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Literaturinformation

Michael Ernst Salzburg/A

Neue Folge

n. 137 der ganzen Serie

ISDCL-Publishers Salzburg 2008

ISSN 0178-2967

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31

Biblische Notizen

Neue Folge

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Abonnement pro Nummer: € 9,50 (zuzüglich Versandkosten)
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ISDCL-Publishers, Universitätsplatz 1, 5020 Salzburg, Austria
Druck: Koller Druck GmbH, Bahnhofstraße 4, 5112 Lamprechtshausen, Austria

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Druck: Koller Druck GmbH, Bahnhofstraße 4, 5112 Lamprechtshausen, Austria

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De l'aveu aux vœux : le rite *tôdâh* d'exaltation

Christophe Lemardelé

Le terme *tôdâh*, qui signifie très communément «merci» en hébreu moderne, pose quelques problèmes de traduction dans la Bible. Se trouvant presque toujours dans un contexte rituel et désignant parfois un type de sacrifice (*zèbaḥ tôdâh*), sa signification précise reste encore à établir, oscillant entre le sacrifice et la prière. Même si les dernières études sur le sujet n'opposent plus le sacrifice *tôdâh* au rite parlé,¹ en revanche, elles ne permettent pas de dégager une traucion solide tenant compte tant de la langue que du sens du rite sacrificiel. En effet, ces études proposent des traductions distinctes : action de grâces, confession ou louange.² Pour trancher cette question et, surtout, pour cerner le rite que le terme recouvre, nous nous proposons d'allier la prospective philologique à la connaissance des pratiques rituelles. Nous pensons même pouvoir démontrer qu'il existe une cohérence de l'étymologie du terme à la fonction sacrificielle. Pour l'étymologie, sans doute faut-il préciser le champ sémantique originel de *tôdâh* qui n'est pas celui de la louange. Pour l'aspect rituel, sans doute faut-il mettre en étroite relation le *zèbaḥ tôdâh* avec l'acquiescement des vœux puisque beaucoup de passages bibliques nous invitent à le faire.

1. Etymologie et traductions

L'étymologie de *tôdâh* ne pose pas de problème. C'est un substantif verbal de forme féminine (préformante *taw*), formé sur le *hifil* du verbe *yādâh*.³ Ce verbe contient toutefois une difficulté car il a le sens de «jeter, lancer» à la forme *qal* et le sens de «louer, confesser» au *hifil* et au *hitpael*.⁴ Si l'on doit rattacher le verbe à une racine effective, on songe à un étymon⁵ *yd*. Or s'il conient bien pour le premier sens du verbe – *yād*, «main» –, en revanche, le rapproche-

¹ Comme le faisaient encore, par exemple, Grimme, Begriff 234-240; Beyerlin, *tôdâ* 208-224; Hermisson, Sprach; Cazelles, L'Anaphore 11-21. L'opposition sacrifice / louange n'a pas de réalité dans les textes bibliques. Les passages prophétiques utilisés pour appuyer la thèse de la spiritualisation du culte sont le plus souvent retirés de leur contexte. Quant au corpus psalmique, il indique seulement que celui qui était trop pauvre pouvait remplacer le sacrifice et l'offrande par la louange (Ps 40).

² Voir dans l'ordre: Charbel, *Todah* 105-114; Bach, Rite 10-19; Swetnam, *Zebach* 65-86.

³ Joüon, Grammaire 206-207.

⁴ Koehler / Baumgartner, Hebrew 389.

⁵ Pour une remise en cause de la racine trilitère, qui ne serait qu'un radical, au profit d'un étymon bilitère, voir Bohas, Matrices.

ment est difficile à faire avec le second. Il faut donc songer à une homonymie et envisager une étymologie différente pour *ydh* II,⁶ à moins d'envisager un sens figuré. En effet, le lexique de la prière, du chant, de la louange, est déjà très riche, essentiellement formé sur *hll*, avec notamment le terme précis de «louange», *hillāh*, qui donne son nom au livre des Psaumes. Ainsi *yādāh* II et ses dérivés peuvent très bien n'occuper ce champ que pour apporter une nuance de sens supplémentaire: *tōdāh* ne serait pas un synonyme exact de *hillāh* telles que les traductions le laissent supposer dans les Psaumes. L'étude du rite nous permettra de préciser sa fonction et de revenir au sens profond du terme.

Les traductions de *tōdāh* dépendent en grande partie des contextes dans lesquels on trouve le terme. Lorsqu'il est associé à *zēbah*, la LXX a rendu par *ainesis*, «reconnaissance»,⁷ soit en Lv 7,12.13.15; Ps 49 [50],14.23; 106 [107],22; 115 [116],8 [17]; 2Par 29,31; 33,16. Mais la traduction grecque est peu fiable car on trouve *ainesis* dans des cas où il ne semble pas y avoir de sacrifice, comme en Ps 26,7 dans un contexte de louange, en 1Esd 10,11 dans un contexte de confession et, surtout, en 2Esd 12,31.38.40 pour désigner un «cœur». En outre, en Lv 22,29, le terme est rendu autrement alors qu'il complète pourtant *zēbah*; de même dans des contextes sacrificiels évidents (Jr 40 [33],11; Am 4,5). L'autre traduction fréquente est encore plus inconstante puisqu'on la trouve dans des contextes de confession (Jos 7,19) et de fête (Is 51,3; Ps 41 [42],5; 94 [95],2; 99 [100],1.4; 146 [147],7). Il s'agit du nom *exomologēsis* qui signifie un «aveu». Parmi les traductions pour le moins surprenantes, nous trouvons comme expression en Lv 22,29, un sacrifice «votif de joie» (*eukhēn kharmosunēs*), un participe du verbe *a(i)dō*, «chanter», en Jr 37 [30],19, le nom *dōron* au pluriel pour signifier des sacrifices en Jr 40 [33],11 et un participe de *exagoreuō*, «révéler», pour rendre le participe *mtwdym* de 2Esd 9,3 – nous laissons de côté la traduction de Am 4,5 qui est corrompue: le traducteur n'a pas traduit *tōdāh* mais *tōrāh*: *nomos*. Pour finir, il nous faut ajouter la transcription présente en 2Esd 12,27, *thōdatha* pour *tōdōt*, qui prouve à quel point les traducteurs peinèrent à rendre ce terme dans ses différents contextes.

Dans la Vulgate, nous trouvons plus de logique. Les cas avérés de sacrifices dans le Lévitique sont rendus par *hostia gratiarum* (Lv 7,13) ou *pro gratiarum actione* (Lv 7,12 et 22,29): sacrifice d'action de grâces. Cette traduction se re-

⁶ Si le verbe a des correspondants en araméen et en arabe, cela n'est pas le cas en akkadien: Mayer, *ydh* 455. Le rapprochement qui fut tenté, par l'intermédiaire de l'akkadien, avec le substantif hébraïque *hōd*, «gloire», n'est guère convaincant: Albright, *Names* 178-185. En outre, l'étymologie de ce terme n'est pas assurée: Warmuth, *hwd* 375.

⁷ Harlé / Pralon, Lévitique 108. Ce terme, non attesté ailleurs, se distingue de *aimos*, «louange», mais Aquila traduira plus véritablement par «reconnaissance» en prenant le mot *eukharistia*. Voir Swetnam, *Zebach* 77 n. 43.

trouve en Is 51,3 et en Ne 12,27, la mention du sacrifice en moins. Dans le corpus psalmique, c'est le terme *laus*, «louange», qui domine, même associé au sacrifice (Ps 49 [50],14.23; 115 [116],8 [17]). Dans les contextes de «confession», nous trouvons bien le verbe *confiteor* ou le substantif *confessio*. Cette logique qui tient compte des corpus et des contextes ne doit pas nous aveugler. D'une part parce qu'elle ne vise qu'à dépasser les difficultés apparues dans la LXX, d'autre part parce qu'il y a tout de même des exemples qui ne répondent pas à cette logique dans la Vulgate. En Jr 33,11, la traduction est calquée sur la LXX: *vota*, «vœux», pour *dôra*, «dons». En Ps 94 [95],2; 99 [100],1.4 et en 146 [147],7, psaumes de joie s'il en est, nous trouvons *confessio*. Enfin, en Am 4,5 et en 2Ch 33,16, nous trouvons des sacrifices de «louange» dans un contexte qui ne s'y prête pas: *sacrificate de fermentato laudem*, «sacrifiez des louanges de ferment» (Am 4,5).

Cette petite mise au point nous permet d'énoncer quelques postulats: *tôdâh* pose des problèmes de traduction à cause essentiellement des imprécisions rituelles qui l'entourent; les contextes ne peuvent être suffisants pour déterminer le sens du mot et du rite évoqué dans un passage; la signification précise du terme ne pourra être déterminée qu'à la suite de celle du rite – sacrificiel et / ou oral –, tout en tenant compte de son étymologie qui reste à préciser.

2. L'offrande végétale et les rites votifs

Dans les études sur le sujet, les deux aspects les plus mis en valeur sont, d'une part, le sacrifice tel qu'il est clairement défini dans le Lévitique, d'autre part, la louange telle qu'elle est déduite de nombreux textes, principalement des psaumes. C'est oublier un troisième aspect, pourtant incontournable et probablement révélateur de ce que pouvait être la *tôdâh*: l'offrande végétale.

Le texte de Lv 7,12-15 décrit avec précision les offrandes qui devront accompagner le sacrifice offert en *tôdâh*. Conformément à Lv 2,4, nous trouvons deux formes de pains sans levain, des pains *hallôt* et des *r^e qîqîm*. Le texte n'est toutefois pas clair car il est question d'autres *hallôt* faits, à la différence des premiers, avec de la fleur de farine (*sôlêt*) – la LXX ne mentionne que la fleur de farine. Il est possible que le texte soit corrompu puisque les *hallôt* de Lv 2,4 sont mentionnés avec la fleur de farine. Quoi qu'il en soit de la complexité rituelle présente dans ces suppléments au document sacerdotal (P^s), l'important se trouve au verset suivant: «en plus des *hallôt*, il apportera son offrande de pain levé (*lèhèm hāmés*)» (v.13). Conformément à Lv 2,11, on en déduit que ce pain ne sera pas offert sur l'autel, le ferment y étant interdit. Pour autant, il n'est pas certain que cette interdiction ait toujours été de rigueur. En effet, dans le passage d'Amos, certes polémique, mais non en ce qui concerne la validité des rites, le prophète, ou ses disciples développant les oracles contre Israël, affirme: «faites

fumer ce qui est fermenté (*mḥms*) en *tôdāh* et criez vos dons,⁸ proclamez!». Que l'on accepte ou non que le culte ait évolué, il reste que la *tôdāh* se caractérisait par l'offrande de pains levés.

La prédominance des *maṣṣôt* (sans levain) dans P^s explique peut-être pourquoi la mention du pain levé soit si confidentielle en Lv 7,13. En effet, l'absence de ferment semble accompagner l'obsession de pureté visible dans ce document.⁹ Malgré cela, les auteurs ont été «contraints» de l'ajouter, tout en réduisant son importance par l'ajout plus ou moins cohérent des autres offrandes. Nous verrons plus loin comment nous pouvons interpréter ce ferment dans la *tôdāh*.

Le sacrifice offert en *tôdāh* se distingue des sacrifices apportés pour un vœu (*nèdèr*) et pour une offrande volontaire (*n^edābāh*) en ceci que sa viande devait être consommée le jour même (Lv 7,16). Il semble donc n'y avoir aucun rapprochement possible avec les sacrifices votifs. Cependant, beaucoup de textes mentionnent l'accomplissement des vœux avec la *tôdāh* comme sacrifice (*zābah / zèbah*). L'exemple le plus frappant se trouve en Ps 56,13: «sur moi, Elohim, j'acquitterai tes vœux en *tôdôt* pour toi.» La présence du verbe *šālām* au *piel* ne laisse pas de doute, il signifie dans toute la Bible hébraïque le fait d'acquitter des vœux.¹⁰ Le psaume 116 n'est pas moins explicite: «à toi, je sacrifierai un sacrifice *tôdāh* et au nom de Yhwh, je proclamerai. J'acquitterai mes vœux à Yhwh (...)» (Ps 116,17-18).¹¹ Quant au psaume 50, il est des plus intéressants car, non seulement il confirme ce lien entre l'acquiescement des vœux et ce type de sacrifice, mais il met en opposition deux manières de rendre le culte. En effet, il est dit au verset 13 que Yhwh refuse les sacrifices. Mais, dans ce verset, il est question de deux types précis de sacrifices. On reconnaît, d'une part, qu'il

⁸ Ou «vos vœux». La LXX comporte le terme *homologia* et si le terme grec rend comme ici l'hébreu *n^edābāh* (don) en Dt 12,17 et en Ez 46,12, en revanche, il recouvre *nèdèr* en Lv 22,18 et en Jr 51 [44],25. Or la signification de *homologia* comporte l'idée de «contrat». Harlé / Pralon, Lévitique 185.

⁹ Contrairement à Marx, Les offrandes, nous ne pensons pas que ce développement des offrandes végétales dans le document sacerdotal reflète un idéal végétarien, mais que, comme pour les prescriptions sacrificielles, les prêtres ont élaboré un système cultuel complexe et raffiné en fonction du paradigme fortement affirmé en Lv 10,10: séparation du sacré du profane et de l'impur du pur. Dans ce paradigme, le ferment n'est pas impur mais son ambiguïté – comme le miel, il est un produit *transformé*. *Ibid.*, p. 45 – fait qu'on le tient éloigné du sacré, donc de l'autel.

¹⁰ Il se distingue clairement du verbe *pālā'*, qui désigne la *prononciation* d'un grand vœu; voir Lemardelé, Le verbe 481-498.

¹¹ Pour l'aspect cultuel de ce psaume, sans que le lien avec les vœux soit établi; voir Janowski, Dankopfer 51-68. Pour le problème que pose la structure de ce psaume – qui en forme deux dans la LXX (Ps 114-115) –; voir Prinsloo, Psalm 116.

s'agit des holocaustes puisqu'il est fait mention de la viande que pourrait manger Yhwh – et il ne le peut que par un sacrifice brûlé intégralement sur l'autel – et on reconnaît, d'autre part, les sacrifices de purification par l'évocation du sang des boucs, le sang étant purificateur et le bouc étant l'animal habituellement consacré à cet usage dans les textes sacerdotaux : «mangerai-je la chair des taureaux et le sang des boucs le boirai-je? Sacrifie à Elohim la *tôdâh* et acquitte au Très-Haut tes vœux. Crie vers moi au jour de ta détresse, je te délivrerai et tu me rendras gloire » (Ps 50,13-15). Et le psaume se conclut par : «Qui sacrifie la *tôdâh* me rend gloire (...)» (Ps 50,23). Autrement dit, celui qui prononcera un vœu dans une situation de détresse, donc appellera à l'aide Yhwh, lui rendra gloire en acquittant celui-ci par l'offrande de ce type de sacrifice. Quelque peu marginal dans les prescriptions sacerdotales du Lévitique, le sacrifice *tôdâh* se trouve ici considéré comme la meilleure offrande faite à Yhwh.¹² D'ailleurs, cela explique en partie pourquoi la viande de ce sacrifice devait être mangée le jour-même, à la différence d'un don plus banal.

Qu'il y ait un lien intrinsèque entre la pratique des vœux et ce sacrifice est confirmé également par le psaume 107. Le verset 19 évoque une situation de détresse pouvant entraîner la prononciation d'un vœu ou celle d'une simple supplication, les versets 20-21 parlent de l'exaucement divin par les «miracles» (*nīplā'ôt*) de Yhwh et le verset 22 conclut : «Qu'ils sacrifient des sacrifices *tôdâh*.» Ce texte énonce les trois temps de la pratique votive et / ou du culte privé – prononciation, exaucement, acquittement –, le dernier requérant ce sacrifice. Une source externe va dans le même sens, puisque, dans sa paraphrase du Lévitique (22,28-30), Flavius Josèphe décrit ce sacrifice, si caractéristique par ses offrandes végétales, et donne son motif : «pour échapper¹³ aux maladies et pour d'autres raisons» (*Antiquités juives* 3,236). Ainsi, on comprend mieux alors la traduction grecque que nous trouvons en Lv 22,29 car le sacrifice *tôdâh* était bien offert en «vœu joyeux», c'est-à-dire lors de l'acquittement d'un vœu.¹⁴ Bref, c'était un sacrifice d'action de grâces ou de reconnaissance.¹⁵

¹² Nous retrouvons un contexte assez similaire en Ps 69,30ss: la *tôdâh* après le salut est bien mieux qu'un holocauste. Pour la spécificité du psaume 50, qui à la différence de bien d'autres ne semble pas *a priori* avoir un *Sitz im Leben* cultuel; voir Mannati, Le psaume 50.

