

## כרפס

After discussing *qiddush*, the Mishnah describes very briefly the opening of the meal:

הביאו לפניו מטבל בחזרת עד שהוא מגיע לפרפרת הפת

These nine words raise three obvious questions:

- 1) What is it that they 'bring before him'?
- 2) What is *parperet hapat*?
- 3) Why does the only specific detail provided by the Mishnah refer to eating lettuce when the universal practice is *not* to eat lettuce, but to eat some other vegetable?

I shall proceed by answering these questions in reverse order, concluding with a review of the evidence from the *Tosefta* and from the Geonic period regarding the composition of the appetizer course.

### Lettuce during the appetizer course

Plainly, the understanding of the Mishnah is that lettuce should be consumed during the appetizer course. Indeed, this is the only piece of information that it states explicitly and unequivocally. Standard commentaries on the Mishnah, however, make the counter-intuitive claim that the Mishnah is talking only about a case where no other vegetable is available in order to inform you that in such a case – and only in such a case – it is *permitted* to eat lettuce as your appetizer. The basis for this interpretation is found in the *Bavli*, *Pesahim* 114b-115a:

פשיטא היכא דאיכא שאר ירקות מברך אשאר ירקות בורא פרי האדמה ואכיל והדר  
מברך על אכילת מרור ואכיל היכא דליכא אלא חסא מאי אמר רב הונא מברך  
מעיקרא אמרור בורא פרי האדמה ואכיל ולבסוף מברך עליה על אכילת מרור ואכיל  
מתקיף לה רב חסדא לאחר שמילא כריסו הימנו חוזר ומברך עליה אלא אמר רב  
חסדא מעיקרא מברך עליה בורא פרי האדמה ועל אכילת מרור ואכיל ולבסוף אכיל  
אכילת חסא בלא ברכה בסוריא עבדי כרב הונא ורב ששת בריה דרב יהושע עבדי  
כרב חסדא והלכתא כוותיה דרב חסדא רב אחא בריה דרבא מהדר אשאר ירקות  
לאפוקי נפשיה מפלוגתא.

This passage raises a number of questions. If it is 'obvious' that when you have another vegetable, you should eat that instead of lettuce for the appetizer, why is it noteworthy that Rav Aha (a seventh generation *amora*) would use them? Why it is 'obvious' that it is preferable to use another vegetable when the Mishnah says to eat lettuce? What does it mean to say that in *Surya* they followed the opinion of Rav Huna when the circumstances he is describing (that is to say when no vegetable other than lettuce is available) would hardly be likely to occur outside of famine conditions?

As is not infrequently the case, this carefully arranged *sugya* yields more information once one reads it not in the order that the information is presented by the editors, but in the order that the statements were originally recorded. For ease of use, I have colour-coded the above passage; the darker the shade the earlier the statement.

The earliest stratum of the *sugya* is the debate between Rav Huna and Rav Hisda. Both assume that one is supposed to eat lettuce twice during the meal, once during the appetizer course and once during the main course. They differ as to when one should say the *bracha al achilat maror*: during the appetizer course, when it is first eaten, or during the main course, which constitutes the essential fulfilment of the *mitzvah*. The next layer reports that in *Surya* they followed the opinion of Rav Huna and quotes a certain *rav* (different names are given in different manuscripts) who followed the opinion of Rav Huna. Rav Aha, however, instead of ruling one way or the other, found a way to avoid the dispute. If one does not eat lettuce at all during the appetizer course, then there is no dispute that the *bracha* should be said during the main course. Clearly, Rav Aha's practice became widespread, so much so that the anonymous editors took this to be the default practice and *reinterpreted* the dispute between Rav Huna and Rav Hisda to apply only to the case where no other vegetable was available leaving the Seder participant with no other choice than to eat lettuce during the appetizer course. Finally, the editors rule in accordance with the opinion of Rav Hisda.

