One of the many unsolved riddles of the Qumran-literature is the proper meaning of the mentioned in CD (the Damascus or Zadokite Documents) X 6, XIII 2 and probably XIV 8, the study of which belongs to the duties of the most important members of the sect, the priests and the judges. It would seem that all possible etymologies and explanations in connection with the root הָגַה have already been offered. The root הָגַה may mean to think and learn, and since every one is subject to the commandment בֵּית הָגַה (Jos. i 8), the expression refers to the divine Thora itself. On the other hand the same root הָגַה expresses the concept of meditating and studying, and thus הָגַה may refer to the study of legal practices, the Halakha, as practiced by the members of the sect ¹. Again הָגַה means “to pronounce”, so that the book may teach the believer the right way of pronouncing the divine name in solemn oaths ²).

As regards the grammatical form, the word has been read either הָגַה or הָגַה, i.e. the status absolutus of a supposed Aramaic הָגַה וְהָגַה ³. Although the non-existence of such an Aramaic הָגַה וְהָגַה is no unsurmountable obstacle, RABIN (loc. cit.) has preferred to conjecture „Sefer Hahaghi”, a Hebraised form of Aramaic haghyä or haghîyä.

It is by now common knowledge that the reading הָגַה instead of הָגַה, which in 1954 was still a conjecture, is meanwhile attested in 1 Q Sa

²) HABERMANN, Edah we-Eduth (Jerusalem, 1952) p. 27 f. considers leaf 8 (p. xv = p. 121 of his edition) as part of this lost book, which teaches the ways of pronouncing the divine name. It is, of course, rather unfortunate that the root הָגַה itself is not used in the context of that leaf of the manuscript.

The connection with the personal name הָגַה (Est. ii 8, 15), recently suggested by RICHARDSON (JBL 76, June 1957, p. 120), is not taken seriously by the proposer himself.

³) Cf. HABERMANN, loc. cit. p. 112. I do not find in the literature any justification of such a form, but Aramaic qatât-formations from III-y stems, like plâthâ, mahôtâ might provide it.

⁴) The possibility of taking הָגַה as a quoted verbal form („consider ye”), preceded by the article, does not seem to have found much favour. Cf. RABIN, loc. cit.
I 7, and already BARTHELEMY has duly pointed out that fact 1). Furthermore it can now be hardly doubted that owing to his Vorlage the scribe of CD interchanged Waw and Yodh rather frequently 2), so that he may be suspected easily of changing an original יָדָה into יָדָה.

This יָדָה, however, is not a word hitherto unknown. I would submit, that the letters יָדָה represent a well-known biblical noun, which will become obvious the moment we cease reading יָדָה as baghi. Bearing in mind, that according to the orthographic usage attested in the Qumran-manuscipits final yodh serves as mater lectionis for the vowels e/a 3), the letters יָדָה turn out to stand for the Hebrew noun usually spelled יָדָה.

This is no mere assumption, since this interpretation can be luckily substantiated by the fact that the biblical יָדָה is spelled יָדָה elsewhere in the Qumran-texts; and it is no coincidence that in that case the letters יָדָה have been misread by the editors into יָדָה, most probably under the influence of the non-existing „Sefer Hagu“.

In the Hodayoth (IQH) XI 21-22 4) the author speaks of his sorrow and mourning, saying:

...לְהַמָּת הָגִיָּנָה נָטִיאָא הָבָּכָּר קְחָּה...משְׁפִּד מְרוֹרִים גִּדְלוּת סוֹלֶה... 5)

The latter יָדָה in this context are obviously the same יָדָה as in Ez. ii 10: יַךְּרָם וּמָתַת וּיָדָה 6). This sorrowful mourning is to continue „until wickedness will perish“, and thus seems connected to the customs which the members of the sect will observe until the powers of light will finally win.

Up to this point the ground is firm, and instead of the „Sefer Hehagu“ we shall have to get used to the „Sefer Hahege“. Of course one feels tempted to follow the path and to explain the meaning

1) Qumran Cave I, 1955, p. 113. Cf. now also RICHARDSON, loc. cit.
2) Cf. already RABIN's note in his preface, p. viii. On the basis of this assumption we may get a preferable text in cases such as CD i 15 יָדָה (> מְרָה), ii 12 יַךְּרָם (> מְרָה) וָסְפִּיד מְרוֹרִים, vi 16 יַךְּרָם (> מְרָה) וָסְפִּיד מְרוֹרִים (MT! > יַךְּרָם). In some cases an emendation along these lines has already been suggested, e.g. i 20 יַךְּרָם (> יָדָה), iii 1; iv 8, 10; iv 17; iv 19; v 15; vi 13; vii 5; xi 10; xi 14; xvi 6. 3) Cf. my paper on this problem, JJS 4 (1953), p. 104 f., and now Scripta Hieros. IV, § 29.
5) The words יָדָה etc. have been entered between the lines, and seem to follow the word יָדָה. But this has no bearing on our argument.
6) Probably IQH xi 2 has also to be read בָּלָה יָדָה, but the expression stands isolated.