



*The Tikvah Center
for Law & Jewish
Civilization*

The NYU Institutes on the Park

THE TIKVAH CENTER FOR LAW & JEWISH CIVILIZATION

*Professor Moshe Halbertal
Professor J.H.H. Weiler
Directors of The Tikvah Center*

Tikvah Working Paper 07/12

Marc Hirshman

Individual and Group Learning in Rabbinic Literature: Some Key Terms

NYU School of Law • New York, NY 10011
The Tikvah Center Working Paper Series can be found at
<http://www.nyutikvah.org/publications.html>

All rights reserved.
No part of this paper may be reproduced in any form
without permission of the author.

ISSN 2160-8229 (print)
ISSN 2160-8253 (online)
Copy Editor: Danielle Leeds Kim
© Marc Hirshman 2012
New York University School of Law
New York, NY 10011
USA

Publications in the Series should be cited as:
AUTHOR, TITLE, TIKVAH CENTER WORKING PAPER NO./YEAR [URL]

INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP LEARNING IN RABBINIC LITERATURE: SOME KEY TERMS

By Marc Hirshman

A. Foundations of Education in Biblical and Second Temple Times

Wilhelm Bacher, the great late 19th, early 20th scholar, published in 1903 a wonderful essay entitled "Das altjüdische Schullewesen", in which he declared Nehemiah 8, 1-8, which describes the public reading of scripture, "der Geburtstag des altjüdischen Schulweis". From that day on 1 Tishre 445 b.c.e, Bacher would have it, the public recitation of Torah and its teaching would become central to second Temple Judaism, and its rabbinic heirs in the first five centuries of the common era. Indeed, Ezra's commission from Artaxerxes includes appointments of "judges and magistrates to judge all the people... and to teach..." (Ezra 7, 25). This close connection between the judicial system and the educational system also characterizes the rabbinic period, succinctly captured in the opening quote of the tractate of Avot 1,1. In that collection of rabbinic apothegms from the third century c.e, a group called the Men of the Great Assembly, purportedly the earliest post biblical predecessors to the rabbinic movement are quoted as saying, "Be moderate in judgment, raise up many disciples, and make a fence around the Torah".

But it was the Book of Deuteronomy¹, probably a century and a half earlier than Ezra and Nehemiah, that instituted and inculcated a culture of ubiquitous writing and

¹ This has certainly not gone unnoticed by recent scholarship but the question has been treated from different perspectives. See M. Himmelfarb, "The Torah Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish Difference in Antiquity" in C. Bakhos, *Ancient Judaism in its Hellenistic Context*, Leiden: Brill 2005, who begins with an analysis of Deuteronomy citing Albert Baumgarten notion of Deuteronomy as a public document- "The Torah as a Public Document in Judaism *Sciences Religieuses* 14 (1985) pp. 17-24. Baumgarten rehearses Philo and Josephus's apologetic praise of Jews as learning their laws every Sabbath (see below) and adds an interesting discussion of a passage of Seneca. Himmelfarb concludes that it was "the status of the Torah in ancient Judasim accounts for the distinctive character of Jewish interaction with Greek culture" (p, 128) She is arguing for the role the Torah played as "a central institution in the Hellenistic period" (121), which was adumbrated by the attention paid to Torah in books like Enoch, parts of which precede the Hellenistic period. See also M. Halbertal, *People of the Book*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1997, who states that, "the pedagogic function of the book of the Torah is first mentioned in Deuteronomy" and goes on to distinguish between learning "from the book" and learning "the book". (p.

incessant speaking of God's word. Though the wisdom tradition predates Deuteronomy it confines itself at least literarily, to a sage -disciple framework. Deuteronomy on the other hand presents itself as addressed to the people Israel making demands and setting norms for every individual from the foresters to kings, priests and prophets, adults and children alike. The Hebrew root for learning, *lmd*, appears only in Deuteronomy and is absent from the other four books of the Pentateuch. Moreover, the root *kra* as reading rather calling is attributed in the Torah first to Moses in Exodus 24 and then to the king in Deut 17.² These facts and Deuteronomy's emphasis on ritualizing words in inscriptions and declamations, coupled with an insistence on recollection and memory, make it the prime candidate, the book that laid the groundwork for a religious philosophy that eventually privileged learning as the unique avenue of religious expression in ancient Judaism. Let us cite some illustrations of the Deuteronomic revolution.