We see, therefore, that the practice to not eat lettuce during the appetizer course came about as a result of not being able to make a decision about when to say the *bracha*. We could proceed by asking whether Rav Huna or Rav Hisda's opinion is more reasonable and congruent with other *halachot*. However, this is not strictly necessary since the Palestinian rite does not contain a separate *bracha* for *maror* at all. Rather, as we shall see at more length in a subsequent reactionary note, it contains one longer *bracha* on both *matzah* and *maror* ending with the *hatima*, זוכר הברית. This is based on the opinion of Hillel (which is accepted as *halacha* by every source except the *Bavli*) according to which the essential *mitzvah* consists of eating *matzah*, *maror* (and under normal circumstances the *Pesah*) together, according to the straightforward interpretation of על מצה ומררים יאכלוהו. There is therefore no question about when to say a *bracha* on *maror* and no reason not to follow the Mishnah in eating lettuce during the appetizer course.

We see then that the elimination of lettuce from the appetizer course was a product of the Babylonian tradition first separating the eating of *matzah* and *maror*, generating a confusion about when to say the *bracha* on *maror*, which it was unable to solve except by abolishing one of the occasions on which lettuce was eaten. There is, however, a *sugya* in the *Yerushalmi* (*Pesachim* 10:3), which also needs to be addressed. Unfortunately, the Leiden MS is our soul manuscript copy of *Y Pesachim*, and in this section it is undoubtedly corrupt, as indicated by an unusually large marginal note. What follows is the best possible reconstruction of the *girsa*, based on Shaul Lieberman's analysis, though there is almost certainly still something missing.<sup>1</sup>

חברייא בשם רבי יוחנן צריך לטבל בחזרת שני פעמים  
 רבי זעורה בשם רבי יוחנן אינו צריך לטבל בחזרת שני פעמים  
 רבי שמעון בן לקיש אמר אם לא טבל פעם ראשונה צריך לטבל פעם שנייה  
 מתניתא פליגא על ר' שמעון בן לקיש שבכל הלילות אנו מטבילים פעם אחת והלילה  
 הזה שתי פעמים (סבר רבי שמעון בן לקיש על הדא דבר קפרא מתניתא שבכל  
 הלילות אנו מטבילין אותו עם הפת וכאן אנו מטבילין אותו בפני עצמו)

<sup>1</sup> ירושלמי כפשותו, 519

The words in brackets are from the marginal notes, and the words קפרא פליגא על בר קפרא have been removed.

מתניתא פליגא על רבי יוחנן יוצאין במצה בין שכיוון בין שלא כיוון והכא מכיוון  
שהסיב חזקה כיוון  
מתיב רבי ירמיה קומי רבי זעורה מתניתא פליגא על רבי שמעון בן לקיש הביאו  
לפניו מצה וחזרת וחרוסת אף על פי שאין חרוסת מצוה חזרת מצוה. אמר ליה שכן  
רב מטבל בתירדין.

The *sugya* starts by presenting three opinions about when one must eat lettuce at the *seder*. The first two opinions are reported in the name of Rabi Yohanan. The first is that one is obligated to eat ('to dip') lettuce twice, the second is that one is *not* obligated to do so. This can be understood as a debate of whether the order described by the Mishnah is obligatory: does the fact that the Mishnah lists two occasions when lettuce is eaten mean that one is absolutely obligated to do so, or can one choose either one? Rabi Shimon ben Lakish is then quoted as saying that if one did not eat lettuce the first time, then he must do with the *matzah*. The difference between this and the second opinion attributed to Rabi Yohanan, is that Rabi Shimon ben Lakish believes that rather than having the choice of when to eat lettuce at the meal, the first lettuce course is the obligatory one, and only in its absence is it necessary to have lettuce with the bread.<sup>2</sup>