¹³ L'aoriste *diaphugeîn* doit se comprendre comme «pour avoir échappé aux maladies» et non comme «en vue d'y échapper». Voir Nodet, Bible 162-163.

¹⁴ Ce sacrifice, intégré dans la catégorie des *š'lamîm* par les prêtres (Lv 7,11ss), doit se distinguer du sacrifice pour un vœu (v.16). Il est fort possible en effet que ce dernier soit pour la prononciation d'un vœu, comme en Lv 22, 21 et Nb 15,3.8, car on peut penser qu'un véritable sacrifice votif était plutôt un holocauste (Lv 22,18), un don intégral, on comprendrait mal pourquoi l'offrande votive serait partagée – l'offrant gardant une part de ce qu'il a voué – et pourquoi elle serait moins sacrée que le *zèbah*

Le rite de *nazir* décrit en Nb 6 résume en quelque sorte les deux aspects évoqués – offrandes et sacrifices –, mais par contrepoints. En effet, s'il était bien un vœu conditionnel comme les autres,¹⁶ en revanche, le statut du *nazir*, déterminé dans le cadre du paradigme sacerdotal – devenant «sacré» pour un temps, il ne devait pas être contaminé par l'impureté d'un cadavre –, engendre quelques spécificités. A la fin de son vœu, le *nazir* devait offrir un sacrifice apparenté au *zèbah tōdāh* tel qu'il est présenté en Lv 7,11-15.¹⁷ Tout d'abord, c'était un sacrifice *šēlāmīm*, ensuite, il requérait deux types d'offrandes végétales: *hālōt* et *reqīqīm* (Nb 6,14-15). Le sacrifice et les offrandes, permettant au voué de sortir de son engagement en rasant sa chevelure brûlée par la suite sous le feu du sacrifice (v.18),¹⁸ ont probablement été élaborés à partir du modèle *tōdāh*. Cependant, le sacrifice n'est pas appelé ainsi et il ne comporte pas d'offrande de pain levé sans doute à cause du statut particulier du *nazir*. La parenté évidente entre ces deux sacrifices montre bien qu'à la fin d'un vœu,

tōdāh en étant consommée encore le lendemain. Le passage de Lv 7,11-18 conduit d'ailleurs à bien des confusions entre les sacrifices pour un vœu, les sacrifices votifs – les offrandes promises, consacrées voire interdites – et les sacrifices de reconnaissance. Une offrande votive déclarée *hērēm* devait être accompagnée d'un sacrifice selon la logique de la pratique des vœux, mais ce ne pouvait être un sacrifice votif, ce qui ferait redondance avec l'offrande *hērēm*. L'emploi du terme *kharistērios* chez Philon et chez Josèphe, qui ne traduisent pas mais interprètent en fonction de leur connaissance des rites les catégories du Lévitique, indique qu'il s'agit bien du sacrifice de reconnaissance dans de tels contextes votifs – contrairement à Batsch, *hērem* 101-111.

¹⁵ Flavius Josèphe permet même de faire un prolongement. A propos des Esséniens, il affirme qu'ils envoyaient au temple de Jérusalem des offrandes votives (*anathēmata*) mais sans offrir de sacrifices là-bas, à cause de l'impureté du temple selon eux, et il ajoute qu'ils faisaient leurs sacrifices eux-mêmes (*Antiquités juives* 18,19). Nous pourrions y voir là une évocation des sacrifices *tōdāh* qui accompagnent l'acquiescement votif. Auquel cas les éléments archéologiques du site de Qumrân pouvant attester l'existence d'un culte sacrificiel seraient loin d'être infondés. Voir Humbert, *L'espace* 161-214.

¹⁶ Cartledge, *Nazirite* 409-422.

¹⁷ «The resemblance of the thanksgiving offering to the offerings of the Nazirite and the priestly consecrands is hardly accidental.», Milgrom, *Leviticus* 414.

¹⁸ S'agit-il du feu de l'autel ou de celui du chaudron sacrificiel dans lequel cuit la viande? Nb 6 et Josèphe (*Antiquités juives* 4,72) sont imprécis à ce sujet, mais les targums Onqelos et Pseudo-Jonathan, de même Philon d'Alexandrie (*De Specialibus Legibus* 1,248) et la Mishnah (*Naz* 6,8), indiquent la seconde solution. Auquel cas, le *nazir* n'offrait pas ses cheveux «consacrés», il se contentait de les détruire.

l'offrande d'un sacrifice partagé servant à un repas festif (Lv 22,29) était une réalité culturelle.¹⁹

3. Louange, chœurs et confession

Si le terme, en tant que rite matériel, recouvre un sacrifice spécifique de par sa fonction et de par son offrande végétale fermentée, il reste qu'il désigne avant tout un rite oral. C'est pourquoi, on trouve des contextes votifs similaires à ceux évoqués précédemment qui comportent le terme synonyme *tehillâh*: «Pour toi, la louange convient, Elohim, à Sion, que le vœu soit acquitté pour toi» (Ps 65,2). Mais le mot doit avoir une signification plus précise. Dans le psaume 26, nous avons la *tôdâh* liée à un rite de circumambulation autour de l'autel et, surtout, énonçant les miracles de Yhwh (v.6-7). Là encore, la mention des *niplâ'ôt* renvoie à la pratique des vœux ou, pour le moins, à celle des supplications: des appels à l'aide de dévots qui furent écoutés et exaucés par Yhwh. En retour, au-delà d'une quelconque offrande votive et d'un sacrifice *tôdâh*, il s'agit de chanter les faits de Yhwh. Ainsi, la *tôdâh* comme rite oral a un sens plus précis que celui de «louange» puisqu'il s'agit de proclamer haut et fort les mérites de la divinité. Après la mention du salut, le psaume 69 est très explicite: «Je louerai (*'āhalelāh*) le nom d'Elohim par un chant (*šîr*) et je le magnifierai (*wa'āgaddelennû*) par la *tôdâh*» (v.31).²⁰ La nuance de sens avec la *tehillâh* doit se situer là: la *tôdâh* signifierait «dire les hauts faits de Yhwh avec force».

Dans les Psaumes, la *tôdâh* est souvent mentionnée avec des termes du champ lexical du chant et de la musique – de même en Is 51,3 et en Jr 33,11. Il ne faut bien sûr pas imaginer qu'elle était le seul fait du dévot acquittant son vœu ou glorifiant Yhwh après avoir vu sa demande exaucée. Les chantres et les musiciens du temple devaient appuyer sa démarche, voire la suppléer. Pour autant, cela ne justifie pas les traductions de quelques mentions par des «chœurs». Tout d'abord, parce qu'on ne peut pas se baser sur les traductions de la Vulgate et de la Peshitta pour établir cette traduction,²¹ ensuite, parce que les

¹⁹ Le lien entre ce sacrifice et la notion de reconnaissance a été observé par les spécialistes mais sans l'articuler avec la pratique des vœux : Milgrom, Leviticus 413 et Levine, Leviticus 42. De même, O'Brien, God 281-298, et Modéus, Sacrifice 105-114. Dans le récit même de la naissance de Samuel (1S 1,24), Anne vient acquitter son vœu avec un sacrifice et des pains (LXX) ou un «pain levé» (*lēhēm*) (4QSam^a). Or l'acquiescement consiste à donner à Yhwh son fils tel qu'elle lui a promis (v.11): Samuel est l'offrande votive. Ainsi, le sacrifice animal et l'offrande végétale ne font qu'accompagner cet acquiescement.

²⁰ Toujours concernant l'acquiescement du vœu d'Anne, un psaume succède au sacrifice, à l'offrande et à la libation, qui glorifie Yhwh pour ses miracles: «exauçant celui qui fait un vœu» (1S 2,9 [LXX]).

²¹ Comme le propose Boda, Use 387-393.

«chœurs» de Ne 12,31.38.40 sont occasionnels lors de la dédicace de la muraille. Ils sont certes formés de chantres (v.28 et 31), mais aussi de prêtres sonnant trompette (v.35 et 41), qu'accompagnent les princes (v.32) et que suivent, pour chacun des deux cortèges, Esdras (v.36) et le narrateur Néhémie (v.38). Compte tenu du contexte spécifique de louange et de glorification à l'occasion de la dédicace, il nous paraîtrait plus juste de traduire *tôdâh* par «procession», en ayant à l'esprit l'image de deux cortèges exprimant la *tôdâh*. Nous avons donc une signification dérivée mais qui n'eut peut-être pas de réalité culturelle.

Mais venons-en désormais aux exemples de confession qui mettent à mal les significations maintenant établies de la reconnaissance et de la glorification. En Jos 7, le contexte est clairement celui d'une faute commise puisque le dénommé Akân a sauvé pour lui une part du butin qui était consacré (*hêrêm*) à Yhwh. Au verset 19, Josué lui demande trois choses: «mon fils, maintenant, que (*nâ'*) tu [rendes] gloire (*kâbôd*) à Yhwh, l'Elohim d'Israël, et donne-lui la *tôdâh*, et que (*nâ'*) tu me declares ce que tu as fait...». Et, dans les deux versets qui suivent, Akân avoue effectivement son forfait mais de manière très concrète, comme un voleur et non comme un pécheur. Autrement dit, l'aveu répond à la dernière demande de Josué et ne correspond pas à la *tôdâh* d'Akân. En outre, la phrase est structurée par la double répétition de l'interjection *nâ'* et la *tôdâh* est ainsi comprise dans la glorification de Yhwh. Rien ne nous permet donc de l'interpréter comme une confession, nous pouvons seulement dire qu'il ne s'agit évidemment pas d'un contexte de joie ayant pour origine une supplication ou un vœu et l'exaucement divin pour cause.

En Esd 10,1, la situation est plus probante étant donné qu'Esdras lui-même prie (*pâlal* au *hitpael*) et «confesse» (*yādâh* au *hitpael*) la faute du peuple d'Israël (Esd 9). Aux versets 10-11, le même Esdras énonce sa faute au peuple (les épouses étrangères), qui n'a donc pas ainsi besoin de l'avouer et qui l'a reconnue précédemment (v.2), et lui demande: «et maintenant, donnez la *tôdâh* à Yhwh». Nous retrouvons la même expression avec le verbe *nātan* qui ne permet pas plus d'affirmer la signification de «se confesser» étant donné que la faute est connue et avouée. Mais Ne 9 est plus précis. Il s'agit d'un contexte de jeûne après une fête des Tentes, où les fils d'Israël «confessent» (*yādâh* au *hitpael*) leurs fautes (*ḥaṭṭōtēhēm*) (v.2). On peut comprendre le verset qui suit ainsi: «se confessant (*mitwadîm*) et se prosternant (*mištaḥāwîm*) devant Yhwh, leur Elohim».

Le contexte de confession n'est donc pas réfutable,²² tout en précisant qu'il peut s'agir d'un simple aveu des fautes sans que cela fût une longue contrition, l'aveu pouvant être suivi d'une louange ou d'une glorification de Yhwh. Quoi qu'il en soit, si l'on en déduit à partir de ces exemples que le substantif – et le verbe au *hitpa'el* – avait ce sens dans un cas d'atteinte aux bien sacrés de Yhwh,²³ cela revient à accepter qu'il y a une antonymie entre deux substantifs issus du même verbe. Or, dans ces trois exemples, nous remarquons qu'à chaque fois revient la mention de Yhwh suivie de sa forme «abstraite»: «l'Elohim d'Israël» (Jos 7,19); «l'Elohim de vos pères» (Esd 10,11); «leur Elohim» (Ne 9,3). Autrement dit, il s'agit pour ceux qui ont fauté de louer les «dénominations» de Yhwh et de s'adresser à lui comme étant bien le Dieu avec lequel ils ont une alliance (Esd 10,3). Et il semble bien que la *tôdâh* se caractérise non par le contenu du message – reconnaissance ou aveu – mais par la manière de s'adresser à Yhwh. Nous avons vu qu'en Jos 7,19, le terme intervenait en lien avec sa glorification. L'expression «donner la *tôdâh*» ne doit donc pas se comprendre comme «se confesser» mais plutôt comme *exalter* Yhwh²⁴ – c'est d'ailleurs le sens que nous avons en Ps 69,31 avec le verbe *gâdal* au *piel*: magnifier au sens de rendre *grand*.²⁵ Si nous retenons cette idée de l'exaltation de Yhwh, soit pour le remercier à la suite d'un exaucement, ce que nous avons vu dans quelques psaumes, soit pour l'infléchir à la suite d'une faute, alors cela nous permet de revenir à l'étymologie du verbe *ydh*. En effet, plus rien ne s'oppose au rapprochement entre le premier sens – «jeter, lancer» – et le second proposé – «exalter» – puisque ce dernier peut être un sens figuré du premier: exalter, au sens de «lancer» des paroles.

²² De même dans l'Ecrit de Damas (CD 9,13) où il s'agit d'un contexte comparable à Lv 5,20-26 et à Nb 5,5-10, sans qu'il soit question de confession de la faute dans ces passages. Ainsi, même tardivement, *tôdâh* a toute sa place dans ce contexte. Le texte est cependant corrompu, il n'a pas *whtwdh* mais *whtwrh* (?). Voir Abegg / Bowley / Cook, Dead Sea 756.

²³ Voir Couturier, Tôdâh 121-127, qui s'appuie sur Milgrom, Concept 236-247.

²⁴ Nous devons cette notion d'exaltation à madame Nicole Belayche dans son étude de stèles de confession en Anatolie d'époque romaine. Ces dernières ne s'opposent pas, en effet, à des stèles votives, elles servent toutes deux à l'exaltation de la divinité évoquée; voir Belayche, Religions 220-224. 235-239 et Stèles 66-81.

²⁵ Avec une nuance de sens probablement, le terme *hwdh* présent en IQH ne doit pas être compris comme désignant un hymne. De même, on ne comprend évidemment pas IQM (Rouleau de la guerre) 15,5 si l'on traduit par «hymnes d'action de grâces» – Delcor, Les hymnes 20-21. Le contexte d'exhortation à la guerre du grand prêtre se comprend mieux s'il s'agit d'exalter le Dieu d'Israël et non de le remercier. Pour ces textes, voir Wise / Abegg / Cook, Dead Sea. Pour les attestations de *hwdh/hdh* dans les textes de Qumrân, voir Abegg / Bowley / Cook, Dead Sea 211-212.

Conclusion

En étudiant *tôdâh* dans tous ses contextes, il nous est apparu que son sens précis serait «exaltation». Cette hypothèse s'appuyant sur la manière même de s'adresser à Yhwh permet de comprendre pourquoi le terme intervient aussi bien dans des contextes de reconnaissance que dans des contextes de faute. Nous avons vu également que l'offrande végétale fermentée qui accompagnait la *tôdâh* comme rite parlé, figurait en quelque sorte cette exaltation. D'ailleurs, le contexte d'Am 4,4-5 n'est pas très clair puisqu'il est question de transgressions et l'offrande brûlée sur l'autel peut très bien accompagner une «reconnaissance» de ces fautes. Quant au sacrifice *tôdâh*, il survient dans des contextes de remerciement, soit à la suite d'un vœu mais sans être l'offrande votive, soit après une simple prière exaucée.

Pour ce qui est du problème de traduction, il nous semble peu réaliste de proposer de traduire par «sacrifice d'exaltation» pour les contextes votifs. En revanche, traduire par «exalter» ou utiliser une périphrase dans les contextes de «confession» est plus envisageable. Certes, la notion d'action de grâces rend de nombreux aspects du terme, mais elle n'a pas la clarté et la précision d'un concept anthropologique. Finalement, les traductions d'après les différents contextes ne sont pas si mauvaises – elles permettent d'éviter, par exemple, des traductions comme «sacrifice de louange» (J. Swetnam) ou «de confession» (D. Bach) quand celle de «sacrifice de reconnaissance» répond mieux au contexte général des vœux –, à condition d'être plus rigoureux que ne le furent les traducteurs de la LXX et même de la Vulgate. L'important est donc d'avoir à l'esprit que l'exaltation est ce qui relie la reconnaissance votive et l'aveu de la faute. Le terme *tôdâh* de l'hébreu moderne, signifiant platement «merci», n'a donc plus cette signification originelle²⁶.

Summary

Translating the term *tôdâh* is not an easy task and the rites which it designates seem to be too contrasting to give the right meaning of it. If the sacrifice and the praise are bound to the practice of vows as act of gratefulness, then the notion of *exaltation* permits the understanding of why this term is used for the confession of a fault. This meaning would result from a figurative sense of the verb *yâdâh*: to *cast* words.

²⁶ Je voudrais dédier cette étude à madame Annick Martin, professeur émérite d'histoire ancienne, qui me mit le pied à l'étrier il y a de cela bien des années à l'université de Rennes et à qui j'avais déjà fait remarquer la spécificité du sacrifice de reconnaissance en lien avec les vœux dans un modeste mémoire sur les rites sacrificiels du judaïsme. Qu'elle entende donc ce simple mot: «*tôdâh!*».

