Whereas medieval Spanish Jewry was bilingual as far as writing was concerned (i.e., Hebrew and Arabic), in Ashkenaz (western Germany, eastern France and England) Hebrew served as the sole written language. The literary language of the surrounding culture was mainly Latin, though middle high German was also beginning to be used in writing for epic poetry, courtly lyrics and sermons (Goldenberg, 1971, p. 1636).

In the second half of the twelfth century the works of Jewish authors became more accessible to readers in Ashkenaz and Spain than they had been hitherto. Spanish exiles translated into Hebrew the most important works that had been written in Spain. Moses ha-Kohen Gikatilla had translated the works of Hayyuj as did Abraham Ibn Ezra, while Judah ibn Tibbon translated some of Ibn Janah’s works. The Jewish intellectuals of Spain who were exiled to Italy and to southern France brought with them the works which had been written in Spain, and they disseminated their contents among intellectuals in their new lands. Ibn Ezra had done his best to disseminate the knowledge of Hebrew in various countries of Christian Europe.

Whereas in Spain Hebrew grammar was treated and developed mostly as a pure science (Hirschfeld, 1926, p. 91; Klar, 1947, pp. vi–vii), the study of grammar in Ashkenaz was pursued not merely as a theoretical matter but also for practical application in reading Holy Scripture.¹

The works of Ashkenazi grammarians can be divided into three categories (Eldar, 1979, p. 91):
A) Grammatical-Masoretic treatises such as Hörāyat haqqόřē “The Instruction of the Reader” (Eldar, 1985, p. 233), i.e., reading Torah scrolls

¹ Zunz (1919, p. 107) devotes a chapter to the vocalizers (Naqdānim) and includes among them several of the older authorities on grammar beginning with Menachem. The Ashkenazi vocalizers were the bearers of masoretic studies during the thirteenth and part of the fourteenth centuries.
in the synagogue. This treatise is an anonymous treatise, known to us in many versions and editions, which contain many rules for the accents. Its Arabic version is known as ḥidāyah ʿalqārī, “The Instruction of the Reader," and its translation and Hebrew adaptation are known by such names as “Ḥorāyat ḥaqqōrē,” “Ṭaʾāmē ḥammīqrâ” and “Ṭokēn ʿEzrā.”

Another example of such a grammatical-masoretic treatise is “Ein ḥaqqōrē” of Yekuthiel ben Judah ha-Kohen ha-Naqdan (known as ḤN). This treatise is one of the most widely used grammatical-masoretic treatises among the Ashkenazi scholars of the Middle Ages. Other such treatises include a didactic poem of the rules of vocalization by R. Mordecai bar Hillel, didactic poems on Ṭaʾāmē kap ʿālep sepaʿām, “the accents on the twenty-one books,” “Ṭaʾāmē ʿēmet,” the accents on Job, Proverbs and Psalms, books by R. Joseph bar Kalonymus han-naqdan and more.

B) Comprehensive Hebrew grammatical treatises such as “Ṣeḥer haṣṣōḥam” by R. Moses ben Isaac ha-Nessia,2 and “Ḥibbūr ḥaqqōnim” by R. Shimshom han-naqdan. These treatises also contain chapters on masoretic grammar which deal with practical application in reading holy scripture.

C) Grammatical treatises which deal with specific topics such as: “daʾyyāqūṭ” by R. Samuel ben Meir (Rashbam), “ḥakrāʿōt Rabbēnū Tam,” and “mapiʾēḥ šel diqdiq,” probably by R. Mordecai Yaʿir, the medieval editor of “Ḥibbūr ḥaqqōnim.”

Scholars have not had much interest in such Ashkenazi treatises belonging to category B, and research was focused more on Spanish grammarians. The “Ṣeḥer haṣṣōḥam” was first edited by the Hebraist G. W. Collins (1882). This edition did not get further than the first part of the treatise. A second edition was done by B. Klar (1947; Eldar, 1979, p. 100, n. 2a) and also includes a small portion of the treatise. “Ḥibbūr ḥaqqōnim,” on the other hand, has not yet been edited by scholars except for one part: “Ṣaʿar ḥattēnūʿōt” “The Chapter on the Vowels,” which was edited by Eldar (1979). Apart from that, only short quotations have been printed in manuscript catalogs (Wolf, 1715–33, v. 1, p. 1152, v. iii, p. 1160, v. vi, p. 1003). “Ḥibbūr ḥaqqōnim” has also been mentioned by scholars who have dealt with the history of Hebrew language and literature.