The *gemara* then questions Rabi Shimon ben Lakish's opinion by citing the Mishnah's *manishtaneh* statement that 'on all other nights we dip [lettuce] once, on this night twice'. The position is answered by conceding that the Mishnah does indeed indicate lettuce must be eaten twice, but pointing out that there this is not the only opinion. The 'Mishnah' of Bar Kapara states, to the contrary, that the difference between the *Seder* and all other nights is that on *Seder* night lettuce is eaten alone and not with bread as it is usually. This fits with the opinion that only the first lettuce course, before the bread, is obligatory. The *Gemara* then brings a support for Rabi Shimon ben Lakish's opinion in the form of a *baraita* stating that one fulfils his obligation to eat *matzah* (and thus, the logic seems to run, also *maror*) whether or not he had *cavanah*. The *Gemara* then adds that, since he was reclining at this point, the assumption is that he did in fact have *cavanah*. Since the only thing the *baraita* states is that *cavanah* is irrelevant, it's hard to see precisely what point is being made here,<sup>3</sup> but the general message seems to be that one fulfils his obligation by eating lettuce during the appetizer course and therefore does not *need* to eat it again. Finally, the *gemara* records Rabi Yirmiyya's further objection to Rabi Shimon ben Lakish's opinion, by pointing out the obvious, namely that after having described the participants eating lettuce, the Mishnah then describes lettuce being brought to the table again. There appears to be a conflation of two issues in this *sugya*: what one needs to do to fulfil the obligation of eating *maror*, and how many times is it proper to eat lettuce at the meal (for reasons we will come to shortly).

The *sugya* so far is structurally simple, though it leaves us with many frustrating questions to which it seems likely that access to more manuscripts would have provided some answers.

<sup>2</sup> This is difficult to reconcile with the *haggadot* from *Eretz Yisrael*, which all record a *bracha* said over *matzah* and *maror* eaten together. Clearly, Rabi Shimon ben Lakish's opinion was not accepted as *halacha*, but this raises the question of what kind of *bracha*, and how many, he did say.

<sup>3</sup> Some interpret the last part as an answer. Since it is only during the main course that he reclines, it is only then that he fulfils his obligation. The premise of this explanation is not true, since the Jews of the hellenised Levant reclined during all courses at special meals, and the argument doesn't even follow since the *baraita* just said that *cavanah* doesn't matter.

However, Rabi Zeura's concluding response is quite mysterious 'he said to him, therefore Rav would dip with beet [leave]s'. It is not at all clear what this means. If Rav was trying to avoid some sort of problem by eating beets instead of lettuce, then what is the problem? The second opinion cited in the *Gemara* is that one does not *need* to eat lettuce twice, but no-one has so much as hinted that you *may* not eat it twice. There is also an additional historical problem: Rav was probably the single most important individual in establishing normative Rabbinic Judaism in Bavel, but his practice of not eating lettuce during the appetizer course apparently made no impact since, as we have seen, both Rav Huna and Rav Hisda took it as a given that one did eat lettuce as did, apparently, everyone else until Rav Aha in the seventh generation of *amoraim*. The only thing we can say with confidence about this passage, therefore, is that the version we have is highly corrupt. Drawing any further conclusions about when and when not to eat lettuce at the *Seder* would be rather incautious.<sup>4</sup>

We have said, then, as much as can be said about the process by which lettuce was removed from the appetizer course, but there is another no less important question: why was it included in the first place? One possible answer is that given by the *Bavli*, namely that it is there to be a *הכירא לתנוקות*. This is generally glossed as meaning that eating lettuce at this stage in the meal is a deliberately incongruous act designed to provoke children into asking questions. This explanation is open to two obvious objections. First, if that is what we are up to, why stop there? Surely, there are more zany things one might think of to rouse the attention a dull-minded child than eating lettuce. Secondly, what exactly is the child supposed to ask? The most obvious question would be some variant of 'Dad, why are we eating lettuce?'. However, if this explanation is correct, then father's answer would have to be 'to make you ask questions', which sounds more like the sort of joke that a Yiddishist might make at an academic conference than an effective pedagogical technique.<sup>5</sup>

The concept of *הכירא לתנוקות*, however, becomes perfectly clear when we look at the next Mishnah:

מזוג לו כוס שני וכן הבן שואל. אם אין דעת בבן אביו מלמדו מה נשתנה הלילה הזה מכל הלילות שבכל הלילות אנו מטבילים פעם אחת הלילה הזה שתי פעמים. שבכל הלילות אנו אוכלים חמץ ומצה הלילה הזה כולו מצה. שבכל הלילות אנו אוכלים בשר צלי שלוק ומבושל הלילה הזה כולו צלי. לפי דעתו שלבן אביו מלמדו<sup>6</sup>