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Zusammenfassung

Das Wort *tôdâh* ist nicht einfach zu übersetzen, und die Riten, die es bezeichnet, sind zu gegensätzlich, um daraus einen Sinn zu erschließen. Wenn Opfer und Lob mit der Praxis eines Gelübdes als Akt der Dankbarkeit verbunden sind, dann erlaubt die Vorstellung von „Rühmen“ (lat. *exaltare*) das Verständnis, weshalb dieser Terminus für das Bekennen eines Fehlers benutzt wird. Diese Wortbedeutung käme von einem übertragenen Wortsinn des Vers *yâdâh* her: Worte „werfen“, das heißt „(seine Stimme) abgeben“. Der Begriff *tôdâh* im modernen Hebräisch, der einfach „danke!“ bedeutet, hat diese Originalbedeutung nicht mehr.

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Your Daughters Do Not Give to Their Sons and Their Daughters Do Not Take for Your Sons (Ezra 9,12)

|| Intermarriage in Ezra 9-10 and in the Pre-Maccabean
Dead Sea Scrolls $\cup ; \cup$

Teil 1

*Armin Lange**

A significant number of the Dead Sea Scrolls found in the Qumran caves attest to compositions which did not become part of the Hebrew Bible and which were written before the Hellenistic religious reforms of the years 175-164 B.C.E. This literature provides crucial contextual evidence for the interpretation of late biblical texts. As of to date though it is mostly an unclaimed treasure in interpreting the Hebrew Bible.¹

In this study, I will ask in how far the pre-Maccabean literature from the Qumran library sheds new light on the much debated question of the rejection of mixed marriages in the Ezra 9-10.² I will approach this question both with regard to the rejection of intermarriages by the final redaction of the book of Ezra / Nehemiah as well as the rejection of intermarriages by Ezra himself.

The book of Ezra / Nehemiah has a complicated redaction history and dates in its final stage to early Hellenistic times, probably to the reign of Alexander the Great (see below notes 134-135). Ezra's and Nehemiah's reforms are one of the most complex issues to discuss in the study of the history of Persian time Yehud. For lack of space, I can only summarize the position of H. Donner at this place.³ Nehemiah came to Jerusalem in the 20th year of the reign of Artaxerxes (Neh 1,1; 2,1) and staid for 12 years (Neh 13,6). During this time Nehemiah was in conflict with a governor of Samaria called Sanballat (see Neh 2,10.19; 4,1; 6,1-2.5.12.14; 13,28). A letter from Elephantine suggests that this

* I am indebted to my assistant, Mr. Matthias Weigold for his careful editing of this article.

¹ I have discussed further examples for the importance of the pre-Maccabean texts from the Qumran library for the understanding of late biblical books in Lange, *Literature* 276-305.

² For the question in how far the Dead Sea Scrolls help to better understand the rejection of mixed marriages in the final redaction of the book of Ezra / Nehemiah, see also Lange, *Significance* (forthcoming).

³ Donner, *Geschichte* 451-453.

particular Sanballat was governor of Samaria during the reign of Artaxerxes I Longimanus (465/464-425 B.C.E.). This would mean that Nehemiah's first stay in Jerusalem took place in the years 445/444-433/432 B.C.E. His second stay (Neh 13,6-29) happened most probably before the death of Artaxerxes I Longimanus although the book of Ezra / Nehemiah provides insufficient information for more precise dates.

Ezra's mission is more complicated to date but seems to presuppose Nehemiah's activities. Ezra 9,9 mentions a wall (גִּדֵּר) in Judah and Jerusalem. The way this passage is phrased excludes a metaphoric use of גִּדֵּר. Hence, Ezra must have been in Jerusalem after Nehemiah rebuilt its city wall. Furthermore, Nehemiah's demographic policy (Neh 7,4-73) does not consider the returnees coming with Ezra to Jerusalem. Further information can be gained out of the short mention of the high priest Jehohanan son of Eliashib in Ezra 10,6. He was high priest during the reign of Artaxerxes II Mnemon (404-359/358 B.C.E.).⁴ This corresponds well with Ezra 7,7-9 which dates the arrival of the Ezran returnees in the seventh year of the reign of king Artaxerxes. This means Ezra arrived in Jerusalem in the seventh year of Artaxerxes II Mnemon, i.e. 398/397 B.C.E.⁵

That at least in its core stratum the Nehemiah memoir goes back to Nehemiah himself is rarely doubted.⁶ It records several measures Nehemiah took during his missions to Jerusalem. Some of these measures attest to the realization of a political schedule by Nehemiah while others respond to developing situations. The heterogeneous character of the Nehemiah memoir shows that it underwent comparatively little theological reworking and is thus an important historical source. This is especially true for the Persian documents it contains.

The Ezra memoir is coined by a coherent theological program. Ezra 7-8 describes how Ezra is commissioned and comes to Yehud. Ezra 9-10 reports how Ezra cleanses the community in preparation for the proclamation of the cultic law. Neh 8-10 depicts Ezra's public reading of the law and its cultic installation. Ezra is described as a reformer who develops the theological program of a cultic community based on its (cultic) law. The suspicions about the authenticity of the Ezra memoir are confirmed by the observation that

⁴ For the complicated discussion about the identity of Jehohanan son of Eliashib, see VanderKam, Joshua 49-63.85-99.

⁵ Cf. e.g. Ahlström, History 879-882.

⁶ For the Nehemiah memoir (Neh 1,1-7,72a; 11,1-2; 12,31; 13,4-31) as a document going at least in substantial parts back to Nehemiah himself, see Reinmuth, Bericht, esp. 263-327. For Neh 13,23-29 as part of the Nehemiah memoir and for its historicity, see Kellermann, Nehemia 51-55; Williamson, Ezra 394.

several of the Ezra passages in the book of Ezra / Nehemiah have close parallels in the Nehemiah memoir. The figure of Ezra seems to have been patterned after Nehemiah.⁷ The well founded doubts about the historicity of the Ezra memoir make a historical assessment of the marriage reforms reported in Ezra 9-10 rather difficult.

But ancient Jewish literature preserved in the Qumran library and elsewhere provides new evidence. 1) Several Jewish texts which were written in the 3rd century B.C.E. or earlier engage the issue of mixed marriages. I.e. the Qumran library and other sources preserve Jewish literature which is more or less contemporary to the book of Ezra / Nehemiah⁸ and can provide a Jewish context for its attitude towards mixed marriages. 2) These 3rd century B.C.E. texts allow also to better understand which parts of Ezra 9-10 might have been added by a redactor in early Hellenistic times and which parts might go back to Persian times. I.e. the Dead Sea Scrolls help to answer the question if Ezra did enact marriage reforms or not. 3) The Book of Watchers provides important contextual evidence for the rejection of intermarriages by Ezra himself because its narrative kernel, the so-called Shemihazah myth, goes back to the 5th century B.C.E.

In this article, I will first survey Jewish attitudes towards exogamy and endogamy from the Iron Age until the Babylonian exile. Afterwards I will study the debate about mixed marriages in Jewish texts from the 5th century B.C.E. To better understand the rejection of exogamy in the final redaction of the book of Ezra / Nehemiah I will study intolerant attitudes towards intermarriage in early Hellenistic times. In a conclusion I will apply my results to the interpretation of Ezra 9-10.

1. Mixed Marriages from the Iron Age until the Babylonian Exile

In ancient Israel and Judah, contacts with other cultures and ethnicities were limited for the majority of the Jewish and Israelite populations. As a consequence, exogamy, i.e. intermarriage, was the exception and not the rule. The postexilic book of Ruth is a good example. Although it clearly reflects a positive attitude towards the marriage of a Moabite woman and Jewish man, it does not presuppose intermarriage as a widespread phenomenon. On the contrary, it needs to go through a significant narrative effort to explain how Ruth as a Moabite became the wife of a Jew (Ruth 1,1-5).

⁷ For doubts about the historicity of the Ezra memoirs report see also Grabbe, *Reconstructing* 98-106; Grabbe, *History* 327-331; Smith-Christopher, *Marriage*, 243-265.

⁸ For the date of the book of Ezra / Nehemiah (see below notes 134-135).

The liberal attitude of the postexilic book of Ruth towards mixed marriages is reflected by a wide range of Iron Age traditions. Mostly, the polytheistic religion of Iron Age Israel and Judah did not have a problem with intermarriage.⁹ Examples from the narrative traditions of Iron Age Israel and Judah include Esau's marriages with a Canaanite and two Hittite women (Gen 26,34; 28,6-9), Judah's marriage with a Canaanite (Gen 38,2), Joseph's marriage with an Egyptian (Gen 41,45), Moses' marriage with a Midianite / Kushite (Exod 2,21), Samson's marriage with a Philistine (Judg 14; 16,4-22), David's marriage with a Calebite and an Aramean (2Sam 3,3), Bathsheba's marriage with a Hittite (2Sam 11,3), Solomon's marriage with a multitude of foreigners (1Kgs 3,1; 11,1; 14,21), and Ahab's marriage with a Phoenician (1Kgs 16,31). Furthermore, 1 Kings claims that the mother of the Phoenician king Hiram was from the tribe of Naphtali (1Kgs 7,13-14). Whether the historicity of these reports is to be doubted or not, they reflect a *Zeitgeist* which accepts the notion of intermarriage. The same liberal attitude towards mixed marriages is also reflected in legal texts. Examples are Deut 21,10-14 which allows a warrior to marry a prisoner of war and Lev 24,10 which mentions the son of a Jewish woman and an Egyptian as a member of Israel.

Later biblical texts (see e.g. Num 12,1 and 1Kgs 11,1-13; 16,31-33) criticize some of the exogamous marriages listed above harshly and thus mark a changed attitude towards intermarriages. Most of these criticisms can be found in deuteronomistic texts or deuteronomistic redactions. Hence, deuteronomism with its monolatric or henotheistic thought marks a change in the Jewish attitude towards intermarriages. With the reforms of king Josiah and especially with the extensive development of deuteronomistic thought during the Babylonian exile the exclusive veneration of the national deity of Israel became part of the Jewish cultural identity. The deuteronomistic polemics against the intermarriages of king Solomon (1Kgs 11,1-13) or king Ahab (1Kgs 16,31-33) are paradigmatic. Jews follow foreign gods because they are married to non-Jewish spouses. Hence, mixed marriages were not an ethnic but a cultural challenge. Intermarriages are regarded as diluting the exclusive veneration of YHWH and thus as diluting the Jewish cultural identity (cf. also Exod 34,14-16 [K^D]; Deut 7,1-5; Josh 23,12-13; Judg 3,5-7).¹⁰

That this dilution of cultural identity motivated Jewish criticism of intermarriage is also reflected in the Non-P and P parts of the Pentateuch. Examples from the Non-P material include criticism of the intermarriage between humans and angels in Gen 6,1-4 and the passage about the so-called rape of Dinah in Gen 34. Both non-P and P parts of the Pentateuch emphasize the endogamous

⁹ Cf. e.g. Meyers, Eve 184.

¹⁰ Cf. e.g. Meyers, Eve 184-185.

marriages of Abraham (Gen 11,29; 20,12), Isaac (Gen 24), and Jacob (Gen 28,1-29,30). These reports about the endogamous marriages of the patriarchs point to a diaspora situation and its special needs for the preservation of cultural identity as a further motivator for the Jewish rejection of intermarriage in exilic times. The most gruesome narrative realization of this need for cultural self-preservation is the Phinehas story (Num 25,6-15). Phinehas and his descendents are rewarded with the perpetual high priesthood because Phinehas murdered a Jew and his Midianite wife on account of their intermarriage.

2. The Rejection Mixed Marriages in the 5th century B.C.E.

In Persian times, the resettlement policy of the Persian empire for Coele-Syria turned the issue of intermarriages into a prevailing cultural challenge for Second Temple Judaism. Assyrian and Babylonian imperial policies led to a dramatic decrease in the population of Coele-Syria. O. Lipschits has shown that compared to the late Iron Age the settled area in Judah decreased by 72.3% in Persian times. For Persian time Yehud, this means a total population of 30,125 people as compared to 108,000 citizens during the late Iron Age.¹¹ Other surveys give even lower population numbers for the Persian subprovince of Yehud. Also based on archeological data, C.E. Carter estimates the population of Yehud in the years 538-450 B.C.E. to 10,850 persons which would have increased in the years 450-332 B.C.E. to 17000.¹² Neither Lipschits' nor Carter's statistics make a large migration of 42000 Jewish returnees from Mesopotamia to Yehud plausible as it described in Ezra 2 / Nehemiah 7. Beyond the literary fiction of the book of Ezra / Nehemiah historical reality features only a small group of Jewish returnees.¹³

When Coele-Syria became part of the Achaemenid empire the Persians were forced to redevelop the area. Based on an archeological analysis of Persian time strata of various sites in Coele-Syria, E. Stern describes the Persian development policy as follows:

The Persians – in order to overcome the consequences of the Babylonian occupation – apparently utilized different methods from those employed by the Assyrians and the Babylonians. They did not destroy everything and remove the booty to Babylon, as did the Babylonians, nor did they bring new settlers to the desolate land, as the Assyrians had done. They simply allowed people from surrounding areas who were up to it to settle the half-empty regions. Our impression is that this was accomplished by various extant local authorities (as

¹¹ Lipschits, *Changes* 323-376, esp. 356.363-364; Lipschits, *Fall* 134-184.258-271.

¹² Carter, *Province* 106-145, esp. 135; Carter, *Emergence*, 172-248.

¹³ See Carter, *Province* 136-137; Carter, *Emergence* 285; Lipschits, *Changes* 365; Lipschits, *Fall* 271.

an almost private initiative), such as the kings of Tyre and Sidon. The coastal region of Palestine indeed appears, for the most part, to have been populated from the beginning of the Persian period by Phoenicians from these two cities. This had been clearly shown by the excavations at coastal towns: Acco, Dor, Jaffa, Ashkelon, Gaza, and Ruq'ish. The same conclusion is valid in regard to the Galilee. Here and there, some new elements, such as Greeks and Arabs, also settled, in particular in the south and in Gaza.

It should be assumed that in the beginning the coastal settlements were renewed. Only later did the new prosperity reach the inland mountainous region, too. This process was slow at first, but gradually gained momentum. Despite its slowness, its aim was clear: the erection of settlements of various sizes on massive scale throughout the country, but mainly along the coastal strip; the renewal of international trade on a large scale; and successful development of the countries economy.¹⁴

It might be added to Stern's description that in the south the Persian resettlement policy led to a continuous growth of Idumea into formerly Jewish territories.¹⁵ A later reflection of the successful Persian redevelopment of Coele-Syria can be found in the onomasticon of 4th century B.C.E. Samaria. For the inhabitants of 4th century B.C.E. Samaria, the Wadi ed-Daliyeh papyri attest to a variety of theophoric elements in the names of citizens of Samaria. The Samaritan names include elements referring to Jewish, Phoenician, Aramaic, Arabic, Moabite, and Babylonian deities: Yahweh, Baal, Qosh, Sahar, Chemosh, Nabu.¹⁶

Although the region of Yehud is less well documented, it can be assumed that Yehud was part of the overall Persian resettlement scheme. And that due to slow beginnings, the resettlement process reached Yehud only by the 5th century B.C.E. This compares well with the complaint of the Nehemiah memoir that Jewish children speak the languages of various neighboring people but not the language of Judah (Neh 13,24). Such a loss of linguistic identity could very well be a consequence of the resettlement of the half desolated areas of Coele-Syria by the surrounding nations.

The resulting multiethnic and multireligious population of Coele-Syria seems to have led to an increase in mixed marriages which by the 5th century BCE made intermarriage an intensely debated issue in Judaism. This is documented not only in the book of Ezra / Nehemiah itself but also in other texts. The Jewish archives of the Nile island Elephantine document intermarriages in its Jewish community.¹⁷ And both Josephus and the Samaria Papyri attest to a

¹⁴ Stern, *Archaeology* 580-581.

¹⁵ See Lemaire, *Beitrag* 15-20. For a survey of the archeological sites of Persian time Idumaea, see Stern, *Archaeology* 443-454.

¹⁶ Cf. Ahlström, *History* 899.

¹⁷ Cf. e.g. Porten, *Archives* 3-61.149. 173-174.178; 248-253; Eshkenazi, *Shadows* 24-43.

pattern of intermarriage between the Samaritan and Jerusalemite elites.¹⁸ A Persian time advocate of Jewish intermarriage can be found with the book of Ruth.¹⁹ It tells the story of the Moabite widow of a Jew. She integrates herself successfully into Jewish culture and becomes the ancestor of king David. The book of Ruth emphasizes, how Ruth acts according to the law of levirate marriage (Deut 25,5-10) when she searches for a new Jewish husband. It makes the counterargument to Persian time polemics against intermarriage. Mixed marriages do not pollute the Jewish temple community and do not cause the loss of cultural identity. On the contrary, in following the laws of levirate marriage (Deut 25,5-10) the foreigner Ruth acts like the role model of a Jewish woman.