Deuteronomy commands inscribing Gods words on the monumental entrance to the land of Israel, on the gates of the city, and on the doorposts of one home. These are fixed, immovable reminders of the words, set up literally in liminal sites. The book goes on to command portable artifacts with God's word, an ark for the tablets and the Torah on the side (Dt. 31, 26), the king's own personal portable copy of God's word, and possibly personal amulets with God's word on one's arm and head.³ These are visual representations of God's word. But possibly the most demanding of the commandments, is that which apparently demands constant recitation of "these words", wherever one finds oneself. "Impress them (*veshinantam*) upon your children". Recite them when you stay at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you get up" (Deut 6,7

14). He foregoes the "detailed analysis of the historical problem" (p. 25) of the "rise of the Sages" and the presumed "decline of the priests". Finally, see the nuanced discussion by Steven Fraade in his essay "Deuteronomy and Polity in the Early History of Jewish Interpretation" in *Cardozo Law Review* 28 (2006) p. 245-258(repr in Steven Fraade, *Legal Fictions: Studies of Law and Narrative in the Discursive Worlds of Ancient Jewish Sectarians and Sages*, Leiden: Brill 2011 especially pages 211-218. See also Jeffrey Tigay's excursus #28 in the *JPS Deuteronomy*.

² J-P Sonnet, *The Book Within the Book*, p. 76.

³ Though the phylacteries found in Qumran show conclusively that the verses in Deut 6, 8 were understood to be a ritual amulet, many commentators and modern scholars hold that this might have been metaphorical, eg Rashbam to Exodus 13,9 and Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School* Oxford 1972, p. 302. See also the beginning of that chapter on "Didacticism" in *Deuteronomy*.

NJPS). The word is palpable and ever present. Finally, the parent is instructed to teach the child these words, "and teach (*ulemadtem*) them to your children- reciting then when you stay at home and when you are away..."(Dt. 11, 19 NJPS) . What is true of the individual is true also of the people. They gather once every sabbatical year to hear the Torah read by the king. Most striking of all is Deuteronomy's insistence on disseminating an everlasting copy of God's testimony in the form of a poem, to be taught and internalized Dt 31, 19 ff). This is how Deuteronomy envisaged the best guarantee for perpetuity, a poem committed to memory by the entire people, a testimony to the covenant.

The foundations laid by the Deuteronomic code and augmented by Ezra and Nehemiah on the peoples' return from Exile, were firm and the teaching and study of Torah continued to flourish in the Persian and Greek periods of the Second Temple.

B. Rabbinic Education (Tannaitic and Amoraic periods 1-5th centuries c.e.) Ages and Curricula

"When the toddler begins to talk, his father speaks to him in the holy language and teaches him Torah" (Sifre Deut 46, Finkelstein ed. P. 104). This source goes on to reinforce the importance of this statement with the most vehement of rhetoric- a parent who desists from this obligation it is "as if he is burying the child" and shortening his days. The baraita (extra-mishnaic source- c. mid 3rd century c.e.) in mAvot (5,21) has instruction in Bible beginning at age 5 but the Babylonian Talmud delays initial instruction in Bible to age six or seven. That same baraita sees mishna instruction as beginning at age 10 and Talmud at age 15. One sage could boast that by the age of eighteen he had mastered the Talmud (bMoed Katan 25a). A late gloss contends that one is not allowed to decide law until age 40 (bAvoda Zara 19b).

The most common and early listing of the curricula of study of the oral law is in mNedarim 4,3: "he teaches him midrash (scriptural exegesis), halachot (laws) and aggadot non- legal apothegms and stories)", but the definition of each of these terms varies and sometimes begins with Mishna. The most exhaustive list of rabbinic studies is found in a baraita at Sukkah 28a and includes, " *mikra* (Scripture), *mishna*, *talmud*,

halachot, vaaggadot, dikduke torah , dikduke soferim" continuing with such diverse topics as logical inferences, gematria, the talk of angels, evil spirits, palm trees, fox and fullers parables, and concluding with "a great thing and a small thing."