After the second cup is poured, the father fields questions from the son. If the son is not intellectually developed enough to ask questions, his father prompts him by pointing out three ways that the night is different from all other nights: (1) usually we dip once, but tonight we dip twice (2) usually we have both *hametz* and *matzah*, but tonight only *matzah* (3) usually

<sup>4</sup> Another *sugya* in the *Bavli* (114b) has an *amoraic* stratum that takes it as a given that lettuce is used twice and advances two explanations of this, the first that eating *maror* requires *cavanah* (presumed absent during the appetizer course) and the second that it is intended to indicate to the children the specialness of the evening. The editorial layer, however, again introduces the idea that normally other vegetables should be used.

<sup>5</sup> Even more kafkaesque is the modern practice in which children will learn at school that they are going to eat lettuce in order that they should ask a question the answer to which they already know.

<sup>6</sup> Once again, the text in manuscripts of the Mishnah differs in significant ways from that in standard printed editions.

we eat meat cooked in many different ways, but tonight only roasted. Plainly, where the *Mishnah* refers to *בכל הלילות* it means other festive and special meals, and the point is that while the *Seder* is, for the most part, similar to other feasts, it has specific differences that relate to it being the first night of *Pesah*. The three question-prompts found in *Mishnah* are clearly related to the three statements of Raban Gamliel:

רבן גמליאל אומר כל שלא אמר שלושה דברים הללו בפסח לא יצא ידי  
חובתו פסח מצה ומרורים. פסח על שם שפסח המקום על בתי אבותינו  
במצרים. מרורים על שם שמררו המצריים את חיי אבותינו במצרים.  
מצה על שם שנגאלו.

Raban Gamliel states that three items all have to be explicitly talked about at the *Seder* because of their symbolic significance (1) the *korban pesah*, (2) *maror* and (3) *matzah*. It is clear – though this has been obscured by the use of inaccurate versions of the *Mishnah* – that the three *mah nishtanah* statements and the three requirements of the Raban Gamliel are related. The three unusual aspects of the *Seder* meal, when compared with an ordinary festive meal, are that (1) only *matzah* is eaten which recalls the exodus, (2) only roast meat is eaten,<sup>7</sup> which recalls the original *korban pesah* and (3) bitter herbs are eaten, which recalls the bitterness of life in Egypt.

However, the mere fact that lettuce is eaten at the *seder* does not, on its own, suggest anything worthy of note or symbolically important because lettuce was frequently eaten at banquets. Similarly, the mere presence of *matzah* at the table would not have been something that the father could cite as unusual to rouse the attention of a dull-witted son; rather, the presence of *matzah* in the absence of leavened bread was noteworthy. Since forbidding the consumption of non-bitter vegetables at the *seder* would have been otiose, in order to emphasise that *marorim* were specifically being served for their symbolic and halachic value, they were served, not once, but twice. Hence ‘on all nights we dip (lettuce) twice, this night once’. The *gemara* therefore means nothing more mysterious than that the act of serving *merorim* an additional time serves as a *היכר* to children that this food has specific significance on *seder* night beyond its culinary qualities.

## What is *parperet hapat*?

We have now established that the *Mishnah*’s instruction is that the leader of the *seder* eats lettuce until *parperet hapat*, to make clear that lettuce is eaten for a reason.<sup>8</sup> The next step in understanding the *Mishnah*’s instructions for the beginning of the meal, then, is to translate the term *parperet hapat* to determine until which point one should continue eating lettuce. The

<sup>7</sup> This *Mishnah* here is ordinarily understood to be talking about the time of the *beit haMikdash* and hence this question has been deleted and replaced with one about leaning. However, this simply cannot be the case, since the *Pesah* was normally offered with a *Hagiga* which did not have to be roasted (the Bavli’s explanation [*Pesachim* 70a] that the *Mishnah* follows the opinion of *בן תימא* is ahistorical, as Shamma Friedman has [demonstrated](#) at length). Rather, the *Mishnah* here is assuming a custom prevalent in early post-destruction communities of eating roast meat on *Seder* night, or even specifically a lamb cooked in the same manner as the *korban pesah* called a *gedi mekulas*. See *Mishnah Pesachim* 4:4, 7:2, *Beitzah* 2:7.