Other Persian time Jewish literature attests to harsh opposition against the notion of Jewish exogamy. Two different strands can be identified in the Persian time campaign for endogamy. Some texts enforce endogamy only for the priests viz. the high priests while others apply it to all Jews. In the next two paragraphs I will first discuss various texts from the Hebrew Bible which reject intermarriages. Afterwards I will ask how these observations relate to the Persian time strata of the Book of Watchers.

2.1. Priestly Endogamy and its Democratization

After the Babylonian exile, the priesthood developed its own attitude towards the question of endogamy. In Persian times, Judaism defined itself not so much as a political or ethical community but as a cultic one. The purpose of Israel's existence was to serve god in his temple. Israel is Israel as long as it performs the cult faithfully. The covenant with its god is realized in this cult. Israel is not a nation or a political power. It is the adherence to the torah as realized in the Jerusalem cult that constitutes Israel's identity. Given the importance of the cult, it cannot surprise that special laws regulated the life of the priests which were the main cultic communicators between Israel and its god. A major concern of these regulations was to avoid defilement of the priests and alienation of Israel from its god by way of priestly defilement.

2.1.1. Lev 21,13-15

To preserve priestly holiness and thus the holiness of the sanctuary, the holiness code of P developed special regulations whom priests were allowed to marry and whom not (Lev 21,6-9.13-15).²⁰ They occur in a passage which is

¹⁸ Cf. Cross, Samaria 189-197.

¹⁹ For a Persian time date of the book of Ruth, see e.g. Zenger, Buch Rut 226.

²⁰ For a Persian time date of Lev 21,13-15, see Blum, Studien 319-322.

coined by the rhetoric of holiness, defilement, profanation, and uncleanness.²¹ Violations invalidate the offerings performed by the violating priests who desanctified themselves.

It cannot surprise that the high priest as the human center of the Jerusalem cult is commanded to marry only out of a rather selected group of women.

13 He shall marry only a woman who is a virgin. 14 A widow, or a divorced woman, or a woman who has been defiled, a prostitute, these he shall not marry. He shall marry a virgin of his own kin, 15 that he may not profane his offspring among his kin; for I am the Lord; I sanctify him. (Lev 21,13-15 NRSV)

R. Albertz brings it to a point: “But he (scil. the high priest) was also subject to intensified priestly conditions of holiness (Lev 21.10-13) and therefore was the only one who had the privilege of entering the holy of holies ..., and performed the liturgy on festivals (sabbath, annual festivals) and in particular on the day of atonement.”²² The special cultic role of the high priest necessitates avoiding any chance of defilement. Hence, the high priest is only allowed to marry a virgin from a priestly family.²³

2.1.2. Ezek 44,22

The regulations for the priests in Ezek 44,17-27²⁴ advocate the same concern for the holiness of the priest as does Lev 21. Woven into the different regulations for the priests of Ezek 44,17-27 are different forms of קִדְּשׁ (see Ezek 44,19.23.24.27). Hence, Ezek 44,17-27 is put under the *Leitmotiv* of holiness.²⁵ Given that Ezek 44,17-27 develops its individual laws out of Lev 10; 21²⁶ and other authoritative traditions,²⁷ it is all the more interesting that the marriage regulations for the priests do not draw on Lev 21,6-9 but on the marriage regulations for the high priests in Lev 21,13-15. This democratization of high priestly halakhah reflects an increased concern for the defilement of the sanctity of priests as the cultic intermediators between god and his chosen people.

²¹ Cf. Hartley, Leviticus 346.

²² Albertz, History 460.

²³ For this meaning of מַעֲמִיר in Lev 21,14, see already Philo, De specialibus legibus 1,110; cf. e.g. Hurvitz, Study 67-69; Milgrom, Leviticus 1819-1820.

²⁴ For a postexilic setting of Ezek 44,22, see e.g. Zimmerli, Ezekiel II 463; Tuell, Law 176-177.

²⁵ Allen, Ezekiel 251-252.

²⁶ Cf. Fishbane, Interpretation 294-295; Allen, Ezekiel 263.

²⁷ Cf. Block, Book 642; Pohlmann, Prophet 594-596.

They shall not marry a widow, or a divorced woman, but only a virgin of the stock of the house of Israel, or a widow who is the widow of a priest. (Ezek 44,22 NRSV)

The differences between the two texts point to the concerns of Ezek 44,22. It clarifies the ambiguous term *מֵעַמּוּד* out of Lev 21,14 as “from the house of Israel,” i.e. a priest can only marry an Israelite virgin. Furthermore, the priests of Ezek 44,22 are allowed to marry a widow of a priest while in Lev 21,14 the high priest is not. This points to endangerment of the holiness of a priestly husband as the main concern of the endogamy law in Ezek 44,22. The widow of a priest was not in contact with the alien sphere of non-priests and can thus not endanger the holiness of a priestly husband.²⁸

2.1.3. *Mal 2,11-12*

Already before the mission of Nehemiah, the concept of a cultic Jewish cultural identity led to a democratization of priestly endogamy laws. A good example is an early addition²⁹ to the book of Malachi in Mal 2,11-12.³⁰

11 Judah has been faithless, and abomination happened in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah has profaned the sanctuary of the Lord, which he loves, and has married the daughter³¹ of a foreign god. 12 May the Lord cut off from the tents of Jacob anyone who does this – the aroused one and the lover – and who brings an offering to the Lord of hosts.³²

The remark “which he loves” (*אֲשֶׁר אֹהֵב*; Mal 2,11) shows that in Mal 2,11-12 it is the sanctuary through which Judah is special. Hence, Mal 2,11-12 follows also the idea of a Jewish cultic identity. Its context attests to the same language of holiness and defilement as observed in Lev 21 and Ezek 44,17-27 but Mal 2,11-12 adds a rhetoric of deception and faithlessness to it. Exogamous marriages do not just endanger the special cultic relation between Israel and its god through the defilement of priests. They are an evil in itself. Those who

²⁸ For this interpretation of Ezek 44,22, cf. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel II* 460; Allen, *Ezekiel* 263-264; Block, *Book 642*.

²⁹ For Mal 2,11-12 as a 5th century B.C.E. addition to the book of Malachi which was composed before the mission of Nehemiah, see Meinhold, *Malachi* 190-197.

³⁰ For a survey of earlier interpretations of Mal 2,11-12, see Glazier-McDonald, *Malachi* 113-119.

³¹ 4QXII^a reads *בֵּית* instead of *בַּת*. With all probability this reading is due to scribal error (cf. Fuller, *Problems* 51).

³² For the translation “the aroused one and the lover,” see Glazier-McDonald, *Malachi* 2:12 295-298; Glazier-McDonald, *Malachi* 94-99.

marry the daughter of a foreign god (בת אל נכר), i.e. a foreign women,³³ profane and thus de-sanctify the sanctuary of the lord. The husband of a foreigner continues to bring sacrifices to YHWH while also being affiliated with the gods of his wife.³⁴ Hence, if Jews marry non-Jewish partners, an abomination (תועבה) develops. This keyword introduces deuteronomic ideas into the priestly thought of Malachi and evokes the philosophy that the veneration of other deities causes catastrophic punishment.³⁵

Mal 2,11-12 differs in two respects from the Holiness Code and the temple vision of the book of Ezekiel. It applies the laws of (high) priestly endogamy to all Jews and it specifies how intermarriage carries defilement. The husbands of non-Jewish women are affiliated with foreign deities through their wives and could therefore introduce non-Jewish culture into the Jerusalem cult.³⁶ This element of foreign religion de-sanctifies the Jerusalem sanctuary³⁷ as it is not exclusive to YHWH anymore.³⁸ Judah as a cultic community loses its sanctity³⁹ and its cultic identity. Any intermarriage endangers the cultic identity of Judaism which runs through the Jerusalem temple.

2.1.4. *The Mission of Nehemiah (Neh 13,23-29)*

Neh 13,23-29 is part of the Nehemiah memoir. It is hence highly probable that it reflects historic measures taken by Nehemiah himself. As Mal 2,11-12, Nehemiah seems to have democratized the priestly notion of endogamy and applied it to all Jews.

Neh. 13,23-24 mentions language disabilities of children out of mixed marriages. That Nehemiah connects the language issue with the problem of mixed marriages shows, in the 5th century B.C.E. exogamy was not rejected because of ethnicity but because of the endangered Jewish cultural identity. Hence, Neh 13,25-27 refers to the negative role model of Solomon's mixed marriages. Unlike its *Vorlage* (1Kgs 11,1-13), Neh 13,26 does not accuse Solomon's foreign wives of having him lured away to the veneration of their foreign gods but that they caused him to sin (חטא Hi.). Mixed marriages are a

³³ For this meaning of the phrase בת אל נכר, see Glazier McDonald, Malachi 91-93; Glazier McDonald, Intermarriage 603-604.

³⁴ Cf. Glazier McDonald, Malachi 99.

³⁵ Cf. Meinhold, Malachi 205.

³⁶ Cf. Schreiner, Mischehen 221-223; Glazier-McDonald, Malachi 89-91.119-120; Glazier-McDonald, Intermarriage 610.

³⁷ For קדש יהודה as a designation of the Jerusalem temple, see e.g. Glazier-McDonald, Malachi 89.

³⁸ Cf. Glazier McDonald, Intermarriage 604.

³⁹ Cf. van der Woude, Malachi's 67.

violation of Jewish religious culture even if the veneration of other gods is not involved. Inter marriages need to be avoided, because they result in a loss of Jewish conduct and thus of Jewish identity.

Therefore, Nehemiah summarizes his activities with regard to mixed marriages as a cleansing from anything foreign, i.e. anything that is not receptive to YHWH (Neh 13,30).⁴⁰ As an extreme example for how to deal with intermarriage, Neh 13,28-29 describes the case of a grandson of the high priest Eliashib and his marriage with the daughter of the Samaritan governor Sanballat. Nehemiah drove him out of the Jewish community. Nehemiah's policy is thus in line with his general exclusion of foreigners from Judaism as attested in Neh 13,1-3. Jews who live in a mixed marriage lose their Jewish cultural identity and need to be removed from Judaism.

To summarize: Before the Babylonian exile, intermarriage was not a disputed issue. The diaspora situation of the Babylonian exile led to a strong support of endogamy versus exogamy. Most exilic polemics against exogamy are incorporated into existing authoritative texts by way of redaction. The small size of Persian time Yehud and the Persian resettlement policy for Coele-Syria turned intermarriage into one of the major problems of postexilic Judaism. Persian time rejections of intermarriage are based on the idea of a cultic Jewish identity. In the beginning, postexilic prohibitions of intermarriage seem to be restricted to the (high) priests (Lev 21,13-15; Ezek 44,22) as their intermarriage with non-Jews could defile the cult. Both an early insertion into the book of Malachi (Mal 2,11-12) and the Nehemiah memoir (Neh 13,23-29) attest an expansion of the priestly marriage prohibition towards all Jews arguing that the cult could be defiled by all of its members. The postexilic rejection of intermarriages did not remain undisputed. In support of intermarriages, the book of Ruth depicts the Moabite woman Ruth as an exemplary member of the Jewish cultic commune.

2.2 Intermarriage in the Shemihazah Myth (1En *6-11)

The Book of Watchers (BW; 1En 1-36) is a paratext to Gen 5,21-24 and Gen 6,1-4, which has undergone a complicated textual history.⁴¹ The earliest manuscript of the BW is 4QEn^a at which was produced in the first half of the 2nd century B.C.E.⁴² Milik has shown that copyist errors and the orthography of

⁴⁰ For this meaning of נכר, see Lang, נכר 460-461.

⁴¹ For the textual history of the BW, see Bhayro, Narrative 45-53.219-226. The Greek Vorlage of the Ethiopic translation was not identical to the text of Codex Panopolitanus but close to it (cf. Milik, Books 71-72; Bhayro, Narrative 223-224).

⁴² Milik, Books 140.

4QEn^a ar argue for a date of its *Vorlage* in the 3rd century B.C.E.⁴³ Logical inconsistencies like the absence of Enoch in 1En 6-11 indicate that the BW is the result of a complex history of redactional growth. Parts of 1En 6-11 seem to preserve the narrative kernel of the BW, which was first enlarged by 1En 12-16 and later by 1En 17-19. 1En 1-5; 20-36 were added to 1En 6-19 in one or more later redactions.⁴⁴ Taking the BW's dependence on various Jewish scriptures from exilic and post-exilic times (see e.g. Ezek 1-2; 40-44 in 1En 14,8-16,4) and its somewhat intricate redactional history into consideration, it seems highly unlikely that the BW was finalized before the 3rd century B.C.E.⁴⁵ while a later date is excluded by Milik's observations concerning the *Vorlage* of 4QEn^a ar.

The narrative nucleus of the BW, the so-called the Shemihazah myth, can be found in 1En 6,1-8; 7,1abc-2,6; 8,4; 9,1-5,7-8ab,9-11; 10,1-3,11-22; 11,1-2.⁴⁶ Some specialists suggest a setting for the Shemihazah myth in the 5th century B.C.E.⁴⁷ while others doubt this dating⁴⁸ and propose early Hellenistic times.⁴⁹ In my opinion, the intricate redaction history of the BW argues for a significantly earlier date of the Shemihazah myth than the beginning of the 3rd century B.C.E. The prominence of the rejection of intermarriages in Persian times could suggest a 5th century B.C.E. setting. Corroboration for such a setting might be found in the name of the seventh angelic chief of the fallen watchers,

⁴³ Milik, Books 141; cf. 22-23.

⁴⁴ For the literary growth of the BW, see Nickelsburg, Apocalyptic 384-386; Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 165 and ad loc. Cf. also Hanson, Rebellion 195-233; Newsom, Development 310-329. For a summary of various reconstructions of the BW's redactional history, see Tigchelaar, Prophets 152-164, 168-172.

⁴⁵ For a 3rd century B.C.E. date of the BW, see e.g. Milik, Books 28; VanderKam, Enoch 111-114; Kvanvig, Roots 95-96; Reed, Angels 61-69.

⁴⁶ See Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 165,254-256. It has repeatedly been claimed that this Shemihazah myth was in turn part of a Book of Noah which is now lost. Other parts of this text would be preserved in 1En 106-107 and various passages of the Book of Similitudes (1En 54,7-55,2; 60; 65,1-69,25). For this idea cf. e.g. Charles, Book 24-25; Bartelmus, Heroentum 154-156; Uhlig, Henochbuch 506; Rubinkiewicz, Book 151; Sacchi, Apocalyptic 83. But the end of the Shemihazah myth presents an eschatology which is difficult to imagine in the middle of a Book of Noah. 1En 6-11 should be understood as a literary work in its own right which was incorporated into the BW (cf. Tigchelaar, Prophets 156-157).

⁴⁷ Milik, Books 25-34; Sacchi, Apocalyptic 61-62,212-213; Rubinkiewicz, Book passim (Rubinkiewicz wants to date even a later reworking of the Shemihazah myth into the 5th century B.C.E.); Boccaccini, Hypothesis 77.

⁴⁸ See. e.g. Collins' apodictic criticism of P. Sacchi: "There is no reason to push the date back to the fifth century" (Origin 28 note 10).

⁴⁹ Cf. e.g. Hanson, Rebellion 218-220.

Daniel (1En 6,7; cf. the later paraphrase in the Book of Similitudes [1En 69,2]).⁵⁰

The use of the names Dan'el and Daniy'el in ancient Jewish literature has a characteristic history. From the Iron Age no Israelite or Jewish use of the names Dan'el and Daniy'el is preserved. In exilic times, in a Mesopotamian setting,⁵¹ the book of Ezekiel mentions the name דניאל⁵² repeatedly. Ezek 14,14,20; 28,3 point to a positive reception of the Dan'el of Canaanite legend in Mesopotamian Judaism of exilic times.⁵³

Outside the Daniel literature and the book of Daniel itself the name Daniel is rare in the Jewish onomasticon of the Second Temple period.⁵⁴ Until the turn of the eras it is not attested on Jewish seals or in other Jewish inscriptions. Only in a 1st century C.E. ossuary inscription from Jerusalem, a Joseph son of Daniel is mentioned.⁵⁵ Another late use of the name Daniel might be attested in a Jewish re-marriage contract of the year 124 C.E. (Mur115). Among the signatures on the *verso* of the document a damaged name reads Δα[...⁵⁶ In the 1st century B.C.E.,⁵⁷ the Letter of Aristeas lists a Daniel as one of the translators of the Pentateuch into Greek (*Let. Aris.* 49). *Jub.* 4,20 mentions that Enoch's father in law who also was his uncle, was named Daniel. 1Chr 3,1 gives the name of David's second son as דניאל which is a reinterpretation of 2Sam 3,3 where David's second son is named דלוייה.⁵⁸ The first attestation of the name Daniel in the Jewish onomasticon outside the Daniel legends is Ezra 8,2 (cf. Neh 10,7). The name designates a Jew who migrated from Mesopotamia to Yehud.