Despite the lesser importance of Ashkenazi Hebrew grammar compared to that of the Sepharadim grammar and the smaller number of

2. An English scholar of the second half of the thirteenth century. He was a pupil of Rabbi Moses ben Yomtob ha-Naqdan of London who died about 1268 C.E.
Ashkenazi texts, a comprehensive history of the Hebrew language remains incomplete until account is taken of Ashkenazi contribution in this area. Therefore I have edited two further parts of “Hibbûr haqqônîm”: The Chapter on the Prenominal Suffixes and The Chapter on the Verb. The part on the Nouns and the grammatical-masoretic treatise still remains in manuscript form.

The author of “Hibbûr haqqônîm”

The author’s name is mentioned in the MSS. as follows (MS. B, p. 56b, MS. L, p. 72b; Porges, 1907; Eldar, 1979, p. 101):

1) “...וְאֵין שְׁמֶשׁוֹן נְהַמְּבָר אָדָם עַל ...”, “and I, Shimshon the author, said concerning...”

2) By the medieval editor of “Hibbûr haqqônîm” (MS. B, p. 78a; MS. L, p. 94b):

“זֶה ספר שְׁמוֹנֵה אֵשׁ אֲשֶׁר הָרָךְ וְחָכְמִים בַּכְּרוֹב

וְשָׂם אֵשׁ הָהוֹדָה דֶּרֶךְ וְחָכָם שְׁמֶשׁוֹן הנָחַד.”

“This is a book which written by a man in whom the gift of speech and the spirit of God dwells... and the name of that man, of blessed memory, is the scholar R. Shimshon hannaqdan.”

3) In MS. P at the end of the short grammatical treatise “Maptêah šel diqdûq” preceding “Hibbûr haqqônîm” there is a note which attributes this short treatise to R. Shimshon:

“סלֶךָ מִפְּתַח הַדָּקָדָק מַהְּנוּ הָשָׁמֶשׁ שֶׁרְשַׁיָּה לָנוּ שֶׁשָּׁהוּ.זֶכָּה.”

“It is the end of “maptêah šel diqdûq” by the scholar R. Shimshon, and may it be a source of joy for us.”

There is also a gloss in MS. V (in the title page) in which only the title “Ashkenazi” appears:

“סֶפֶר הַדָּקָדָק מְאָשְׁכָנְזִי וּלָא נְכוֹר שֶם ”

“This is a grammar book by an Ashkenazi whose name is not mentioned (i.e., known).”

3. The edition of these two chapters (with an apparatus and explanatory notes in Hebrew and also a full introduction in English) was submitted as a Ph.D. thesis to the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Literatures, UCLA, in Summer of 1987.
R. Shimshon's title "Naqdan" (vocalizer) is very common among grammarians from Ashkenaz, and appears in Zunz's list amongst the "Naqdanim" (Zunz, 1919, p. 113; Eisenstein, 1951, p. 104; Steinschneider, 1897, pp. 200–202; Klar, 1947, preface; Eldar, 1979, p. 102).

The Author's Identity and Period

There is a consensus among scholars, first expressed by Heidenheim (Loewenstein, 1837, pp. 37–38; Eldar, 1979, p. 103; Berliner, 1886, p. 5; Bacher, 1892, p. 91; Freiman, 1930, pp. 169–170; Hirschfeld, 1926, p. 91) that R. Shimshon was the grandfather of R. Joseph from Xanten (on Xanten see: Elbogen, Reimann, Tykocinsky, 1934, pp. 497–499), the son of Kalonymus from Neuss (on Neuss see: Avneri, 1968, pp. 243–245). This consensus, based upon glosses which were written on a biblical MS. by R. Joseph, son of Kalonymus. In one of the glosses he writes (Loewenstein, 1837, pp. 37–38):

"AIY YOSHP HU... KALONIMOS... NAQDANIM... DAGUEM... ORA'AHE..." 1

And in another gloss, R. Joseph mentions his grandfather R. Shimshon. This gloss appended to the book of Kings II 5:6, includes the following sentence: "... And also in a book which my grandfather R. Shimshon had vocalized..."