C. Major Themes and Institutions

Rabbinic teaching and learning was exclusively oral. Ideally, Scripture was memorized at an early age and even midrashic interpretation of scripture on Shabbat afternoons was done primarily without the aid of a scroll (tShabbat 13:1). The tannaitic period, covering the first two and a half centuries of the common era, punctuated by enormous loss of life in two disastrous revolts, was marked by anxiety, lest the oral teaching be lost (tEduyot 1,1). Great emphasis was placed on memorization and recitation, though the perennial tension between recitation of tradition and innovative learning is already highlighted in the famous description of Rabban Yohanan b. Zakkai's leading students- "a cistern" as opposed to a "gushing spring" (mAvot 2, 8) and the debate there over who was Rabban Yohanan's choice pupil. It seems to be the case that Palestinian amoraim (3-5th centuries c.e.) preferred the conservative traditionalists ("*sina'*" / "*sadran*") while the Babylonians, certainly from Rava's time (350 c.e.) and on, had a predilection for innovative reasoning ("uprooter of the mountain" "*pilpulan*"- pHorayot 3,8 bHorayot 14a). This commonplace distinction, long held by academic scholarship, has now been called into question and reassigned to the end of the anoraic period (5-6th centuries c.e.).⁴

In what settings did learning and education take place? Institutionalized elementary education is credited by the Yerushalmi (pKetubot 8,11" *beit sefer*") to the second century b.c.e figure Simon b. Shetach, while the Bavli (bBava Batra 21a) sees the first century c.e. high priest Joshua b. Gamla as having instituted a formal system of tutoring ("*melamdei tinokot*"). It stands to reason that at least by Rav's time (early third century c.e.), who is the author of the Bavli statement, elementary education was in place. There also (bBava Batra 21a) we have a detailed account of the institutional system of

⁴ See A. Tropper, "Like Clay in the Hands of the Potter" (heb) , Merkaz Zalman Shazar: Jerusalem 2010, p. 178-192.

elementary education advocated (and most probably deployed) by Rava in the mid - fourth century bustling port city of Mahoza, on the banks of the Tigris river.

Higher education in Babylonia has been the subject of intense study in the past decades by distinguished scholars, David Goodblatt and Isaiah Gafni. It would seem that formal "*yeshivot*", academies, were to emerge only somewhere in the fourth century while the rule for Amoraic times were disciple circles, gathering around leading individual scholars.

In Palestine there seemed to have been such circles also, sometimes called "*havurot*". Recently, an excellent analysis by Ishai Rosen Zvi ⁵has uncovered two layers in tSanhedrin chapter 7, which contain protocols both for the Sanhedrin legal proceedings and separately for the beit midrash on the Temple mount. It is reasonable that, on the basis of this source and New Testament reports, Jerusalem was a center of formal learning at least from the first century c.e. and on. It would seem that by the third century there were a few "*batei midrash*", academies, scattered through the Galilee and the Golan. along the coast, and in the "south", Lydda for example. Major centers, like Tiberias, possibly had a group of scholars without official titles who constituted the *havura*, to which we will return. The remarkable lintel discovered in the Golan with the inscription, "Eliezer HaQappar: this is the Beit midrash of Rebbe" is rare material evidence for an institution of advanced learning which, according to our literary evidence about the rabbinic figure, would have thrived in Palestine at the beginning of the third century.⁶

Recent scholarship, well represented by Hayim Lapin's *Rabbis as Romans* (OUP 2012), would have us believe that the flourishing of institutions and rabbinic learning was only to take place in the fourth and fifth centuries of the common era, while prior to that it was a small movement of scholars and rabbis numbering a few score in each generation. This issue demands further scrutiny.