The name Daniel is very prominent in the Book of Daniel and other Daniel literature from the Qumran library. The Daniel literature transforms the hero of Canaanite myth into a Jew in the Babylonian exile.⁵⁹ There can be no doubt, that the biblical book of Daniel as attested in the MT is to be dated in the years

⁵⁰ In 1En 6,7 the Ethiopic translation reads *dn'l* while its paratext in 1En 69:2 attests to *dnyl*. The *dn'l* of 1En 6,7 is a transcription of the Greek Δανειηλ which is still attested in Codex Panopolitanus. The Aramaic manuscripts 4QEn^{ac} leave no doubt that the seventh chief of the fallen watchers was called Daniel and not Dan'el. 4QEn^a 1 iii 8 reads דניאל while 4QEn^c I ii 26 has דניאל.

⁵¹ For an exilic setting, see Zimmerli, Ezekiel I 313; Zimmerli, Ezekiel II 76.

⁵² The Ketib reads in all three references Dan'el, which was reinterpreted by the Qere and by the LXX as Daniel. Both were influenced by the postexilic book of Daniel. See e.g. Noth, Noah 252-254.

⁵⁴ Cf. e.g. Ilan, Lexicon 87 (s.v. דניאל – Daniel).

⁵⁵ See the report of Kloner / Stark, Jerusalem 145.

⁵⁶ Cf. Benoît, Textes 254.

⁵⁷ For a date of the Letter of Aristeas in the 1st century B.C.E., see Lange, Law (forthcoming).

⁵⁸ Cf. McCarter, Samuel 101; Willi, Chronik 110. Contra Knoppers, Chronicles 318.

⁵⁹ Cf. Day, Daniel 182-183; Collins, Daniel דניאל 220.

167-164 B.C.E. But it has been long agreed that the first part of the book, Dan 1-6, incorporates earlier legends. According to Kratz, early stages of narrative tradition behind Dan 1-6 go back into the late 6th and 5th century B.C.E. and developed in Mesopotamian Jewry.⁶⁰

To summarize: During the Babylonian exile, the Dan'el figure of Canaanite myth became accepted in (Mesopotamian) Judaism. During Persian times the Mesopotamian diaspora developed Daniel legends which responded to threats to Jewish identity in a diaspora situation. Jewish returnees used the name Daniel during the 5th century B.C.E. in Yehud. At that time, these returnees from Mesopotamia brought the Daniel legends with them. Since this time an almost exclusively positive use of the name Daniel can be observed in Jewish texts from Coele-Syria.

The use of the name Daniel in the BW attests to a very different reception of the Canaanite Dan'el figure. In 1En 6,7, it turns the paradigmatic just of non-Jewish legend into the seventh chief of the fallen watcher and demonises him in this way. The BW had almost no effect on Jewish culture in its use of the name Daniel. After the Daniel-legends became prominent in Yehud it was unimaginable to name a prominent demon Daniel. From the 5th century B.C.E. onwards the name Daniel could not be connected any more with such a negative person.

Given this history of the name Daniel in the Jewish onomasticon, a setting for the Shemihazah myth after the 5th century B.C.E. is very unlikely. The Shemihazah myth reflects a stage in the Daniel tradition, when Daniel was still perceived as a non-Jewish figure in Persian Yehud. Such a 5th century B.C.E. date for the Shemihazah myth is corroborated by its main subject matter, i.e. the intermarriage between the watchers and human women. The question of intermarriage was a main topic of dispute in 5th century B.C.E. Yehud.

The text of the Shemihazah myth as isolated by Nickelsburg (1En 6,1-8; 7,1abc.2-6; 8,4; 9,1-5.7-8ab.9-11; 10,1-3.11-22; 11,1-2)⁶¹ displays a distinct story line. The Shemihazah myth begins and ends with a descent. It tells the story of how the heavenly watchers recognize the beauty of human women, come down to earth, take women for themselves and have sex with them (1En 6,1-7,1). After the corresponding punishment of the deluge an eschatological time of blessing will commence and the heavenly storehouses of blessing will open and their content will descend on earth (1En 11,2).

Between the two descents the Shemihazah myth tells how the watchers procreate (1En 7,2), how their children, the giants, devour all life on earth (1En 7,3-5), how the souls of the deceased and the empty earth cries out to heaven (1En 8,4), how the holy ones in heaven look down to earth, how they recognize

⁶⁰ See e.g. Kratz, *Translatio* 134-148.

⁶¹ See note 46.

the dire straits earth and its population is in (1En 9,1-3), how the holy ones bring earths' fate to god as the ruler of the universe in describing the misdemeanor of the watchers and their offspring (1En 9,4-5.6-10), and how god responds to the plead of his holy ones. He issues a warning to Noah (1En 10,1-3). He orders Michael to punish the watchers and to perform a summary cleansing of the depopulated earth by way of the deluge. In turn, the descendants of Noah will populate the earth and at an unspecified moment in time and an age of eschatological bliss will commence (1En 10,4-11,2).

In this story, the watchers are variously accused and slandered for their mixed marriages with human women. In 1En 6,3 these intermarriages are described as a great sin (ἀμαρτίας μεγάλης). Why intermarriage is regarded as a principal sin in the Shemihazah myth becomes apparent in later parts of the narrative. The Shemihazah myth criticizes the intermarriage of the watchers by employing a rhetoric of impurity, defilement, and cleansing. Regrettably, none of the vocabulary in question is preserved in the Aramaic Enoch manuscripts from Qumran. But the Greek translation is extant. 1En 7,1; 9,8; and 10,11 state that the watchers defiled themselves (μιαίνεσθαι, ἐμιάνησαν, μίανθηται) through the human women. And 1En 10,11 states that they communicated their uncleanness (ἀκαθαρσία) to the watchers.

The defilement of the watchers should not be understood as a communication of menstrual uncleanness by their human spouses⁶² but by their intercourse with women forbidden to the watchers.⁶³ The Shemihazah myth does not mention any bleeding of the watcher's spouses in connection with their sexual intercourse. That the watcher's defilement is not caused by the menstrual uncleanness of their human spouses is confirmed by 1En 9,9 and 10,15. In both places, the giants are called half-breeds (1En 9,9 κίβδηλα⁶⁴; 1En 10,15 τῶν κίβδηλων). In Lev 19,19 and Deut 22,11 κίβδηλος translates the Hebrew term כִּיבְדָה which signifies a cloth or garment made out of two different materials. Hence, the use of κίβδηλος in 1En 9,9; 10,15 creates a link to the *kil'ayim* laws of Lev 19,19. Like the offspring of two different breeds of animals or a garment made out of two different kinds of materials the giants are flawed as they are the offspring of a union of two different kinds. Hence, in the Shemihazah myth the defilement of the watchers results out a mixture of two things which do not belong together, i.e. the watchers' intercourse with human women.

⁶² Thus e.g. Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 225.

⁶³ Cf. Loader, Enoch 11-15; Himmelfarb, Temple 227-228.

⁶⁴ In 1En 9,9, only Syncellus reads κίβδηλα while both Codex Panopolitanus and the Ethiopic text attest to an "abbreviated paraphrase of the longer form of Sync" (Black, Book 132).

It is this defilement resulting out of the unequal union between watchers and humans that necessitates god's order to Michael to cleanse the earth (καθαρίσαν) from "all the impurities" (πάσης ἀκαθαρσίας; 1En 10,20). Michael's cleansing seems to be a prefiguration of the eschatological cleansing (καθαρισθήσεται) from all defilement (ἀπὸ παντὸς μιάσματος) and all uncleanness (ἀπὸ πάσης ἀκαθαρσίας) which is forecasted in 1En 10,22.

The Shemihazah myth is concerned with the purity of the watchers. The watchers are defiled by their human spouses because such a union is prohibited under the *kil'ayim* laws of Lev 19,19.⁶⁵ Both the rhetoric of defilement and purity as well as the *kil'ayim* laws are priestly concepts. The use of priestly language and ideas in connection with the intermarriage of the watchers creates the suspicion that as angels the watchers have the status of heavenly priests. This is corroborated by 1En 9,1 which states that the angels remaining in heaven looked upon the earth out of the heavenly sanctuary.⁶⁶ Before descending to earth the watchers were angelic priests in the heavenly sanctuary.

When the Shemihazah myth tells the story of the fallen heavenly watchers and their human spouses it tells a story of the intermarriage of heavenly priests with human women which had catastrophic consequences.⁶⁷ In the context of the 5th century B.C.E., such a story can only be understood as a polemic against priestly exogamy. The Shemihazah myth resembles esp. Ezek 44,22. Given its priestly language and the rhetoric of defilement employed to denounce the fallen heavenly watcher, it is very likely that the Shemihazah myth responds to mixed marriages of Jerusalem priests as e.g. mentioned in Neh 13,28. But that the Shemihazah myth is "a composition supporting Ezra's reform"⁶⁸ seems doubtful as it attacks only priestly exogamy and not all Jewish intermarriages.

⁶⁵ Cf. e.g. Fröhlich, *Mamzēr* 114.

⁶⁶ Codex Panopolitans and the Ethiopic text lack the phrase ἐκ τῶν ἄγιων τοῦ οὐρανοῦ which is attested in Syncellus^{a,b}. The reading of Syncellus is confirmed by Milik's reconstruction of 4QEn^a (4Q201) ar 1 iv 7 (בן קדשני שמויה), Books 157; contra Bharyo, Shemihazah 78, who reads בן קדן in 4QEn^a ar 1 iv 7).

⁶⁷ Cf. the interpretation of the final stage of the BW as polemics against priestly intermarriages by Suter, Angel 122-124; Suter, Revisiting 140; Nickelsburg, Enoch 585; Macaskill, Purity 78-82. Himmelfarb, Levi 12, thinks that the final stage of the BW argues against intermarriages of priests with Jewish women of non-priestly families.

⁶⁸ Rubinkiewicz, Book 154.

3. The Question of Inter-marriage in the Book of Ezra / Nehemiah in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls

The extensive scholarly debate about inter-marriage in Second Temple Judaism is characterized by a neglect of Jewish writings from early Hellenistic times. M. Himmelfarb's recent statement "that in the Second Temple period after the time of Ezra inter-marriage more or less disappeared as a subject of public concern" is characteristic for this attitude.⁶⁹ This situation is unfortunate as several Jewish texts from early Hellenistic times engage with the issue of mixed marriages. I.e. the Qumran library and other ancient Jewish sources preserve Jewish literature which is more or less contemporary with the final stage of the book of Ezra / Nehemiah⁷⁰ and can hence provide a Jewish context for its attitude towards mixed marriages.

Early Hellenistic times are characterized by an ongoing process of Greek acculturation in Coele-Syria in general and the Ptolemaic province of Yehud in particular. Examples are the history of the Tobiad family⁷¹ and the book of Ecclesiastes.⁷² During the late 4th and the 3rd century B.C.E. mixed marriages are often tolerated in Jewish literature. Examples are the book of Esther – in its MT version probably written at the end of the 4th or the beginning of the 3rd century B.C.E.⁷³ – and 1-2 Chronicles.⁷⁴ The book of Esther does not need to justify or defend Esther's marriage with a Persian king but takes it for granted.

1-2 Chronicles deletes the harsh criticism of inter-marriages out of its DtrH base text. Even the many intercultural marriages of Solomon are not touched on, although in the DtrH they serve as an explanation for the divide into a northern and a southern kingdom after Solomon's death. 1-2 Chronicles even accepts inter-marriages in several cases.⁷⁵ 1Chr 2,3 notes that the first wife of Judah, Bath-Shua, was a Canaanite who delivered three sons for him. Furthermore, 1Chr 2,17 notes an inter-marriage between the sister of David and an Ishmaelite. 1Chr 2,34-35 notes that a man called Sheshan marries his daughter with an Egyptian slave. Subsequently the mixed marriages of king David with a

⁶⁹ Himmelfarb, Book 133.

⁷⁰ For the date of the book of Ezra / Nehemiah (see below notes 134-135).

⁷¹ For the Tobiad family and its Hellenizing preferences, see Schäfer, History 18-21.

⁷² For Greek influence on Ecclesiastes, see e.g. Braun, Koheleth.

⁷³ For the date of the book of Esther, cf. e.g. Zenger, Buch 307-308.

⁷⁴ For 1-2 Chronicles und Ezra-Nehemiah as two separate literary works (see below). For a date of 1-2 Chronicles in early Hellenistic times, see e.g. Kaiser, Grundriß 147-148; cf. also Japhet, Chronicles 23-28; Knoppers, Chronicles 101-117.

⁷⁵ For the inter-marriages reported in the genealogies of 1 Chronicles and their implications pertaining the Chronicler's tolerance for inter-marriages, see Knoppers, Inter-marriage.

Calebite and an Aramean from 2Sam 3,3 are reiterated in 1Chr 3,1-2. And 1Chr 4,18 claims that a certain Mered married a daughter of Pharaoh while 1Chr 4,22 mentions that a person called Saraph married into Moab.

But tolerance is not the only Jewish attitude towards intermarriages in early Hellenistic times. The Book of the Words of Noah in 1QapGen ar (1Q20), the Book of Watchers, the Aramaic Levi Document, the Temple Scroll, and the book of Tobit point towards a rejection of intermarriages by the majority of Judean Jewry in this period.

3.1 *The Book of the Words of Noah (BWN)*⁷⁶

The only copy of the BWN is part of a collective manuscript from the Qumran library called 1QGenesis Apocryphon. In this manuscript, the Book of the Words of Noah covers 1QapGen ar V:29-XVIII:?.⁷⁷ The BWN is a re-narration of Gen 6-9, which enlarges the biblical story significantly. Different parts of the Book of the Words of Noah are incorporated into the book of Jubilees (*Jub.* 8-9), the Third Sibylline Oracle (Sib. Or. 3,110-161), and the War Scroll (1QM I-II).⁷⁸ And it is possible that the book of Tobit is influenced by the BWN in its mention of Noah's endogamy (Tob 4,12).⁷⁹ The widespread authority of the BWN already in the middle of the 2nd century B.C.E. and possibly earlier (Tob 4,12) argues for a date no later than the 3rd century B.C.E.

⁷⁶ My ideas on the topic of intermarriage in the BWN are significantly influenced by discussions with my assistant, Mr. Matthias Weigold, whom I owe a special gratitude for this invigorating discourse.

⁷⁷ For 1QapGen ar V:29-XVIII:? as attesting to an independent Book of Noah, see Steiner, *Heading*; cf. also Stone, *Book(s)* 8. The heading *כתב מולי נה* is reminiscent of 1En 14:1 (4QEn^c ar 1 vi 9) where the vision of Enoch is described as *ספר מולי קושטנא* "the book of the words of truth." Similarly, in 4Q543 1 I (par. 4Q545 1 i 1), the Vision of Amram is entitled *כתב מולי חזות עמרה* "the book of the words of the vision of Amram." This understanding of 1QapGen ar V:29-XVIII:? has been criticized by Dimant, *Noah* 144-146; Dimant, *Fictions* 240-242, and Bernstein, *Noah* 226-231. But both graphical markers and a heading indicate the beginning of a new book. External markers in a manuscript take precedent over textual observations. Furthermore, the discussion whether 1QapGen V:29-XVIII:? preserves an independent literary work should be separated from its identification with the Book of Noah mentioned in later sources as the one does not necessarily need to be connected with the other. For an overview about later mentions of a Book of Noah, see e.g. García Martínez, *Qumran* 24-43, and Stone, *Book(s)* 9-23.

⁷⁸ For the reception of the Book of the Words of Noah in the literature of Second Temple Judaism, see Scott, *Division* 300-303.

⁷⁹ See below, note 128.

The BWN addresses the issues of intermarriage and endogamy repeatedly. Endogamy is first mentioned at a crucial place in the narrative of the BWN. 1QapGen ar VI:6-9 argues that god saved Noah from the deluge because of his righteousness. The text is guided by Gen 6,8-10. But different from Gen 6,8 it gives a reason why Noah was regarded righteous by god.

vacat 6 Then I, Noah, became a man, and I clung to uprightness and strengthened myself in [...] 7 [Ba]raqiel, and I took 'Imzera', his daughter, as my wife; she conceived from me and bore me th[re]e sons [and daughters] 8 [...] Then I took wives for my sons from the daughters of my brothers, and I gave my daughters to the sons of my brothers according to the eternal law 9 [which] the Most High gave to human beings. *vacat* (1QapGen VI:6-9)⁸⁰

Although Noah's endogamy is not mentioned in the preserved text it must have fallen victim to manuscript damage as the texts emphasizes how Noah arranged endogamous marriages for his sons.⁸¹ The endogamy of Noah⁸² and his sons is the only example given by the BWN, how Noah came true to his claim "I clung to uprightness" (1QapGen ar VI:6). Noah's righteousness is thus his practice of endogamy. And it is Noah's righteousness which saved him and his family from the flood. Hence, in the preserved text of the BWN, Noah and his family were saved from the flood because of their endogamous marriages. The crucial importance of endogamy for the BWN is also illustrated by its claim that Noah and his sons practiced endogamy according to the "eternal law" (כרת חוק עלמא 1QapGen ar VI:8). The phrase "eternal law" refers to the heavenly law otherwise mentioned in connection with the heavenly tablets.⁸³ In the BWN intermarriage means a violation not just of the torah but of the heavenly law itself.