<sup>8</sup> The reason is that it recalls the bitterness of life in Egypt, but this is what logicians call the final cause. The efficient cause is that the Torah says to eat them. It may be objected here that *maror* at the *seder* is only *d’rabanan* in the absence of *korban pesah*, but (a) the *Mechilta* says precisely the opposite and (b) such an objection presumes a simplistic understanding of the distinction between *d’oraita* and *d’rabanan*.

term *parperet* in tannaitic sources refers to a foodstuff that does not constitute a main meal, typically opposed to bread as in M *Brachot* 6:5.<sup>9</sup> It is therefore translated by traditional commentators as ‘the side-dish eaten with the bread’, that is to say the *maror*.<sup>10</sup> Taken literally, this would mean that one should dip lettuce up until the time one dips lettuce, which is odd, and also contradicts the universal practice of interrupting the eating to do the *maggid*. Traditional commentators resolve this difficulty through various forced interpretations, but the Mishnah can be understood quite simply.

The word *parperet* has quite a large lexical range. In M *Brachot* 6:5, it refers simultaneously to what we would call a side-dish (בֶּרֶךְ עַל הַפֶּת, פֶּטֶר אֶת הַפְּרָפֶרֶת. עַל הַפְּרָפֶרֶת, לֹא פֶטֶר אֶת הַפֶּת), an appetizer (בֶּרֶךְ עַל הַפְּרָפֶרֶת שֶׁלִּפְנֵי הַמְּזוֹן), and a savoury (פֶּטֶר אֶת הַפְּרָפֶרֶת שֶׁלְאַחַר הַמְּזוֹן). In the Tosefta on Pesahim that parallels our Mishnah,<sup>11</sup> we see the term being used to denote appetizers eaten at the beginning of the evening, and it is therefore reasonable to assume that this is how the term is being used here too. In Tosefta *Brachot* 4:8, we find the following description of an idealized formal meal:

כיצד סדר הסעודה אורחין נכנסין ויושבין על גבי ספסלים ועל גבי קתדראות עד שיכנסו כולן. נכנסו כולן ונתנו להם לידים כל אחד ואחד נוטל ידו אחת. מזגו להם את הכוס (כל) אחד ואחד מברך לעצמו. הביאו להם פרפריות כל אחד ואחד מברך לעצמו, עלו והסיבו נתנו להם לידים אע"פ שנוטל ידו אחת נותן לשתי ידיו, מזגו להם את הכוס אע"פ שבירך על הראשונה מברך על השניה. הביאו לפניהם פרפריות אע"פ שבירך על הראשונה מברך על השניה ואחד מברך לכולן הבא לאחר שלש פרפריות אין [לן] רשות ליכנס.

In this archetypal formal meal, multiple appetizer and wine courses are brought before the guests, with defined rules about handwashing and *brachot* before them. It is taken as a given that the number of appetizer courses is limited to three, after which the main meal has come (and therefore, the doors are closed to latecomers).

The main course invariably involved bread, and the term *פת* can function as a synecdoche for the main course, or even the meal as a whole (in much the same way as the word *לחם* frequently does in *Tanach*). If we assume that the word *parperet* in our Mishnah means appetizer, it cannot mean ‘the *parperet* that is eaten with the bread’. In that case the most readily available explanation is that it means ‘the *parperet* that is adjacent to the bread’, that is to say the final appetizer course. The Mishnah therefore means to say that throughout the appetizer courses, one should continue to dip lettuce. We have already seen that the purpose of having two courses of lettuce, one before and one during the main meal, is the *hikara* that is to say to make clear that the lettuce is eaten in fulfillment of a *mitzvah* so as to recall the bitterness of slavery in Egypt. The Mishnah here is telling us that this extra consumption of *maror* should not be done in one go, but take place over the whole duration of the appetizer section of the meal. We may note here that the Mishnah’s conception of the *mitzvah* of eating

<sup>9</sup> בֶּרֶךְ עַל הַפְּרָפֶרֶת שֶׁלִּפְנֵי הַמְּזוֹן, פֶּטֶר אֶת הַפְּרָפֶרֶת שֶׁלְאַחַר הַמְּזוֹן. בֶּרֶךְ עַל הַפֶּת, פֶּטֶר אֶת הַפְּרָפֶרֶת. עַל הַפְּרָפֶרֶת, לֹא פֶטֶר אֶת הַפֶּת.