⁵ I. Rosen Zvi, "Protocol of a Court in Yavneh: A New look at Tosefta Sanhedrin Chapter 7" (heb) Tarbiz 78 (2009) pp. 447-477.

⁶ See F Millar, *The Roman Near East 31 BC- AD 337* (Cambridge MA: Harvard U Press 1993) p. 382.

I would like to use the remaining time to discuss two terms, one which represent methods of study, and the other possibly the social framework.

D. Garas VeTanna

In a fine anecdote in the Babylonian Talmud, which I dealt with in my recent book⁷, we are told that two prominent sages plot to embarrass and eventually oust the patriarch by plying him with a request to teach one of the more arcane of the 60 tractates of mishna. Their plot is overheard by one R Yaakov ben Kudshai who retires to the patriarch's upper chambers and begins to recite that very tractate. The passage reads as follows:

R. Yaakov ben Kudshai heard them and said, "Lest Heaven Forbid it (he?) will come to an embarrassment". He went and sat behind Rabban Shimon Ben Gamliel's upper chamber and learned (*garas*) and repeated (*vetana*), learned and repeated.

He said," Perhaps ("*dekama*" ?) there is Heaven Forbid, something (up) in the academy (*beit midrash*).

He put his mind to it re-viewed it (*iyen*) and learned.

HORAYOT 13b Munich 95

HORAYOT 13b Paris 1337⁸

שמעינהו ר' יעקב בק קודש' א' דילמ' ח"ו אתו לידי כסופא אזל איתיב אחורי עילית' דרשב"ג
שמעינהו ר' יעקב בן קודשאי אמ' דלמא חס ושלום אתי לידי כיסופא אזל ויתיב אחורי עיליתיה דרשב"ג

פשט גרס ותנא
גרס ותנא גרס ותנא

דקא' דילמ' ח"ו איכ' מילת' בי מדרש
אמ' מאי דקמא דלמא חס ושלום איכא מידי בי מדרשא

יהב דעת' וגרס למחר ואמרו ליה ניתי מר וניתני בעוקצין פתח ואמ'
יהב דעתיה עיין בה וגרסה למחר אמרי ליה ניתני מר בעוקצין פתח ותני

⁷ The Stabilization of Rabbinic Culture 100c .e. -350 c.e: Texts on Education in Their Late antique Context (OUP 2009)p. 75ff.

⁸ All the variants from the various manuscripts are copied from the Sol and Evelyn Henkind Database of the Saul Lieberman Institute of Talmud Research of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

בתר דאוקי' א' להו אי ח"ו לא גמרנ' מכספית
בתר דאוקים אמ' להו אי לאו גמירנא כסיפתון

I want to dwell again on the Aramaic word "*garas*". As a verb of learning it appears only in the Babylonian Talmud. It is not to be found in Palestinian literature of the Amoraic period 250-400 c.e nor of course in the earlier Tannaitic period in Palestine (1-250c.e.), where Hebrew is the dominant, almost exclusive language.

In Biblical Hebrew *garas* means to crush, pulverize. So Lamentations 3,16 reads, "He has broken my teeth on gravel". How and why did this verb become the main Babylonian Aramaic verb study? A comparison with the Syriac for example shows no similar usage. *Garas* there seems to be restricted to the primary sense of breaking and crushing. This might not be surprising since Adam Becker has masterfully pointed out the basic differences between Eastern Christianity's approach to learning as opposed to Babylonian Jewry of late antiquity. Syriac Christianity had, in his words "caught the Christian bug of writing"⁹, as opposed to the "pervasive orality" of the rabbis. This is most striking since there are many parallel terms for educational operations and institutions between Syriac Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism.¹⁰

David Goodblatt in a fine article on our source¹¹, concludes that *garas* must be "reciting orally and audibly". Given the plot line of the anecdote at bHorayot that is indeed an ineluctable conclusion. The Munich ms has the additional word *pashat* which might have survived an earlier Palestinian recension of the story. *Pashat* is a regular verb in Palestinian Aramaic for study¹², though it's exact meaning is debated. It means to stretch out or explain (ἐκτείνω) Bacher held that it meant to explain scripture, to reach a deep understanding. While Melamed thinks that it means to explain to a student or child.