The second time the BWN addresses the question of intermarriage is found in 1QapGen ar VI:20. The manuscript 1QapGen ar is rather deteriorated at this place. What is preserved shows that the BWN reiterates the story of the fallen angels and their female spouses of Gen 6,1-4.

⁸⁰ Translation according to Fitzmyer, Genesis 77.

⁸¹ Cf. Bernstein, Noah 208.

⁸² Qimron, Edition 107-108, reads 1QapGen ar VI:6-9 as referring to interfamily marriage. But there is no reason for a distinction between interfamily marriage and marriage inside one's own people in the BWN. With Noah as the forefather of post-diluvian humanity both categories are one and the same.

⁸³ That the phrase כרת חוק עלמא ("according to the eternal law"; 1QapGen ar VI:8) refers to the heavenly tablets becomes apparent when read in light of *Jub* 28,6, where the heavenly tablets are mentioned in connection with marriage (cf. Fitzmyer, Genesis 148).

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holy ones who were with the daughters of m[en]⁸⁴

Immediately after the mention of the intermarriage between holy ones and human women, the BWN describes the deluge. Although this sequence is guided by the book of Genesis, it seems likely that for the BWN the angelic exogamy of the fallen holy ones caused the deluge. If intermarriage leads to universal destruction in the BWN the key importance of the intermarriage prohibition cannot be overstated for the BWN.

Whether the BWN's enforcement of endogamy is also reflected in the numbers of sons and daughters born to Shem, Ham, and Japheth in 1QapGen ar XII:10-12⁸⁵ must remain speculation. It is remarkable though that Shem on the one hand has five sons and five daughters (lines 10-11) allowing five endogamous couples. On the other hand, Ham has four sons and seven daughters and Japheth seven sons and four daughters. The offspring of Shem – out of which Judah developed – is thus the only one which provides the perfect match for endogamous couples while the sons and daughters of Ham and Japheth would have needed to look outside their forming ethnic and cultural groups for a partner.

The manuscript deterioration of 1QapGen ar makes conclusions about the socio-cultural context of the BWN's attitude to exogamy impossible. A comparison with the Book of Watchers (BW) would argue for an anti-Hellenistic background, i.e. the preservation of Jewish cultural identity by way of ethnic isolation. Therefore, I will turn now to the question of intermarriage in the BW.

3.2 *The Book of Watchers (BW)*⁸⁶

J.J. Collins has emphasized that in its various literary strata the BW is written so unspecific that the story of the watchers can function as a “paradigmatic model which is not restricted to one historical situation.” Collins dubs this as the “essential polyvalence of apocalyptic symbolism.”⁸⁷ Although it is doubtful whether the original Shemihazah myth was an apocalypse, Collins' observation explains why the BW was repeatedly reread and reapplied to various historical situations in its long redaction history. For reasons of space, I cannot discuss every redaction individually but will restrict myself to the BW's final redaction. It should be noted though that E.J.C. Tigchelaar⁸⁸ understands

⁸⁴ Transcription and translation according to Fitzmyer, Genesis 76-77.

⁸⁵ Thus VanderKam, Granddaughters 460-461.

⁸⁶ For the textual and redaction history of the BW as well as its date.

⁸⁷ Collins, Technique 98.

⁸⁸ Tigchelaar, Prophets 198-203; cf. Tigchelaar, Remarks 143-144.

1En 12-16 as a response to Manasseh's intermarriage with the daughter of the governor of Samaria and the subsequent exodus of Manasseh and some of his priestly followers to Samaria shortly before the conquest of Coele-Syria by Alexander the Great.

In the final stage of the BW, the intermarriage of the fallen heavenly watchers with human women is "one of the basic oppositions of the myth of the fallen angels in 1En 6-11."⁸⁹ In its understanding of intermarriage, the BW draws on Gen 6,1-4. 1En 6-11 reports how the heavenly watchers recognize the beauty of human women, go down to earth, marry them and procreate with them. This union is qualified in 1En 9,9 as defilement.

The watchers' intermarriage has two consequences: 1) the watchers teach their spouses different forms of knowledge and corrupt humanity in this way (1En 7,1; 8,1-3). 1En 9,6 qualifies this knowledge as hidden:⁹⁰

You see what Asael has done, who has taught all iniquity upon the earth, and has revealed the eternal mysteries that are in heaven, which the sons of men were striving to learn. (1En 9,6)⁹¹

2) the Watcher's offspring, the giants, devastate the earth by devouring it (1En 7,3-6). 1En 9,9 summarizes this as follows:

"And now behold, the daughters of men have born sons from them, giants, half-breeds. And the blood of men is shed upon the earth, and the whole earth is filled with iniquity."⁹²

At the end of the myth, 1En 9-11 describes how the angels who remained in heaven petition god to help his creation, how the deluge will come upon the earth as a just punishment and cleansing, how the watchers will be bound for seventy generations, and how after the day of their judgement a time of eternal righteousness will evolve. The remaining chapters of the BW (1En 12-36) describe how Enoch becomes an intermediary between the fallen watchers and god and how Enoch fulfils this function by way of an otherworldly journey.

It has been argued that the terminology of defilement as well as the former priestly status of the fallen watchers in the heavenly sanctuary would show that the BW attacks intermarriages between priests and non-Jewish women or Jewish women of non-priestly background. While this is true for the Shemihazah myth, in the final stage of BW, later redaction(s) combined Jewish myths in a way that they counteract Greek mythology. There is surprising correspondence between various parts of Greek mythology on the one hand and 1En

⁸⁹ Suter, *Angel* 122.

⁹⁰ See Koch, *Adam* 187-194.

⁹¹ Translation according to Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 202.

⁹² Translation according to Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 202.

6-11 as well as later parts of the BW on the other hand – a correspondence which was already recognized by ancient Jewish authors (cf. Josephus, *Antiquitates Judaicae* 1,73).⁹³

The titan Prometheus teaches forbidden knowledge (Platon, Protagoras 320c-322a)
Prometheus was bound by Zeus (Hesiodus, Theogonia 521-523)

The Watchers teach forbidden knowledge (1En 7-8; 9,8!)

The Watchers will be bound (1En 10,4.12)

Pandora's box as humanities' punishment for Prometheus' gift of fire (Hesiodus, Theogonia 570-577)

The Watchers' teaching as a cause of the deluge (1En 9-11)

The titan Kronos devours all of his children (Hesiodus, Theogonia 453)

The giants devour everything on earth (1En 7,3-6)

The titans are banned to Tartaros (Homerus, *Ilias* 14,279; Hesiodus, Theogonia 697.851; Hymni Homerici, Hymnus ad Apollinem 335; Pausanias, *Graeciae Descriptio* 8,37,3)

The watchers will be banned to a special place of punishment (1En 18,11-19,2; 21)

Other parallels with the partly angelic parentage of the giants include myths about the partly divine parentage of various Greek heroes and a passage from Hesiod's *Catalogi feminarum sive Eoearum*:

Now all the gods were divided through strife; for at that very time Zeus who thunders on high was meditating marvellous deeds, even to mingle storm and tempest over the boundless earth, and already he was hastening to make an utter end of the race of mortal men, declaring that he would destroy the lives of the demi-gods, that the children of the gods should not mate with wretched mortals, seeing their fate with their own eyes; but that the blessed gods henceforth even as aforesaid should have their living and their habitations apart from men. But on those who were born of immortals and of mankind verily Zeus laid toil and sorrow upon sorrow.⁹⁴

By combining Greek myth with Jewish myth the BW slanders Greek culture as something that was taught already once by the watchers to their exogamous wives. As a consequence the deluge came. The implication for a time of

⁹³ For the influence of Greek myth on the BW, see e.g. Glasson, *Influence*; Nickelsburg, *Apocalyptic* 395-397.399-404; Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 191-193; Bartelmus, *Herontium* 160-166; Newson, *Development* 314; VanderKam, *Enoch* 126-128; Reed, *Angels* 39-40. To observe the correspondences between the BW and Greek myth does not deny that earlier stages of the BW are influenced by ancient Near Eastern mythology (see e.g. Hanson, *Rebellion* 202-218; Hanson, *Response*). It demonstrates rather how the final redaction of the BW is able to combine earlier Jewish and ancient Near Eastern mythology into a parody of Greek myth (cf. already Collins, *Issues* 319-320).

⁹⁴ Translation according to Evelyn-White, *Hesiod* 199.201.

increased Greek cultural influence is evident. Greek acculturation is comparable to the teaching of the fallen heavenly watchers. Its consequences will be as bad as the deluge was.

But the BW does not just issue a general warning against Hellenism. It is more specific and attacks the mixed marriages of watchers and human women. As the union between watchers and humans brought forth the giants, mixed marriages between Jews and Greeks will also have terrible consequences and threaten Judaism in its very existence. Greek intermarriage provokes Jewish conversion to Hellenism and thus to idolatry. The consequences for Judaism might be as catastrophic as the deluge was. The BW tells the story of the intermarriages between watchers and humans to encounter and battle Greek influence on Judaism in favour of traditional Jewish culture.

This interpretation is confirmed by Uriel's words about the fallen watchers at their place of punishment in 1En 19,1.

And Uriel said to me, "There stand the angels who mingled with the women. And their spirits – having assumed many forms – bring destruction on men and lead them astray to sacrifice to demons as to gods until the day of the great judgment, in which they will be judged with finality."⁹⁵

In this text, the influence of the fallen watchers leads to sacrificing to false gods and thus to a loss of religious integrity for humankind. Vice versa such a loss of religious integrity happens also to the fallen watchers as a consequence of their intermarriage. 1En 9,8; 12,4; and 15,3 all emphasize that the watchers are defiled due to their sexual union with human women.⁹⁶ As a consequence their religious integrity is lost. This rhetoric of defilement affiliates the BW with the Aramaic Levi Document.

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⁹⁵ Translation according to Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 276.

⁹⁶ Cf. Fröhlich, *Mamzēr* 113-114; Loader, Enoch 13-15.29-30.

“INVOKE AT ANY TIME ...”

|| Apotropaic texts and belief in demons in the literature of the Qumran community

Ida Fröhlich

The title cites the text of 11Q11 V.4, a manuscript published earlier as an apocryphal psalm.¹ Republished later among scrolls of Cave 11 it has been reckoned now as a magical text.² The manuscript has a regular form with an average size and line numbers.³ The beginning of the scroll is very fragmentary. Words like *šbw'h* “oath” (11Q11 fig. 4, I:3); *mšb[y']* „exor[cis]ing” (11Q11 fig. 4, I:7), and “the demon” (*hšd*) (11Q11 fig. 4, I:10) in the fragmentary part refer to a magical content of the work.

The manuscript includes supposedly four compositions which are to be distinguished on the basis of the opening and closing formulae in the text.⁴ Frg. 2, fig. 3, fig. 4, and col. I. are too fragmentary to be interpreted. They may belong to a first composition. The beginning of the second composition is supposedly col. II.2 where Solomon is mentioned who “shall invoke” (*wyqr[]*). The end of the second psalm is in col. V.3, a closing formula reconstructed as [Amen, amen. Selah]. In col. V.4 a new unit is introduced by the formula “Of David” (*ldwyd*). The composition following this introduction is an apocryphal psalm. Its title is complemented with some words referring to the use of the text: “Against incantation (*lhš*) in the name of YHWH”. The composition ends in col. VI.3, with the partly reconstructed formula “[Amen, amen.] Selah”. The fourth composition is again introduced by the title “Of David” (*ldwyd*) (col. VI.3); the introduction is followed by the somewhat paraphrased text of Psalm 91.

Persons mentioned in the compositions are Solomon and David, both of them well-known from Psalm inscriptions. Both biblical figures are linked with psalms related to magic and healing. David is featured in a biblical narrative as a healer when playing the harp for Saul, who had been stricken by a demon causing a depressive illness (1Sam 16,14-23; 18,10-11). In later Jewish tradition

¹ Sanders, Psalms Scroll.

² García-Martínez / Tigchelaar et al., Qumran.

³ 11Q11 (11QapocrPs) trans. García Martínez / Tigchelaar / van der Woude.

⁴ For a classification of the magical texts and an overview of this text see: Eshel, Genres 395-415.

Solomon is referred to as one who has power over the demons.⁵ Other figures mentioned in the compositions are Raphael, referred to as a healer: “[Ra]phael has healed [them]”, i.e. the possessed (*hpgw’[ym]*), preceding immediately the closing formulæ of the second composition (Amen, amen, Selah, col. V.3). Raphael is a healing angel in Jewish tradition, and has the same function as in the present text.⁶ The expression “has healed” (*šlmm*) in 11Q11 refers to the efficacy of his power. Because of the fragmentary nature of the text it can only be supposed that examples for his healing activities were also enumerated; in this case the formula could be paralleled with the closing formula of magic formulas “a formula of proof, tested for many times”.

Elements referring to the use of the text are: “And invo[ke]” (*wqr’*) (II.8); and the expression “A[gainst incanta]tion in the name of YHW[H. Invoke at an]y time” (*[qr’ bkl]’i*) (V.4) leads to suppose that these texts were recited on certain occasions, individually or commonly. The third composition refers to the situation when the incantation should be recited: “[when] he comes to you in the nig[ht], you will [s]ay to him”. The text to be recited is Psalm 91. The Psalm text ends in VI.13. At the bottom of the column there are two additional lines (VI.14-15).⁷ Line 15 is void, consequently line 14 must be the end of the composition. The text of line 14 sounds as “And [t]he[y] shall an[swer: Amen, amen.] Selah *va[cat v]aca[t]*”. The expression “they shall answer” (*wy’[nw]*) refers that the composition – the text of Psalm 91 – might have been recited loudly on some occasions in the community. The mode of use of the previous compositions is not known. The third composition (V.4-VI.3) might have been recited individually, probably in case of need.

Although certain parts speak openly of a situation of a demonic offense, the text is not an amulet. There are no traces of iteration, or any other trace of wearing the text on the body as an amulet. The extent and content of the text does not make probable its use as an object bestowed in the living place as an

⁵ The Greek Testament of Solomon presents him as a figure who has power over the demons by mean of his ring. The work presents a rich demonology. On the work and ancient traditions of Solomon’s power see Duling, Solomon 117-119.

⁶ The meaning of the Raphael is „God heals”. In the book of Tobit he is the angel sent by God to restore Tobit’s sight and to free Sarah from the dominance of the evil spirit, Ashmodai. In the book of Tobit Raphael is the angel who binds Asael and casts him into a pit (1En 10,4). Raphael is mentioned as the second in the angelic hierarchy in 1En 20,3.

⁷ Frg. 2 and frg. 3 holds only a few words. On the basis of cols. V (14 lines) and VI (15 lines) it can be supposed that the average length of the columns were 14-15 lines.

apotropaic object.⁸ The compositions are of different character: composition 2 is descriptive while composition 3 was written for individual and casual needs. Composition 4 (Psalm 91) seems to be used collectively.

The contents of the texts

The first composition is too fragmentary, and no structure or content of the text can be established. The second composition (II.2-V.3) bears a description on God's power and trust in God, who, as creator of the world is above all. “Lean [on YHWH, the God of gods, who made] the heavens [and the earth, and all that is in them, w]ho separated [light from darkness]” (11Q11 frg. 4, II.9-12). The expression “separated light from darkness” calls associations with Gen 1,6-7. At the same time light and darkness evoke the idea of an ethical dualism represented in the literature of the community by the symbols of light and darkness. This dualism is a relative one, subordinated to God's power. God is lord over the “wonders” (*hmwptym*) of the world (III.3), that is over the natural phenomena, the causes of which are hidden from the humans. Further heavenly beings, “an[gels and] all the [holy] see[d] to st[a]nd before [him] (i.e. God)” are mentioned in the following (11Q III.4-5). The ideas of a heavenly sanctuary and that of a heavenly court are well-known both from Qumran, and from late biblical texts.⁹ In 11Q11 the heavenly beings are called by God to be witnesses against some sinners “who committe[d] against [all me]n sin, and against all p[eople]” (11Q11 III.5-7). The sin was, to all probability, the desecration of heavenly secrets: “But] they know his [wonder]ful [secrets] which they do not []” (III.7-8). This act may be the cause for which they are to fear from punishment: “ [t]he[y] will fear tha[t] great [blow.]” (III.10). In Col. IV the situation is completely clear, and the fragmentary text can be completed with certitude: “YHWH will strike you with a [grea]t b[low] to destroy you [And in his fury [he will send] against you a powerful angel [to carry out] his [entire comm]and, who[will not show] you mercy” (IV.4-5). They are punished with being taken “to the great abyss” (*thwm rbh*) and to “the deepest Sheol” (*[š'w]l httyh*) (IV.7-8). In the following references are made to “your gift” (*mntnk*) (IV.12), and to the possessed (*hpgwym*) (V.2) whom Raphael has healed.

