

VOSSIUS, SPINOZA, SCHULTENS: The Application of *Analogia* in Hebrew Grammar

0. INTRODUCTION ¹

When we take careful note of the development of speech in children we notice that after a certain age they tend to ignore linguistic usage (*usus linguæ*) and replace, e.g., strong verbal forms by weak ones. Therefore, some children might use *I writed* for *I wrote* at a certain age while earlier they used the correct past of *to write*. They probably construct this past after verbs as *to like* and *to dine*, the former one being more likely since usually most toddlers just *eat*. Without having thoroughly studied grammars such as Varro's *De lingua latina* or bearing knowledge of the grammatical views of Aristarchus of Samothrace (c. 217-145 B.C.), it is apparent that they adhere to the point of view that 'the people as a whole ought in all words to use Regularity' (*populus uniuersus debet in omnibus uerbis uti analogia*, Varro 1979, L. IX, cap. I, 5: 444). The term *regularity* is the correct translation of Greek *analogia*.

In this paper, I will first discuss the concept of *analogia* and its application in grammars from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. First, I shall treat of Vossius, who was respon-

1 A shortened version of this paper was read at the 15th Annual Colloquium of the *Henry Sweet Society for Linguistics Ideas*, Amsterdam, 16-19 September 1998.