⁹ A. Becker, "The comparative study of "scholasticism" in late antique Mesopotamia: rabbis and East Syrians" AJSReview 34 (2010) p. 103. He quotes Y. Elman's term of "pervasive orality" to describe Rabbinic Judaism.

¹⁰ Ibid p. 101-102.

¹¹ D. Goodblatt, "On the Rebellion etc" (heb) Zion 49 (1984) p. 354.

¹² see M Assis, A Concordance of Amoraic Terms Expressions and Phrases in the Yerushalmi, JTSA: New York and Jerusalem 2010, vol 2 p 1235 n.152.

But let us take a look at another source in the Babylonian Talmud. The discussion here revolves around the law that, during the Sukkot, tabernacle festival, one should transfer all one's regular habits to the temporary dwelling, the booth erected for the holiday. This includes eating, drinking and, of course for the rabbis, learning. So the earlier tannaitic source reads: "...one eats and drinks and recites/ learns" (*meshanen*, var. *shone*). *Meshanen* is a form of *Shnn* which is the verb used at Deut 6, 7 for instruction to one's child, and is carried over into Rabbinic Hebrew and probably means oral recitation. In the LXX it is rendered προβιβάζω¹³. The tannaitic source is questioned by invoking a norm instituted by the mid-fourth century c.e. leading Babylonian figure Rava, who declared that: " *mikra* and *mishna* in the sukka/booth/, *tanoye* (var. + *Talmud*, outside the sukkah. This is interpreted to mean that elementary study of *mikra*-scripture and *mishna*, rabbinic corpus of law, is done in the sukkah but "*tanoye*" which is an Aramaic form of *mishna* is done outside the sukkah. Presumably *tanoye* is a more intense study that might require more serene conditions for concentration. Some manuscripts add an object to *tanoye*, "*Talmud*", which presumably means studying Talmud, the most advanced subject of study. The Talmud then is left with a seeming contradiction between the early source that declared that all learning was to be done in the booth and Rava who makes room for a more advanced type of learning outside the booth. This seeming contradiction is resolved by the anonymous stratum of the Talmud called the *stam*, which explains that Rava meant that *girsā* is to be done in the sukka while *iyunei* evidently more speculative learning, takes place outside the sukka. Might it be the case that this verb *ligros*, to crush or pulverize as a verb of learning, as opposed to *iyune* to speculate (root *iyne* means to see, inspect) was introduced only in the latest strata of the Babylonian Talmud and reflects a kind of study done in the 5th- 6th c. What then was Rava's *tanoye*?

¹³ Προβιβάζω is used again only at Ex 35, 34 to translate *lehorot*- to instruct.

BERAKHOT 11b Oxford Opp. Add. fol. 23¹⁴

ואמ' רב חייא בר אשי זימנין סגיאין הוה קא[י]מנא דרב לתנויי ספרא דבי רב פירקי הוה מקדים וקאי ומשי ידיה ומברך ומתני לן פירקין

BERAKHOT 11b Florence II-I-7

דא' רב חייא בר אשי
זימנין סגיאין הוה קאימנ' קמיה דרב לתנויי פירקין
בסיפרא דבי רב ומי ידיה ומברך

Rav Hiyya bar Ashi said, "many times I stood before Rav to learn sifra of the school of Rav. He would first rise and wash his hands and bless and then teach us the chapter."

M. Sokoloff translates *tanoye* as oral tradition, study of oral tradition, Talmud (p. 1217), but we are far from a clear picture of the nuance of this word.