Scholars such as Wickes (1881, preface), Bacher (1892, p. 90), Völlers (1906, p. 438), Waxman (1933, p. 12), Ginsburg (Levita, 1867, p. 257, n. 30), Freiman (Elbogen, Reimann, Tykocinsky, 1934, p. 499) and Tene (1971, pp. 1379–1390) therefore propose that R. Shimshon's period of activity was the middle of the thirteenth century.4

There are also some glosses in the "Hibbur haqqonim" by the editor of the treatise, which supply more information about the author's period and identity. In one of these glosses, the editor mentions his name, place and date (MS. B, p. 92a):5

4. But see Szniejder (1927, p. XXIV) who dates R. Shimshon to the end of the twelfth century.
5. In MS. L, p. 106, he is mentioned by name only once:
"And I, Mordecai Ya'ir, the humblest person in my entire family, could not clarify the aforementioned six words for several years until the year 5057 (i.e., of the creation of the world which is 1297 C.E.) on Passover, while I was in synagogue in Friedberg (on this place see: Avineri, 1968, p. 263, n. 15). I was pondering these six words and finally found an answer. Then I made three 'signs' which are mentioned above, in order that I should not forget them."

In another gloss R. Mordecai Ya'ir testifies to being one of R. Shimshon's disciples (MS. B, p. 92a; Margoliouth, 1899–1935, p. 295, right column):

"Furthermore, when I wrote it for myself, I changed the verbs according to my own foolish view and also expanded my explanation according to my own opinion. It is not that I disagree with him, for Heaven forbid that I should do so, for all that I learned concerning grammar is nothing more than the drops which fell down from his hands while his students poured water on them."

R. Mordecai Ya'ir also indicates that he learned something from R. Shimshon's disciple (MS. B, p. 84b; MS. L, p. 16):

"So I learned from the scholar R. Salomon who had received it from the scholar R. Shimshon ha-Naqdan, of blessed memory."

In other glosses in the treatise R. Mordecai again mentions his name and the title 'humble'.

6. See, for example, his name in MS. L, p. 29b and MS. V, p. 14b:

"וזאא זא'אנז" and the title "ya'ir" in MS. B, p. 29b and MS. L, p. 46a:

"זאא היצזע"
acquired his knowledge of grammar from R. Shimshon’s disciples. Eldar (1979, p. 105) concludes on the basis of this information that R. Shimshon was born circa 1230 C.E. and flourished in the middle of the thirteenth century.

The title of the treatise

Two names are derived from the treatise. The first one is “Hibbûr haqqônîm”: as attested by the editor (MS. B, p. 78a; Wolf, 1715–33, v. 1, p. 1152; Delitzsch, 1838, p. 16):

“עֵלָּךְ קָרָאתָ לְעָפָר הַזָּה שִׁבְרָה הַקּוֹנִים כִּי קָנָה אָまとָה וְרַבָּה הוֹכָנִים”

“Therefore I called this book “hibbûr haqqônîm,” since it was acquired by many scholars.”

The second name is “haššimsônî,” as attested by the owner of MS. B (MS. B, p. 94b):

“שֶׁיֵּלֶדֶת הַשְּׁמָשְׁנִי. מִשָּׁה בַּר רַבָּךְ וּדָלָל”

“This (i.e., the book) “haššimsônî”: is my book. I am Moses son of R. Joseph of blessed memory.”

A sixteenth century source uses both names (Levita, 1867, p. 257):

“. . . וְסָפְרַ הַשְּׁמָשְׁנִי דָּוָא הַסָּפְרַ הַנְּקָרָה וְיַבֵּר הַקּוֹנִים מַתְחִילִי לָהוּ”

“Whereas the book “haššimsônî” is the book called “hibbûr haqqônîm,” beginning with. . . .”