<sup>10</sup> There is another interpretation according to which *parperet hapat* means something like ‘the breaking up of the bread’, i.e. when the *matzah* is eaten. This is certainly not correct at all, but it amounts to more or less the same thing in practice.

<sup>11</sup> רבי יהודה אומר אפילו לא אכל אלא פרפרת אחד, אפילו לא טבל אלא חזרת אחד, חוטפין מצה לתינוקות בשביל שלא ישנו

*maror* (and by extension *matzah* too) is subtly, but profoundly, different from that commonly taught today. While it is certainly true that the Mishnah assumes that the absolute minimum one must eat to discharge one's obligation is a *kezayit*, the *mitzvah* of eating *maror* is not considered to be fundamentally an act that takes place during the moment this *kezayit* is eaten, but rather one that extends through the meal.

## What did they bring before him?

The Mishnah does not specify any food to be eaten during the appetizer course, stating only that he should dip lettuce the entire time. As we have seen, the Mishnah indicates that there were multiple courses of *parparot*, but it gives no direction as to how many or what they should consist of. The reason for this is quite simple: the contents of the appetizer course was not fixed, but left to the discretion of local or familial custom or taste. The *Seder* is a festive meal, adapted to the needs of the first night of *Pesah* when certain *mitzvot* have to be performed: not everything eaten at the *Seder* has to be laden with symbolism or obligatory significance. We can nevertheless find important and interesting information about what was *typically* eaten during this point in the meal from two sources. The first is the *Tosefta*, and the second is geonic era manuscripts from the Cairo Genizah either from Jews in *Eretz Yisrael*, or those in Egypt who followed their customs and halachic tradition.

The parts of the *Tosefta* that are relevant to our question are as follows:

אין יוצאין בחליט, ולא בחמעיסה, ולא בספגנין, ולא בדבשנין, ולא באסקריטין,  
אבל ממלא כריסו מהן, ובלבד שיאכל כזית מצה באחרונה (פסחא ב:כ)

השמש מכביש בבני מעים ונותן לפני האורחין, אע"פ שאין ראיה לדבר זכר לדבר,  
נירו לכם ניר ואל תזרעו אל קוצים. (פסחא י:ה)

ר' לעזר אמ' חוטפין מצה לתינוקות, בשביל שלא ישנו. ר' יהודה או' אפי' לא אכל  
אלא פרפרת אחת, אפי' לא טבל אלא חזרת אחת, חוטפין מצה לתינוקות (פסחא  
י:ט)

The first passage lists a number of different products made with flour, all of which are not *hametz* and thus acceptable for consumption. The precise identity of each item on the list is subject to dispute, though some of them are clearly sweet pastries of some sort, but what is important is that the *Tosefta* takes it as a given that these are typically consumed at the *seder*, adding that it is not possible to fulfil one's obligation to eat *matzah* with any of them, and thus at least a *kezayit* of *matza* must be consumed afterwards. This clearly indicates that it was considered normal for some sort of pastry or cake to be eaten during the appetizer courses. The second passage describes the waiter dipping organ meats and then serving them to the guests, and brings a verse in support of this passage, the significance of which is that one should not eat the main course on an empty stomach. In the *Bavli Pesachim* 107b, a near-identical *baraita* is interpreted to refer to the afternoon before the *seder*, in support of the lenient practice there regarding eating in the afternoon, but its place in the *Tosefta* makes it clear that it is talking about the early sections of the *seder* itself. It may refer to the organ meats of the *Pesah* or *Hagiga*, but it more likely, as with the rest of the chapter unless it indicates otherwise,

is referring to a *sefer* after the *Horban*. The last passage, refers to allotting *matza* to the children during the appetizer course, which, in the opinion of Rabi Yehuda should be done, *even* if one has only has one appetizer, or dipped lettuce once. The implication here is that there were usually multiple appetizers, enough that children could not consistently be expected to wait through all of them, and lettuce was dipped frequently during this portion of the meal.