⁸ The length of the text is x + 6 columns. The sheet on which the text was written is the average size of the scrolls found in the Qumran caves; no special traits of the manuscript refer to its special use.

⁹ The idea of a heavenly sanctuary where angels recite the liturgy is reflected in the Qumran text the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (4Q400-403, 4Q405). Dan 7,9-14 depicts a heavenly court and judgment in heaven. The scene where Satan asks the testing of Job is again a heavenly court, Job 2,1-6. The judgment scene of John's Revelation is in the heaven.

The third composition refers to a nocturnal assailant, a demonic being attacking at times: “[When] he comes to you in the nig[ht]” (V.5). The being is of mixed origin, an “[offspring of] man and of the seed of the ho[ly one]”, it has mixed human and animal traits (horns) (V.5-6). Its nature is “darkness and not light, [injust]ice and not justice” (V.7-8), that is, it belongs to the sphere of physical and ethical evil. It will be punished by God, who will bring it down “[to the] deepest [Sheo]”. The reading Sheol is conformed by the following text which mentions bronze [gates], a motif generally known from texts dealing with themes of the netherworld. Similarly the attribute “dark” refers the reader to Sheol connected to darkness. The expression “[for]ever”, and the subsequent expression on “the sons of Bel[ial]” may refer again to the attacker (VI.2-3).

The fourth composition, Psalm 91, promises God’s protection in difficult situations like “[the net of the fow]ler”, “the calam[itous] pestilence” (VI.5).¹⁰ Further dangers are “the dread of night or the arrow that flies by day”, 6 “the plague that rages at [no]on or the pestilence that [in dark]ness proceeds” (VI.7-8), and “evil, and a plague” in a general meaning (VI.10). The “cobra [and viper shall you s]tep, you shall tramp[le lion] and dragon” mentioned at the end of the Psalm is, to all probability, a general reference to God’s general protection from every kind of dangers, and not a mention of concrete dangers.

Demons in the Old Testament

Psalm 91 cited in 11Q11 enumerates various plagues and afflictions: „pestilence”, (*qtb*) (91,6); „the arrow that flies by day” (*hš y’wp ywmh*) (91,5); „plague” (*dbr*) (91,6), and evil forces: „the net of the fowler” (*pḥ*) (91,3); „the dread of night” (*phd lylh*) (91,5) as causing harms to humans.

The rest of the compositions of 11Q11 mentions demonic beings as *šdym* and *rwḥwt* both in plural forms. Both terms are known from the Old Testament. A general name of a demonic being is *šēd* (*šd*), mentioned usually in plural form in the Old Testament (Deut 32,17, Ps 106,37).¹¹ As to the other term *rwḥwt*, Saul’s mysterious depressive illness is caused by a bad spirit (*rwḥ r’h*) (1Sam 16,14-23).¹² The spirit of the dead is meant in the story of the witch of En-Dor where Saul evokes the spirit (*’lthym*) of the dead Samuel with the help of a witch (1Sam 28; for the term see verse 13). Demonic beings are referred to in the Old Testament when mentioning Azazel (*’z’zl*, Lev 16,8.10.26), the

¹⁰ Reconstruction on the basis of Psalm 91.

¹¹ The term is etymologically related to Akkadain *šēdu*, „protecting spirit, esp. of bull-colossus”, Aram *šyd’*, „demon”, see Brown / Driver / Briggs, *Lexicon* 993-994.

¹² The word *rwḥ* can also designate ethical evil, like the „spirit of breach” in Judg 9,22-23, and „a lying spirit” in the mouth of prophets in 1Kgs 22,19-22.

rephaim (*rp'ym*), and the vampire-like *'alûqâ* (Prov 30,15). Names of illnesses and afflictions may comprise the meaning of demonic beings, like *maš'hit*, *deber*, *qeteb*, *rešep* or the “demonium meridianum” in Psalm 91,6.¹³ Illnesses and afflictions in the Old Testament narratives are always God’s agents for punishing sins, they never are sovereign entities.¹⁴

The Old Testament is acquainted with further demonic beings besides those mentioned above. Together with Lilith owls and jackals are mentioned as evil spirits dwelling at deserted ruins (Isa 34,14). Isaiah does not inform about Lilith’s characteristics. The amulet bearing her name from Arslan Tash (northern Syria), from the 8th or 7th century is probably a fake.¹⁵ On the other side Lilith is well known from Mesopotamian incantation texts and amulets as a night demon killing infant babies. The incantation series Maqlû mentions several times the group *lilû*, *lilîtu*, and (*w*)*ardat lilî*.¹⁶ The name Lilitu is to be identified here with that of Lilith as well as in the incantation texts written against the demons of the *lilû*-family.¹⁷ Lilith is dangerous, above all, for newborn babies, sucking their blood and eating their flesh. Her characteristics are very similar to those of the Mesopotamian female demon Lamaštu. She is shown on her numerous representations with a lion head, a female body, bird’s legs, holding snakes in her hands and suckling a dog and a swine. Jewish sources derive the name Lilith from the noun *lylh* “night”. However, its origin is the Sumerian word *lil* meaning “wind” (similarly the names *lilû* and (*w*)*ardat lilî*). Lilith and her companions are constantly mentioned in the texts of the Aramaic and Mandaean magic bowls from the late antiquity. The inscriptions in the bowls served for apotropaic purposes. The majority of the bowls originate from the Jewish community of Nippur.¹⁸ Lilith is well known in Talmudic and later Jewish tradition.¹⁹ Apotropaic texts called *segullah* written against Lilith’s harmful activity had been used in Jewish tradition until modern times. Printed

¹³ Caquot, *Démons* 58-59.

¹⁴ On the concept see Toorn, *Sin*.

¹⁵ Hutter, *Lilit* 520-21; Stol, *Birth* 229.

¹⁶ Meier, *Beschwörungssammlung*.

¹⁷ The members of the *lilû*-family are the *lilû*, a male demon, an incubus; the *lilîtu*, a female demon who strangles newborn children; the (*w*)*ardat lilî*, a female demon, a kind of succubus. For the texts see Farber, *Schlaf*.

¹⁸ *Montgomery Texts*; Geller, *Bowls*.

¹⁹ Mentioned in four tractates (*Niddah* 24b, *Baba Bathra* 73a, *Šabbat* 151b, *‘Erubin* 100b) as long-haired winged being. In midrashic tradition Lilith was Adam’s first wife. He gendered with her the *šēdim* who bring plagues and afflictions on humans. Lilith wanted to rule over Adam, therefore he dismissed her. Lilith became an evil spirit, the demon of the childbed fever and infant mortality. See Haas, *Magie* 224-225.

segulloth from Hungary from the beginning of the 20th century used Psalm texts and names of the biblical matriarchs as a shielding against Lilith.²⁰

Without mentioning Lilith's name Isa 13,21-22 lists owls and jackals, ostriches and "hairy ones" (*š 'yrym*), all of them as demonic beings dwelling among ruins.²¹ According to the general views in the ancient Near East and the Mediterranean owls are connected to death and demonic.²² The evil *utukku*-demons are called "owls hooting over the city" in a Mesopotamian incantation text. Similarly, the jackal is an animal related to death.²³ Besides the beliefs in demons the Old Testament literature bears traces of the belief in the "evil eye" (*'yn r'h*, *'yn hr'*) and its negative effects, too.²⁴ Later Jewish tradition shows a rich world of demons.²⁵

The use of amulets is also documented in the Old Testament. The "moonlets" (*šhrnym*) mentioned in historical and prophetic texts (Jud 8,21,26; Isa 3,18) probably served as amulets.

To all probability jewels (nose-rings, necklaces also worn as amulet) and make-up used for apotropaic purpose were meant when the prophet Hosea urged Israel "that she put away her whoring from her face (*pnym*), and her adultery from between her breasts" (Hos 2,2). Golden bells (*p'mnym*) hanging from the high priest's garment (Ex 28,33f; 39,25f), "were in the first instance amulets to frighten evil spirits away".²⁶

Amulets written with apotropaic purposes are known from Ketef Hinnom (Jerusalem) where two silver amulets were found in a burial cave. The objects are dated to the end of the First Temple period (circa 6th century B.C.E.).²⁷ According to the preamble of the amulet text the amulets protected their owners against "the Evil" qualified by the definite article (*hr'*). The amulet text is the blessing of the priests (Num 6,24).²⁸

The Old Testament has an attitude unfavorable to magic. The historical narratives of the corpus, possible witnesses of everyday practice, have been

²⁰ Fröhlich, Texts 295-303.

²¹ The term is mentioned in the Old Testament over 50 times. On the figure of the *se'irim* see Janowski, Satyrs 732-733.

²² Dunnigan, Owls 144.

²³ Gods and demons of death are usually represented in the form of various canines. The jackal-form god is the lord of the desert and the netherworld. See also Heerma van Voss, Anubis 330-331.

²⁴ Wazana, Case 685-702.

²⁵ For a survey see Hillers / Rainowitz / Scholem, Demons 1521-1533, esp. 1526-1533 for demons in the Talmud and Kabbalah.

²⁶ Davies, Magic 99.

²⁷ Yardeni, Remarks 176-185; Barkay et al, Amulets 41-71.

²⁸ For amulets and their use see Blau, Amulets 546-550; Blau, Zauberwesen.

bequeathed through the filter of the deuteronomistic editors whose opinion was adverse to the magic; accordingly they tried to eliminate any magical element. For this reason references on belief in demons are reticent. However, behind these laconic reports there might have been a living world of beliefs unrevealed. It is hard to believe that in pre-exilic Israel there was only a limited or temporary belief in demons, confined to the acquaintance only with some demons, in certain periods. Belief or disbelief in demons is a vital part of any worldview, and it never is partial or temporary. Ancient Near Eastern cultures attributed illnesses, anxiety and psychical disorders, afflictions, epidemics, and any kind of natural evil to the work of demons. This view is only natural, since at that time there was no knowledge about bacteria, viruses, and other biological causes of illnesses, neither of medical theories and concepts which are known to us. Consequently the realm of demons was a natural and basic element of the worldview of ancient Near Eastern cultures (including the Israelite culture) from the earliest times to the late antiquity.

In an article on Qumran demonology (published on the 50th anniversary of the finding of the Scrolls) P. Alexander remarked the growing interest for the coherent and sophisticated demonology which is presented in the Dead Sea Scrolls, and called the attention to the importance of the research of this phenomenon in the spiritual history of the Qumran community. He ascertained that the “belief in demons was central in their worldview, and some of the earliest Jewish demonological texts are to be found in the Scrolls”. However, he stated that no systematic demonology is presented in the texts, and he concluded that “the Qumran inventory of demons ... turns out to be somewhat vague”. He called again the attention to the contrast between the demonic world in the Dead Sea Scrolls and that of “envisaged in many of the later pagan Greek, Christian and Jewish magical texts which are much more precise and technical in their classification of demons”.²⁹

Was demonology really missing from Qumran tradition? The religious conditions of the Qumran community are derived from exilic experience and traditions of Judaism in the exilic-postexilic time.³⁰ Meeting with Mesopotamian culture, its variety of cults, literature, its overwhelming magical and interpretative traditions was a challenge for Jewish groups living in the exile. Intellectuals were highly represented among the exiled – this is clear not only because of the lists of the ‘first exile’ which show clearly that the Babylonians took the power and intellectual elite into exile, but also due to lists of the

²⁹ Alexander, *Demonology* 331.336.

³⁰ García-Martínez, *Qumran 113-135*, and García-Martínez / van der Woude, *Groningen* 521-541.

returnees which contain a good number of groups of priests.³¹ Jewish works written in an exilic milieu like Ezekiel, Deutero-Isaiah, Daniel 2-6 reflect an excellent acquaintance of their authors with local culture, and political events. The method by which the elements of the foreign culture are presented is not direct borrowing but “elite emulation”, a method which “often appears in colonial or imperial contexts, when peripheral social groups are oppressed and threatened, or at least feel threatened, by a larger social core”.³² Jewish works born in exilic milieu resound Mesopotamian themes and motifs, and interpret them at the same time, according to the traditional culture of the authors (e.g. the interpretation of dreams, a well-known practice in Mesopotamian culture is presented in Dan 2,13-19 as a special practice revealed to Daniel by God). The Jewish authors living in Mesopotamia gave mimetic responses to the local tradition.

Phenomena and ideas are explained and categorized not at the time when they come into being but when a community feels for some reason needy to explain it. To remain within the circle of Mesopotamian culture and demonology, in various times various answers were given to the question of the origin of the demons.³³ For the Jews living in the Babylonian exile that period was a situation which demanded for the scattered people a restatement of their identity. A vital part of shaping their self-identity was their attitude to the new cultural heritage with which they were acquainted in the exile. Their restatement was at the same time distancing themselves from certain phenomena of the foreign culture. The framing of the origin of the demons was shown in an Aramaic work – the Enochic collection – the traditions which originated from an exilic milieu.

A postexilic rationale of the origin of the demonic: the story of the Watchers

The Book of Enoch was earlier known as a part of the pseudepigraphic tradition in Greek and Ethiopian translations. It had been supposed that its original language may have been Hebrew or Aramaic, and that the Greek translation was prepared from this, only a part of which has survived;³⁴ luckily the *ge'ez*

³¹ 2Kgs 24,13-16; Ezra 2,1-63; 8,1-36.

³² Sparks, *Enūma* 625. Sparks demonstrates that besides the well-known example of priestly mimesis in the Creation story (Genesis 1) the priestly material of the Pentateuch was widely influenced by Mesopotamian models, and several narratives and rites were shaped as mimetic responses to Mesopotamian tradition.

³³ On the phenomenon see Toorn, *Theology* 61-83.

³⁴ Its editions are Flemming / Radermacher, *Buch*; Black, *Apocalypsis*. About the Greek manuscripts see also Denis, *Introduction* 11-30.

(Ethiopian) translation has preserved a much longer text.³⁵ The work known only from earlier translations was uniformly dated to the middle of the 2nd century B.C.E. Some parts of it (ch. 37-70) were dated to a somewhat later time.

The finding of fragments of the Aramaic original of the work among the Qumran texts brought a veritable turning point in research.³⁶ The manuscript fragments found at Qumran – despite the fact that we are dealing with very minute fragments – not only answered certain questions about the history of the origin of the text, but also provided an insight into the kind of role the work played in the literary tradition of the group which left behind the library safeguarded in the caves.³⁷ Based on the number of fragments found³⁸ we may suppose that the work was not merely known at Qumran, but that it must have been an important work in the tradition of the community. This is also indicated by the fact that numerous other works found at Qumran are either already known from the pseudepigraphic literature earlier or not, contain a similar tradition to that known from 1Enoch, or mentioned in or used from 1Enoch.³⁹ No fragments of chapters 37-70 of the work appear among the Qumran fragments – it has already been supposed about these chapters that they are of later origin than the other parts of 1Enoch. The Qumran manuscripts, however, also contain texts – fragments of the parts called Astrological Book and Book of Giants by their editor – which were earlier not known from any of the translations.⁴⁰ The oldest Qumran manuscript of 1Enoch (4Q En.ar/a) may be dated to

³⁵ The Ethiopian manuscript tradition can be traced back to the 15th c. The first edition of the Ethiopian text is Charles, *The Ethiopic Version*; the new, critical edition of the Ethiopian text, which takes into consideration the Aramaic fragments, with translation and annotation: Knibb, *Book*.

³⁶ The edition Milik, *Books*; is a new edition of the Ethiopian text and was prepared in the light of the Aramaic fragments, with translation and commentary Knibb, *Book*.

³⁷ On the significance of the Aramaic fragments, see García-Martínez, *Contributions*.

³⁸ In his edition Milik identified seven manuscript copies on the basis of the fragments found in cave No. 4, four manuscripts from the Astronomical Book, on the basis of the fragments of the Book of Giants we may also suppose the existence of several copies from this part as well, see Milik, *Books* 139-317.

³⁹ To mention the most obvious examples: the Book of Jubilees uses and explicitly quotes the book (see Charles, *Apocrypha* 18-19.), and elements originating from 1Enoch play an important role in its entire narrative. The Damascus Document alludes to the Enochic tradition in its historical overview (CD II.2-III.12) similarly the historical schema outlined in 4Q180-181 is also based on the story of the Watchers.