Structure and content of the treatise

“hibbûr haqqônîm” contains two major components (Eldar, 1979):

A) a grammatical treatise.
B) a grammatical-masoretic treatise.

The grammatical treatise is divided into the following parts:

1) “The Pronominal Suffixes” (MS. B, p. 14b)
2) “The Chapter on Verbs” (MS. B, p. 16a)
The grammatical-masoretic treatise is divided into the following parts:

1) "The Chapter on Vocalization" (MS. B, p. 46b)
2) "The Chapter on the Letters Yhw" (MS. B, p. 66a)
3) "The Chapter on Meteg" (MS. B, p. 67a)
4) "The Chapter on the Biblical Accents" (MS. B, p. 68b)
5) "The Chapter on the Dagesh" (MS. B, p. 77a)

R. Shimshon's literary sources

The treatise's editor mentions some literary sources which were cited by R. Shimshon (MS. B, p. 78a; MS. L, p. 94a; Margoliouth, 1899–1935, p. 294; Porges, 1907, p. 57):

This is a book which was written by a man in whom the gift of speech and the spirit of God dwell . . . and he drew water from the following
wells: from the book of R. David, commonly known as Hayyuj, and from the book of R. Jonah Ibn Janah, commonly known as Merwan who was a great grammarian in his generation, and from the book of “hayyēsōd,” which is commonly known as Parhon. He also cited Ibn Ezra’s works: the book “Areṣet haḥassapā,”16 the book “hayyēsōd,”17 and the book of R. Joseph Kimhi, the book “Ben-Pōral.”18 He further cited the names of R. Samuel ha-Nagid, R. Moses ha-Kohen the Spaniard, R. Marinus19 and R. Jacob Kimhi20 as well as many other grammarians . . . and in the section on vocalization he cited the book Miklōl many times.”

In the two parts which I recently edited (see above note 3), the following scholars are mentioned: R. Saadia Gaon; R. A. Ibn Ezra; Hayyuj (also: R. Judah, Judah Ben-David commonly known as Hayyuj); R. Jonah the grammarian (also Merwan); the Masorites (also the men of the masoret); R. Moses (also: R. Moses ha-Kohen the Spaniard); R. Samuel ha-Nagid; R. Joseph b. Kimhi; Dunash b. Labrat; Parhon; R. Jacob Kimhi (?) (see above n. 20); R. Jacob Eleazar; R. Samuel ha-Dayqan21, Rashi; R. Moses Roti22; Kimhi (R. David); R. Judah ha-Levi (?)23; the easterners (i.e., the Babylonian tradition); the westerners (i.e., the Palestinian tradition).

16. According to Delitzsch (1838, p. 253) and Ben Jacob (1880, p. 54) this book is:

17. This treatise was recently edited and published by N. Alloni (1984).

18. Zunz (1919, p. 113) assumes that Joseph b. Jehozadak, the author of[h] מלת, may be the author of [h] מלת פֶּה מִצְוֹת by R. Joseph Kimhi. There is however a possibility that?[h] מלת פֶּה מִצְוֹת is a secondary name for [h] מלת by R. Joseph Kimhi.

19. R. David Kimhi in “Miklōl” (1862, p. 38a) indicates that Ibn-Janah is mentioned by some people as R. Marinus. See also Bacher (1931, p. 133).

20. Nothing is known about R. Jacob in the Kimhi’s family. Elias Leiva in Masoret ha-Massoret (1968, p. 258) mentions a grammarian by the name of Jacob “Naqdan”: “He is often quoted by the above mentioned R. Shimshon in his work but I do not know who he is.” Ginsburg (ibid., n. 35) identifies this R. Jacob Naqdan as R. Jacob ben Eleazar, who flourished circa 1130 C.E. at Toledo. But it seems that the title “Naqdan” is more common among the Ashkenazi grammarians than the Sephardi ones. It may appear that the name [h] נָקָדנָא is a scribal error and the author of “Hibbur haqqōnīm” meant ר. נָקָדנָא, which was published in: Traditionier Rabbiner Verband in der Salovakei Jahrbuch 1923 (1925/6) redigirt von Majer Stern.

