

ABSTRACT

THE *TOSAFOT* ('MARGINAL ANNOTATIONS')  
IN *SIFRE* ON DEUTERONOMY

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Jacob N. Epstein and Louis Finkelstein laid the groundwork for the study of the *tosafot* ('marginal annotations') in *Sifre* on Deuteronomy and distinguishing them from the original text. They established criteria for identifying the *tosafot*, and discussed in detail all the passages that seemed to be such additions. Epstein conducted most of his studies of the topic without being aware of the findings detailed in Finkelstein's edition of the *Sifre* which was published later. Epstein similarly did not draw a clear distinction between the later additions that were incorporated by medieval copyists (most in accordance with *Mekhilta* on Deuteronomy) and the inclusion of early sources by the redactors of *Sifre*. Finkelstein, on the other hand, often tended to resolve difficulties in content and context by the hypothesis of marginal annotations (what he called '*gilyonot*'), even when there is no textual evidence for this in the manuscripts.

After the publication of the Finkelstein edition, new manuscripts were discovered for various parts of the *Sifre* of Deuteronomy, which help to locate the medieval additions and re-examine the question of whether they actually are additions or belong to the original text. The most important of these are the direct and indirect Eastern textual witnesses: four copies of *Sifre* from the Cairo Genizah and two Yemenite copies, along with citations from *Sifre* in the Yemenite *Drash ha-Mazhir*, which are completely free of later additions. The absence or presence of passages in the Eastern witnesses can be taken to indicate whether we have a later addition or an original passage in *Sifre*.

The article contains a renewed and comprehensive discussion of the *tosafot* in *Sifre* on Deuteronomy. Our examination is based on a collection of 91 passages for which there are good proofs to their being *tosafot*, along with a collection of 53 passages that Epstein and Finkelstein thought to be such, either erroneously or without sufficient grounds.

This examination also brings out the different nature of the *tosafot* in the various tannaitic midrashim. Most of these additions in *Sifre* on Numbers and *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Ishmael*, which were redacted in the school of R. Ishmael, are early additions, which apparently were included in the secondary redaction of the midrashim, in the late tannaitic period. In contrast, most of the *tosafot* in *Sifra* and *Sifre* on Deuteronomy, which were redacted in the school of R. Akiva, are late additions by medieval scribes, and were mainly taken from the parallel midrashim from the school of R. Ishmael on Leviticus and Deuteronomy. The *tosafot* in *Sifra* are mostly long and refer to the verses that were not explained in the *Sifra*. They are also relatively few in number and thus differ significantly from the *tosafot* *Sifre* on Deuteronomy, which are numerous and predominantly short, offering alternative explanations to those presented in the *Sifre* itself.

The last part of the article explains the consistent difference between the Eastern manuscripts of *Sifre*, which lack *tosafot*, and the Western textual witnesses, which are replete with such additions.