<u>SUKKAH 28b</u>	<u>SUKKAH</u>	<u>SUKKAH</u>	<u>SUKKAH</u>	<u>SUKKAH</u>	<u>SUKKAH</u>
<u>Oxford</u> -	<u>28b Vatican</u>	<u>28b Oxford</u>	<u>28b New</u>	<u>28b</u>	<u>29a</u>
<u>Bodl. heb. e.</u>	<u>134</u>	<u>Opp. Add.</u>	<u>York</u> -	<u>Munich</u>	<u>London</u> -
<u>51 (2677)</u>		<u>fol. 23</u>	<u>JTS Rab.</u>	<u>95</u>	<u>BL Harl.</u>
			<u>1608</u>		<u>5508</u>
			<u>(ENA</u>		<u>(400)</u>
			<u>850)</u>		

¹⁴ All the variants from the various manuscripts are copied from the Sol and Evelyn Henkind Database of the Saul Lieberman Institute of Talmud Research of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

אוכל ושותה בסוכה ומטייל בסוכה ומשנן בסוכה איני והאמ' רבא מקרא ומשנה במטלתא תנויי תלמודא בר ממטלתא לא קשיא הא במגרס הא בעיוני	אוכל ושותה בסוכה ומטייל בסוכה ומשנן בסוכה איני והא אמ' רבא מקרא ומשנה במטלתא תנויי תלמודא בר ממטלתא לא קשיא הא במגרס הא בעיוני	אוכל ושותה בסוכה ומטייל בסוכה ומשנן בסוכה איני והא אמ' רבא מקרא ומשנה במטלתא תנויי תלמודא בר ממטלתא לא קשיא הא במגרס הא בעיוני	אוכל ושותה בסוכה ומטייל בסוכה ומשנן בסוכה איני והא אמ' רבא מקרא ומשנה במטלתא תנויי תלמודא בר ממטלתא לא קשיא הא במגרס הא בעיוני	אוכל ושותה בסוכה ומטייל בסוכה ומשנן בסוכה איני והא אמ' רבא מקרא ומשנה במטלתא תנויי תלמודא בר ממטלתא לא קשיא הא במגרס הא בעיוני	אוכל ושותה בסוכה ומטייל בסוכה ומשנן בסוכה איני והא אמ' רבא מקרא ומשנה במטלתא תנויי תלמודא בר ממטלתא לא קשיא הא במגרס הא בעיוני
דרבא ורמי בר חמא כי הוו קיימי בי רב חסדא ברישא הוו מרהטי גמרא והדר מעייני בסברא	דרבא ורמי בר חמא כי הוו קיימי בי רב חסדא ברישא הוו מרהטי גמרא והדר מעייני בסברא	דרבא ורמי בר חמא כי הוו קיימי בי רב חסדא ברישא הוו מרהטי גמרא והדר מעייני בסברא	דרבא ורמי בר חמא כי הוו קיימי בי רב חסדא ברישא הוו מרהטי גמרא והדר מעייני בסברא	דרבא ורמי בר חמא כי הוו קיימי בי רב חסדא ברישא הוו מרהטי גמרא והדר מעייני בסברא	דרבא ורמי בר חמא כי הוו קיימי בי רב חסדא ברישא הוו מרהטי גמרא והדר מעייני בסברא

The version that has the Hebrew word "*shinun*" is taken from Deut 6, 7 and at least in the Midrash (Sifre Deut 34)¹⁵ it is clear that it involves oral recitation.

The root in the Bible probably is etymologically related to sharpening as sharpened arrows. Evidently the alternate reading of shana would mean literally to repeat. I am fascinated by the possibility that the changing terminology from *shanen* to *shoneh* to *pashat* and finally *garas* possibly reveal different techniques of study, but much research need be done, including comparative philology which I hope we will begin here.

E. *Haver, Havura*

In second Temple times and even after its destruction in 70c.e., there were fellowship groups who were scrupulous in their observance of purity laws and tithing (mDemai ch. 2). An associate or fellow of such a group was called a *haver*¹⁶. A group in general was called *havruah*, but can mean any self-constituted group. It is used frequently in Talmudic literature for a group that chooses to eat the Pascal dinner together. But there seems to be a usage of *haver, havura* and its Aramaic analogs that indicate a partner in study. A saying attributed to one of the earliest rabbinic figures states the following at mAvot 1,6

יהושע בן פרחייה ומתיי הארבלי קיבלו מהן. יהושע בן פרחייה אומ. 'עשה לך רב וקנה לך חבר. והוי דן את כל האדן לכף זכות .