To sum up, the *Tosefta* indicates that there were multiple appetizer courses, that they typically included some kind of pastry or meat, and that they went alongside lettuce. Though many centuries removed, *Eretz Yisrael* rite *haggadot* from the Cairo Geniza add more details that are highly consistent with this picture:

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו על נטילת ידים  
 ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי האדמה  
 ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי העץ  
 ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם אשר ברא הרים ובקעות ונטע בהם עץ כל  
 פרי ברוך אתה יי על הארץ ועל פרי העץ  
 ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא מיני מעדנים  
 ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם אשר ברא מיני מעדנים לעדן בהם נפשות  
 רבות ברוך אתה יי על הארץ ועל מעדנים  
 ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא מיני נפשות  
 ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם אשר ברא נפשות טהורות להחיות בהם נפש  
 כל חי ברוך אתה יי חי העולמים (Greenstone MS)

ברוך אתה ה' אלהינו מ' העולם ... על נטילת ידים  
 ברוך אתה יי' אלהינו מ' העולם בורא פרי האדמה  
 ברוך אתה ה' אלהינו מ' העולם בורא פרי העץ  
 ברוך אתה יי' אלהינו מ' העולם אשר ברא הרים ובקעות ונטע בהן עץ כל  
 פרי ברוך אתה יי' על הארץ ועל פרי העץ  
 ברוך א' יי' ... בורא מיני מעדנים  
 ברוך א' יי' אלהינו מ' העולם אשר ברא מיני מעדנים לעדן בהן מנפשות  
 רבות ברוך א' יי' על הארץ ועל מעדניה  
 ברוך א' יי' אלהינו מ' העולם בורא מיני נפשות  
 ברוך א' יי' אלהינו מ' העולם בורא מיני מזונות (JTS ENA 2856.2.v)

[MS is incomplete]

All copies we have of *Eretz Yisrael haggadot* where the opening section is in tact follow a similar pattern. They open with a *bracha* on vegetables, then move on to a course of fruit, and have a meat or fish course (indicated by the *bracha* מיני מנפשות (בורא מיני מנפשות) at or near the end. The chief variation is that some have בורא מיני מזונות, indicating a pastry course, some have בורא מיני מעדנים, indicating some type of dessert,<sup>12</sup> or both.<sup>13</sup> We do not know whether there were any more specific customs about what types of vegetables, fruits, meat and other dishes were

<sup>12</sup> In some articles, based on Y *Brachot* 6:1, it is stated that this refers to a dish of egg mixed with rice, but the Yerushalmi does not indicate that the dish referred to (probably a form of rice pudding) is the only foodstuff upon which this *bracha* is said, nor that it includes egg.

<sup>13</sup> In all the *haggadot*, all courses always have a *bracha abarona*, except the first vegetable course, which never does, in accordance with the first opinion in B *Brachot* 44b. The fact that בורא פרי האדמה appears, and never בורא מיני דשאים or בורא מיני דשאים (T *Brachot* 4:4), though the course certainly included lettuce or a similar vegetable, implies that, contrary to the standard view, the *Eretz Yisrael* tradition of saying a wider range of *brachot* than appear in the Mishnah was not based upon following Rabi Yehuda, but this requires a full explanation elsewhere.



eaten, but we can say that there was a fairly well-established custom of the proper order of cases, with some variation.

In sum, the *Seder* as envisioned by *Hazal* should include a long and varied appetizer course between *kiddush* and the talking part of the evening, with lettuce playing a particularly prominent role in order to emphasize that its consumption is a *mitzvah*. The Babylonian *Geonic* practice of having one appetizer of a vegetable other than lettuce is an extremely stripped-down version of the original practice, missing important symbolic and festive elements. The later practice of having a tiny piece of a vegetable is plainly alien to the spirit of *Hazal's* seder. The record of *haggadot* from *Eretz Yisrael* concurs with those *Rishonim* who ruled that a *baracha aharona* (per course) should be said at this stage in the meal.