, Radak had to have seen Rashi's commentary at some point in order to know Rashi's unique formulation in his comment on Jephthah.

Similarly, Radak does not explicitly mention Rashi in his commentary on the book of Psalms.<sup>40</sup> Nevertheless, as in the case of the book of Judges, Rashi is a possible source for some comments.<sup>41</sup> In addition, Radak mirrors Rashi's unique use of a rabbinic statement at Ps 111:4. As is the usual pattern, Rashi does not state that the comment derived from the rabbinic corpus, but Radak does.<sup>42</sup> This case, when added to the allusions in which Rashi is not identified, confirms that Radak had at least seen a copy of Rashi's commentary on Psalms.

On the other hand, in his commentary on Ps 121:1 Radak mentions a rabbinic tradition which is found neither in any extant rabbinic source nor in Rashi's commentary. Of about twenty passages in Rashi's commentary which Maarsen attributes to rabbinic literature although no rabbinic source can be found,<sup>43</sup> Radak quotes only

---

as to necessarily have been copied from Rashi. In the comment to Judg 11:40 Radak paraphrases well-known rabbinic statements so these are not definitely derived from Rashi. Since, as Melamed notes, Radak's comment to Judg 5:14 originated in Targum, there is no reason to believe that he took it from Rashi. In sum, the evidence is not convincing. Only one comment, Judg 15:3, seems likely to be derived from Rashi.

<sup>40</sup> See J. Bosniak, ed., *The Commentary of Rabbi David Kimhi on the Fifth Book of Psalms*, p. 17.

<sup>41</sup> See e.g., Radak's comments on Ps 77:3, s.v. לילה, 89:3, 106:33 (toward the end of the comment), 116:9. At Ps 11:6 Radak quotes an interpretation in the name of others and both Rashi and Targum make use of that explanation. Since it is generally assumed that Radak did not have a copy of Targum to Psalms (E. Z. Melamed, *מפרשי המקרא*, p. 770), Rashi was the likely source for Radak. At Ps 16:2 Radak repeats Rashi's explanation of a verse in the name of "others." This example is inconclusive because A. Daron, *הפירוש השלם על תהלים* (Jerusalem, 1967), ad loc., asserts that the same explanation is offered by R. Moshe ha-Cohen Gikatilla. To my knowledge, no one has collected these examples, as was done for the book of Judges (above, n. 39).

<sup>42</sup> Maarsen, *פרשנותא*, v. 3, ad loc. is unable to find any source for Rashi's comment.

<sup>43</sup> Some examples are Ps 40:10, 42:3, 45:1, 112:4, 144:3, and 147:17. According to Maarsen, *ibid.*, p. 14, in Ps 15:5 the connection to the verse noted by Rashi is not found in extant rabbinic literature.

the comment on Ps 111:4. This may imply that Radak did not have Rashi's commentary readily accessible at all times, or that he chose not to accept Rashi's unique rabbinic formulations in those cases.<sup>44</sup>

The same situation may apply to Radak's comments on 2 Samuel. At 2 Sam 1:18 and 13:2, Radak alludes to interpretations of Rashi, though he is not named.<sup>45</sup> To these allusions can be added the cases of 2 Sam 8:13, s.v. ויעש דוד שם, and 2 Sam 18:6, in which Radak quotes rabbinic interpretations whose only known source is Rashi, and 2 Sam 1:9, s.v. כי אחזני השבץ, in which Radak's wording mirrors Rashi's variation of a statement from Tanhuma. These duplications of rabbinic material indicate, at the least, that Radak had seen a copy of Rashi's commentary on 2 Samuel.

In his comments on 1 Kgs 18:30, s.v. את מזבח ה' ההרוס, Radak repeats an aggadic tradition found only in Rashi's commentary.<sup>46</sup> While this might be taken as proof that Radak had seen a copy of Rashi's commentary to 1 Kings, elements of the same aggadic interpretation are mentioned by both Rashi and Radak in their comments on 1 Sam 15:12, making the verification inconclusive. Radak also repeats Rashi's interpretation of 1 Kgs 5:30, s.v. שלשת אלפים, in his comments on 2 Chr 2:1.<sup>47</sup>

In conclusion, Radak's use of Rashi as a source for midrashic traditions demonstrates that Rashi figures more prominently in *all* of Radak's works than has been previously recognized. Radak's quotation of aggadic material certainly does not always follow Rashi's.

<sup>44</sup> Maarsen, פרשנותא, v. 1, p. vi attributes Rashi's lack of conformity with standard versions of rabbinic statements to lost variants.

<sup>45</sup> In 2 Sam 1:18 Rashi explains that the biblical expression "to teach the sons of Judah bow(s)" means that, because of the death of the great warriors Saul and Jonathan, the sons of Judah must be trained to go to war. Radak presents the same interpretation in the name of anonymous others (יש מפרשים). Similarly, in his comments on 2 Sam 13:2, s.v. כי בתולה היא, Radak clarifies the rationale of Rashi's interpretation, introducing it as מפרשים יש. Rashi had explained that because Tamar was unmarried and did not leave her home, Amnon did not know how to entice her. Radak explains that unmarried women in Israel were generally hidden in their homes.

<sup>46</sup> The biblical text states that Elijah repaired "the ruined altar of the Lord." Rashi restates a rabbinic interpretation that King Saul had built the altar, but the kings of Israel had destroyed it along with other altars that were erected in the name of Heaven. Radak introduces the same rabbinic tradition as ובדרש.

<sup>47</sup> While the commentary of pseudo-Rashi to 2 Chr 8:10 mentions the same interpretation, Radak's remarks reflect Rashi's comment in Kings and not pseudo-Rashi's comment in Chronicles.



and Radak often quotes statements directly from their rabbinic source.<sup>48</sup> Nevertheless, the possibility that a rabbinic interpretation mentioned by Radak derives from a secondary source such as Rashi's commentary, rather than from the original aggadic literature, must at all times be borne in mind.

---

<sup>48</sup> Josh 3:3, s.v. הכהנים הלויים is an example in which Radak's quotation of an aggadic tradition differs from Rashi's in a number of ways.