"Joshua b. Perahia says, 'Make yourself a master and acquire a fellow/friend and judge every person favorably.'"

Is this a presumably early indication of a predilection for partner study? Ben Sira who lived a century and a half before Joshua B. Perahia extols wisdom and learning but

¹⁵ and the Palestinian Talmud, pBerachot 3,3 6b:

ר' יוסי ור' יודה בן פזי. לא מסתבא בקרית שמע. שיהא כל אחד ואחד [משנן בפי] Maagarim database of the Academy of the Hebrew Language with some changes. So too Mishna Avot above.

¹⁶ We find a unique expression *havrei Torah*, friends of the Torah in the Tanchuma- see M Assis, A Concordance of Amoraic Terms Expressions and Phrases in the Yerushalmi, JTSA: New York and Jerusalem 2010, vol 2, p. 622 n. 3. See especially his list of educational institutional terms in appendix 3, pp. 1521-1526.

confines *haver* to contexts of friendship and battle. The noun *haver* appears on Maccabean coins but has little to do with learning. I cannot yet trace the development of the institution of *haver* and *havura*. *Haver* would be a study partner and *havura* would be a group of study partners banded together. What I do know is that the late 3rd century Palestinian amora R Simon ben Lakish enunciates a rule that says that "any mishna that has not entered the *havura*, we do not rely upon it" (pEruvin 1, 6 19b) which seems to indicate that the *havura* served almost as an editorial body. The technical Aramaic term *hevraya* was studied by M Beer¹⁷ and he concluded that for the most part it is a term associated with the students of R Shimon b Lakish's teacher and associate Rabbi Yochanan who died in Tiberias around 270 c.e and the term continues on into the mid-4th century. These *haverim*, fellows evidently were the seasoned students who had not yet been elevated to the level of teachers. Thus, *havura* became an institution by the mid third century almost immediately after the promulgation of the mishna by Judah the Patriarch round the year 210. They virtually edited the oral compilation of Jewish law.

It is fashionable now to postpone the growth and resilience of the rabbinic "movement" to parallel the trajectory of the growth of Christianity, locating the birth of rabbinic Judaism in the post destruction era of 70 c.e. and later. The rabbis own historiography bristles at these conclusions but are taken by moderns to be fanciful anachronisms. The jury is still out and much work need be done to carefully trace the growth of rabbinic Judaism and its educational frameworks. Thank you.

¹⁷ M. Beer, "*al HeHevraya*" in his collected articles, *The Sages of the Mishna and the Talmud* (Heb.), Bar Ilan University Press: Ramat Gan 2011 p. 82-83 (repr from Bar Ilan annual 20-21 (1983). See also his article "*al Hahavura*" pp. 51-58.

Bibliography:

- M. Beer, *The Sages of the Mishna and Talmud: Teaching Activities and Leadership* (heb. Collected essays) , Bar Ilan University Press: Ramat Gan 2011.
- B. Gerhardsson, *Memory and Manuscript*, Lund 1961\ Eerdmans 1991
- D. Goodblatt, " The History of Babylonian Academies" in: *The Cambridge History of Judaism* vol 4 (2006), p.821-839.
- C Hezser, *Jewish Literacy in Roman Palestine*, Tübingen 2001.
- M. Hirshman, *The Stabilization of Rabbinic Culture 100c .e.-350 c.e.: Texts on Education and their Late Antique Context* (Oxford 2009)
- Hayim Lapin, *Rabbis as Romans: The Rabbinic Movement in Palestine, 100-400 c.e.*, Oxford University Press: Oxford and NY 2012.
- S. Naeh, "Omanut Hazikaron" in Y. Sussman et al ed., *MehQerei Talmud* 3 vol 2, Magnes Press: Jerusalem 2005, p.543-590.
- S. Safrai, " Education and the Study of Torah" *CRINT*, *The Jewish People in the First Century*, Van Gorcum 1976 pp. 945-970.
- H. Shapira, "*Beit Hamidrash beshalhei yemei bayit sheni uvetekufat hazal*", PhD thesis, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem 2001.