R. Shimshon also mentions the following books: Spanish Codices, 24 "zikkiiron," "seper Ben-Porat" (see above n. 18), "sēper hayyēsōd" (see above n. 17), "sēper yerušalmi," 25 "seper möznayim," and "sēper ārešet hassapād" (see above n. 16).

Some additional sources which are mentioned by Eldar (1971, pp. 108–109) in the unedited chapters are:

Correct (i.e., reliable) Codices, 26 "sēper 'eben bōhan," 27 R. Joseph Hazzan of Troyes, 28 "sēper sēmadār." 29

References to R. Shimshon's treatise in other medieval sources: 30

a) R. Shimshon is mentioned in a grammatical treatise from the second half of the thirteenth century by R. Shneur (Zunz, 1919, p. 119; Ben Jacob, 1880, p. 112; Renan, 1887, p. 487; Neubauer, 1886, p. 271): "כְּפִי מָצָאָה הַמִּקְסָא בִּקְדֻם מִרְאָא שַמִּשְׁוֹ וְהָאָדּוֹס, ... Thus I found in R. Shimshon ha-Naqdan's work"

b) In a manuscript of an Ashkenazi Mahzor from Worms, which was written circa 1270 C.E. (Geiger, 1844, p. 43), we find R. Shimshon's name: "... מִרְאָא שַמִּשְׁוֹ וְהָאָדּוֹס..." "From R. Shimshon Naqdan..."

c) In a Biblical manuscript from 1489 C.E. we find a gloss appended to the book of Esther 5:2 (Eldar, 1979, p. 106, n. 41; Geiger, 1857, pp. 62–63; Mendelson, 1782, p. 24): "... והמשוער חובה ל'רייח הכה בvelteה קטנה', "haššimsoši listed every והרי which comes with the musical note telisha qetana..."

d) By Elias Levita, 1538 C.E. (Levita, 1867, p. 257).

The MSS. of "hibbûr haqqōnîm"

Margoliouth (1899–1935, p. 295), Wickes (1881, preface), and Ben-David (1958, p. 8) noted only three MSS. Adding MS. V which they neglected (Eldar, 1979, p. 108), we now know of four MSS.: a) British Museum Or. 1016 (=MS. B) (Margoliouth, 1899–1935, No. 969).

24. Compare: Levita, 1867 (pp. 93, 260).
27. A grammatical treatise from 1143 C.E. Only five chapters (out of fifty) remain, all of which deal with the study of the roots of Hebrew verbs. Also see Bacher (1887, pp. 94–115).
28. Lived in the middle of the thirteenth century; wrote a grammatical treatise ס' ירייה הכה בvelteה קטנה. See Zunz (1919, p. 84, 113); Poznanski (1913, p. XCVII).
29. Levita, 1867 (p. 122 and n. 80).
30. These sources are mentioned by Eldar (1979, pp. 105–106).
b) Karl Marx University Or. 102a (=MS. L) (Vollers, 1906, No. 1107).
c) Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana Ebr. 401 (=MS. V) (Ben Jacob, 1880, p. 526; Steinschneider, 1878, p. 16.
d) Biblioteca Palatina de Parma (=MS. P) (De Rossi, 1803, No. 389).

**MS. B.**

According to Margoliouth (ibid.) MS. B is written in a German rabbinic character of the thirteenth to fourteenth century. The MS. contains 94 leaves and includes the following:

1–14a—a short grammatical treatise “maptēḥ ṣel diiqḍi q” “A key to grammar”

14a–78b—“ḥibbūr haqqōnim”

78b–94—Some short grammatical-masoretic treatises by anonymous authors.

MS. B contains editor’s glosses, most of which appear in the margin, but some are written between the lines. Some of the glosses are marked by the word הגדה ‘gloss’, but not all.

**MS. L.**

According to Vollers, MS. L is written in a French rabbinic character of the thirteenth century (Vollers, 1906, p. 438). MS. L contains 101

31. On p. 15a the word הגדה is written in the margin for the following gloss:

32. On p. 26b, for example, there is a gloss which was probably written by the editor without marking the word הגדה. It also contains some dots on the letters of the words, as follows:

For some more examples in the grammatical masoretic part of “Ḥibbūr haqqōnim” see Eldar (1979, pp. 107–108).

33. Porges (1907, p. 55); also: Ginsburger (1927, pp. 160–162) assumes a German rabbinic character of the fourteenth century.
leaves which include the following: 1–24a—“mapti'ah šel diqdûq”\textsuperscript{34}; 24a–94a—“ḥibbûr haqqônîm”\textsuperscript{35}; 94b–101a—Some short grammatical masoretic treatises by anonymous authors; 101b—A list of some books of the Bible and liturgical texts.

Although MS. L contains passages which are missing in MS. B, there are some missing passages in MS. L which appear in MS. B.\textsuperscript{36} There is also a passage which is written twice, with some minor variations.\textsuperscript{37}

**MS. V.**

Steinschneider (1878, p. 16; also: Ben Jacob, 1880, p. 526) dates MS. V to the fourteenth century, but a difficult to read note at the end of the MS. seems to date it to 1446 C.E.\textsuperscript{38} MS. V is also written in a rabbinic script. It contains 77 leaves which include the following:

1a—A title page with the note:

„ספר הרדקוף מאשכנזים ולא נזכר שם„

“This is a grammar book by an Ashkenazi whose name is not mentioned (i.e., known).”

1b–12a—“mapti'ah šel diqdûq”; 12a–71a—“ḥibbûr haqqônîm”; 71a–76b—Some short grammatical-masoretic treatises; 77a—A list which includes names of biblical accents.

It should be noted that MS. V is written in a very neat script through p. 16b. From that point on the copyist becomes careless.

34. Concluding with the words:

„נשלַמְמַפתַּה שֶל רָכָּךַו בְּכָל הַצָּאוֹתְנִי הַעֲלָאוֹתְנִי הַדוֹרִי“

35. Concluding with the passage beginning with the words:

„וז הספר שלמה אַשָּׁר הָרִיבָר וּרְחָבָה הַאֲלָלוּתִי בַּכּוּרִי“

36. See for example, MS. L, p. 29b, line 16–30b; line 12 is missing in MS. B. MS. L, on the other hand, is missing a passage from 40b to 43a. See also an editor’s note on MS. L, p. 54a which indicates the missing pages:

„אַכְּפֹּת סְפָר שֶלֹא יִנְצְרוּ הָרָכָּךַו הַחֵסְרוֹתְנִי הַמְּסָלָם וּרְצֹלָה חַנְּנַג דְּחֵי וּמְחָלָה“

37. See MS. L, pp. 35a–37b which is a repeated passage and indicated in my edition in the apparatus in L.2.

38. The following note appears on p. 77:

„וכֹּרָךְ עַרְוֵת שֶלֹהָה לְפָלְנוֹ לְבֹאֵר בְּבֵיתָב שֶתּ הַסְּמָתָא אָלֶּפָּי, עַמָּטָא וְשָׁמָ"
MS. P.

Not much is known about MS. P. The first 8 leaves contain "maptēah šel diqduq." The first 8 leaves contain "maptēah šel diqduq." Then follows but in a different and shorter style than MSS. B, L and V. I judge the text of "hibbūr haqqōnim" to be a paraphrase of the original work. The possibility does remain, however, that the version in the other MSS. is a paraphrase and the original work is actually presented in MS. P. Since the condition of the version in MSS. B, L and V is superior and since MS. P appears to be the paraphrase, I have given my attention to the former.

39. Here "maptēah šel diqduq" is attributed to R. Shimshon since the treatise concludes with the words:

"סليك מצפת הורקיו ינשה ר"משנוי ישיהו לו שושן. הלוכד.

40. The following samples indicate some differences:

a) MSS. B,L,V =
MS. P =

b) MSS. B,L,V =
MS. P =

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Manuscripts:

- MS. B = British Museum Or. 1016
- MS. L = Karl Marx University Or. 102a
- MS. V = Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana Ebr. 401
- MS. P = Biblioteca Palatina de Parma