⁴⁰ Milik, *Books* 273-317. The Book of Giants contains a rich tradition concerning the giants, the children of the Watchers, unfortunately in a very fragmentary form. The order of the fragments is very problematic. On this see García-Martínez, *Contri-*

the end of the 3rd century B.C.E., and already this manuscript contains the text of Chapters 1-12⁴¹ (but most likely the entire Book of Watchers, the material of Chapters 1-36, belongs to this layer).⁴² The later manuscripts contain further parts of the work; this indicates that the work was continually transmitted until the 1st century B.C.E., and that in the course of this transmission the collection was enriched by further pieces.⁴³ The manuscript tradition can be traced to the turn of the 3rd and 2nd century B.C.E. This means that the Book of Watchers was written at least during the 3rd century B.C.E., but it may have been written even earlier.

1 Enoch and Mesopotamian tradition

Enoch was written in Aramaic, the vernacular in Mesopotamia by the time of the Exile. Besides Enoch several works composed in Aramaic came to light from the Qumran library. They show several specific common characteristics concerning their literary genres and content, which are worthy of further examination.⁴⁴ Several Qumran Aramaic works are well acquainted with historical, literary, and other traditions of the eastern diaspora, and they contain Mesopotamian and Persian elements.⁴⁵ 1 Enoch reflects a good awareness with

butions 97-115 ('The Book of Giants'). A new edition of the fragments of the Book of Giants (BG): Stuckenbruck, Book.

⁴¹ Earlier works, (such as Beer, Buch 224; Martin, Livre lxxviii; Charles, Book 2-3) considered the material of Chapters 1-5 to be a subsequently written introduction to the whole work – in view of the Aramaic manuscript tradition, however, it seems certain that this part is contemporaneous with the narrative parts that follow, and that it represents a tradition predating the 2nd century B.C.E.

⁴² Milik, Books 140. Milik also supposes that the writer of the text followed the Northern Syrian or Mesopotamian scribal customs – and this may also indicate the origin of the tradition. The fragments also prove that Chapters 1-5 already belonged to the so far known earliest Enoch-tradition.

⁴³ Milik, Books 164, dates 4Q En/b to the mid-second century (this manuscript also only contains the Book of Watchers; the later manuscripts, designated by c, d, and e [c, d, e jelu] which can be dated to the 1st century B.C. – 1st century A.D., also contain parts of the Book of Dreams (1En 83-90) and of the Epistle of Enoch (1En 91-107), see Milik, Books 178.

⁴⁴ Wacholder, Literature.

⁴⁵ The most outstanding example is 4Q242, the Prayer of Nabunai which is well acquainted with historical legends on the last Neo-Babylonian king Nabunaid (555-539 B.C.E.). 4Q550 uses Persian names, the story reflects the influence of the pattern of the Ahiqar novel, see Fröhlich, Stories.

certain Mesopotamian traditions.⁴⁶ Revelations on the secrets of the cosmos given to Enoch during his heavenly voyage reflect an impact of Mesopotamian cosmological lore.⁴⁷ The figure of Enoch and the elements of the revelation-tradition associated with him originate in the figures of the Mesopotamian *apkallū* (“wise ones”), more exactly in the figure of the “Mesopotamian diviner-king Enmeduranki” and in the tradition about divine revelation given to him.⁴⁸ Thus it can be assumed that the kernel of the Enochic tradition (1En 1-36) had been shaped either in a Babylonian Jewish diaspora-community or perhaps in a community of returnees which maintained traditions from the Babylonian exile. This group of writings might have been added by later pieces.⁴⁹

The narrative on the Watchers (1En 6-11) belongs to the earliest textual layer of the manuscript and represents one of the earliest traditions of the collection. In chapters 6-11 two narratives can be set apart, the narrative on Shemihazah, and that on Asael.⁵⁰

The Shemihazah tradition

The bulk of the tradition is contained in the Shemihazah story (1En 6,1-7,62). According to the Shemihazah-story sons of heaven (6,2), whom the text similarly to the terminology of Dan 5 calls “watchers” (*ʾyrn*), glimpse the daughters of men, desire them, and decide to descend to them. Their leader Shemihazah (*šmyhzh*) considers the plan to be sinful, for which he does not want to bear the responsibility alone (6,3), therefore the Watchers, in order to fulfill their plan swear to unite on the Hermon-mountain (1En 6,6). Then the Watchers “...began [to go in to them, and to defile themselves with them and (they began) to teach them] sorcery and spellbinding [and the cutting of roots; and to show them plants...]” (7,1). The women become pregnant from them and bear children, who growing up become giants. The giants “were devouring [the

⁴⁶ Jansen, Henocho Gestalt, examined the figure of Enoch in the light of the Mesopotamian tradition years before the finding of the Qumran manuscripts.

⁴⁷ Grelot, Géographie; Grelot, Légende; Grelot, Eschatologie; Grelot, Hénoch, written before the publication of the Aramaic fragments.

⁴⁸ VanderKam, Enoch 116. On the Mesopotamian background of the Enoch figure and of the Son of Man figure see Kvanvig, Roots. See also Bhayro, Noah’s.

⁴⁹ A similar case is the Danielic collection the earliest pieces of which show a good knowledge of Mesopotamian lore.

⁵⁰ This fact has already been noted by earlier scholars dealing with the work: Dillmann, Pseudepigraphen 12.352; Beer, Buch 225; Charles, Book 13-14, all differentiated between two narratives in the text of 1En 6-11. More recently Hanson, Rebellion. Apocalyptic and Myth have analysed the constituents of the text and they too differentiated between two sources.

labour of all the children of men and men were unable to supply [them.]” (7,4). After this the giants begin to devour men, then “... they began to sin against all birds and beasts of the earth] and reptiles ... and the fish of the sea, and to devour the flesh of another; and they were] drinking blood. [Then the earth made the accusation against the wicked concerning everything] which was done upon it” (7,5-6).⁵¹ These then are the transgressions, which finally bring about the punishment of the Flood (1En 9,1ff), thus the story serves as a justification for the catastrophic punishment.

The Asa’el story (1En 8,1-2) reports about Asa’el⁵² who taught metal-working, making weapons and jewels for men, and the knowledge of eye-shadows, of precious gems and dyes of mineral origins for women.⁵³ The section on Asa’el’s teaching is followed by a report on the teachings of Shemihazah and his companions: they taught the interpretations of heavenly omina, each Watcher teaching the signs of that natural phenomenon which was included in his name (1En 8,3-4).

The whole section is closed by a report on the punishment of Asa’el and the Watchers. Asael was punished for the sin perpetrated by him by the angel Raphael: he was bound and cast in darkness, where the Watchers will stay until “the great day of judgment” (1En 10,4-7). On the other hand, the punishment belonging to the Shemihazah-story, is the binding of Shemihazah and his companions by Mikael “for seventy generations” after they had witnessed the annihilation of their children, the Giants (1En 10,11-12). The devastation of the Flood following these events means in addition the purification of the earth (1En 10,1-3; 20-22).

The narratives on Shemihazah, and that on Asael are separate traditions on the origin of the evil which were merged in the Book of the Watchers. As to the background and meaning of the story of the Watchers, earlier theories saw historical and mythological motifs behind the narrative. The motif of the relation of the heavenly and earthly beings would have exemplified the mixed marriages of the priests in the postexilic era objected by Ezra, and the motif of

⁵¹ Translated by J.T. Milik, based on the Aramaic text reconstructed by him; see Milik, *Books* 166-167.

⁵² The name occurs in the form of Azazel in the Qumran texts *Agnes of Creation* (4Q180), the *Enochic fragments* (4Q201, 4Q202, 4Q203, 4Q204), and the *Temple Scroll* (11Q19). The tradition on Asael may not have relation with the tradition of the Flood; it may be a tradition different from that of the Watchers about the origin of the evil.

⁵³ 1En 65:6 supplements the list of the teachings of Asael by adding that the Watchers also taught people to cast metal and to make cast metal statues. According to 1En 69a Watcher named Pinem’e taught people writing and the use of ink and papyrus – things that later could be the source several misunderstandings.

the bloodshed would have mirrored the wars of the Diadochi.⁵⁴ Other theories look for mythological models, seeing the motif of the teachings of the Watchers as modeled after the myth of Prometheus, Asael being a *protos heuretes*.⁵⁵ Of course, neither historical-sociological, nor mythological models can be ruled out. However, the observation of only one or two motifs of the narrative does not illuminate the background and meaning of the whole story. Some elements of the story like cannibalism and consuming blood, as well as the basically negative nature of the teachings of the Watchers (magic and interpretation of omnia) are left unexplained. In order to look into the background and to ascertain the exact meaning and message of the narrative, all major elements of the narrative must be examined and taken into consideration. The tradition of the Watchers was a relevant theme in Qumran literature. It was often cited and referred to in other works, certainly because the meaning of the story was of basic importance for the spiritual world of the community.⁵⁶ Supposedly the story had a specific meaning for them, and its motifs were of a consistent background related to basic ideas of the Essene tradition.⁵⁷ Notions which are related to each of the motifs of the story are those of *sin and impurity* and *magic and demonic*.

Sin and impurity: ethical (prohibited) impurities

The purity system of the Old Testament is acquainted not only with physical impurities, but also ethical ones.⁵⁸ This type of impurity grows out of situations which are controllable and are not natural or necessary, such as delaying purification from impurity, polluting specific sancta, sexual transgressions, idolatry, and murder. The locus of uncleanness may be the person, but prescriptions talk more of the pollution of the sanctuary or land.⁵⁹ Punishments of these sins are more severe than the consequences of physical impurities. Punishment of the

⁵⁴ Suter, Angel; Rubinkiewicz, Book; Nickelsburg, Apocalyptic.

⁵⁵ Nickelsburg, Apocalyptic.

⁵⁶ The afterlife and influence of the Watchers' story in the literature of Qumran requires a separate study.

⁵⁷ According to P. Sacchi the peculiar conception of evil based on 1En 6-11 was a distinct ideological tradition which was the catalyst of the schism between the group and Judaism in the 4th century B.C.E. M. Stone and D. Suter date the schism to the third century, see Boccaccini, Hypothesis 76-77.

⁵⁸ On distinction between types of purity based on nonbiblical anthropological evidence, see Rosen, Contagion.

⁵⁹ Davies, Dimension; Wright, Unclean 737-738.

sinner is usually the banishing / driving away from the land or the extinguishing of his family (*kārēt*).⁶⁰

The main list of ethical impurities is to be found in the Holiness Code (Lev 17-26):

1. Sins related to sexual relations are cases of the *zenūt* (usually translated as fornication), i.e. all kinds of illicit sex (sex among blood relatives, sex with another's wife, homosexual relation, sex with menstruating women, prostitution (see Lev 18,1-30; 19,29). A special case in the list is *kilayim*, the prohibition of mixing together different kinds of animals, plants and materials in human clothing (Lev 19,19; Deut 22,9-11). A special case of *zenūt* not listed in Lev 17-26 is remarriage with one's divorced wife, meanwhile remarried, and later on divorced or widowed (Deut 24,1-4; cf. Jer 3,1).

2. Sins related to blood: bloodshed (Deut 21,1-9; cf. Gen 4,10, Psalm 106,38f.).

3. Sins related to the dead: corpse left on the tree for the night (Deut 21,22-23), cf. also 11QTS (LXIV.11-12).

4. Sins related to magic: "Do not resort to ghosts and spirits or make yourselves unclean by seeking them out. I am the Lord your God" (Lev 19,31). Magical practice is sometimes conceived as *zenūt* (Lev 20,6), and those who practice it are to be killed (Ex 22,17).

Results of ethical impurities are summarized in Lev 18,27-30: "The people who were there before you did those abominable things and the land became unclean. So do not let the land spew you out for making it unclean as it spewed them out. Observe my charge, therefore".⁶¹

Qumran texts enrich the Biblical theory of impurities.⁶²

⁶⁰ E.g. the Assyrian exile of Israel is explained in 2Kgs 17,5-23 as a punishment resulting from 'the sin of Jerobeam', the improper cultic practice of the northern kingdom.

⁶¹ The citation is a summary of the Holiness Code in Lev 17-26. The land is the Land of Canaan where the people was about to enter.

⁶² The Temple Scroll (11QT) considers as impure the non-observance of the dietary laws (11QTS XLVIII.6-7), the bodily signs of mourning (tattooing) (11QTS XLVIII.10), covenant and marriage with the "inhabitants of the land" meant as idolatry (11Q II.1-15, cf. Ex. 34,10-16), burial-grounds not separated from surroundings (11QTS XLVIII.11-17), the non-separation of sufferers from bodily impurities (flux, leprosy, plague, scab, menstruating women, women after childbirth), and idolatry repeatedly mentioned as *zenūt* defiling the land. 4QMMT (4Q394-399) adds to the list of impurities the offering taken from the pagan corn, and highlights cases of forbidden marriages (priests' marriage with commoners' daughters) as cases of *kilayim*.

Sin and impurity in the story of the Watchers

The sins of the Watchers are their transgression of the cosmic order and mixing with earthly women, and their teaching of magic. They are told to become impure by this relation (1En 7:1, cf. 4Q531 5.1). The Book of Giants qualifies their relation as a case of *znwt* (4Q203 = 4QEnGiants/a 8,9), one of the main categories of ethical impurities.

The sins of the Giants, sons of the Watchers are: violence, bloodshed (cannibalism), sins against the animals, birds, and fishes, and drinking of blood (1En 7,4-5). Homicide is among the sins which make the land impure (Deut 21,9). Cannibalism is not known in the biblical system. The meaning of the sins committed against the animals is not clear; it can be a violation of the prohibitions concerning food. This presupposition is confirmed by the report on their consuming of blood, which is a violation of the biblical prohibition (Gen 9,3-4).

These are the sins of the Watchers and their offspring which made the earth impure. The Flood following this is not only a punishment of these sins but at the same time a purification of the earth.

The Giants in the Enochic tradition

1En 15,8 reports on the offspring of the giants saying that their offspring is called demons (Ethiopic *nafsat*, Aramaic *rwh*⁶³). These beings are spiritual in nature, following their fathers' characteristics: they do not eat, they are not thirsty and know no obstacles. Their destructiveness first and foremost affects children and women, as they were born of women.⁶³ The Giants are the protagonists of the Book of Giants, Aramaic fragments belonging to the Enochic manuscripts from Qumran are not contained in the Greek and Ethiopic translations. According to the narrative of a fragment one of the Giants took to the air “as whirlwinds, and he flew with his hands / wings as [an] eagle”.⁶⁴ According to these giants were imagined as human shape figures which were able to fly like whirlwinds.

The story of the Watchers and demonology

Although the story of the Watchers does not mention any demons, the motifs of the story are related to the realm of the demonic. The characteristics of

⁶³ This part of the tradition is known only from the Greek and the Ethiopic translations. 4QEnar/c, the fragment which supposedly contains this part of the text is not legible at this place. It is to be supposed that this part was also contained by the Aramaic tradition of the Enochic collection.

⁶⁴ 4Q530 = 4QEnGiants/b III.4, see Stuckenbruck, Book 128-134.

the Giants evoke the Mesopotamian tradition about the *utukku*-s, a term generally used for demonic beings.

The Enochic Giants have characteristics similar to those of certain Mesopotamian demons: they are tall and obtrusive beings, roaming in bands, attacking their victims indiscriminately. They ravage the work of humans,⁶⁵ devour the flesh of animals and humans, and consume their blood. They are born from the relation of heavenly and earthly beings (which is considered in the story as impure).

It is to be noted here that the name and figure of Gilgamesh, one of the giants of the Book of Giants can also be interpreted in the magical tradition of the Near East (the name which is known also in Greek magical papyri is referred to until today in magical incantations).

Binding the Watchers: The punishment of the sins of the Watchers is binding and casting them to darkness. Asa'el is bound by the angel Raphael, Shemihazah is bound by Mikael. Demonological texts regularly mention that the demon is binding his victim. The witch, a constant figure of the Mesopotamian incantation series Maqlû binds her victim by her practices. Binding effect of the witchcraft is referred to in the title of a series of incantation entitled "The pregnant woman who was bound".⁶⁶ The bonds made by the witches can be solved by another kind of magic, healing incantations.

Binding is a constant motif in the Mesopotamian creation myth *Enûma elîš* where the triumph of the gods over their demonic enemies is marked by binding the enemy. Triumphant Ea binds Apsu (the primeval ocean) and builds his house over his breast. He also binds Apsu's helper, Mummu. Marduk binds Tiamat, then, splitting Tiamat in two, he forms the netherworld in the monster's inner part.⁶⁷

Sorcery: The Watchers teach to humans in the Shemihazah-story magical practices, "sorcery (*hršh*) and spellbinding (*kšph*) [and the cutting of roots (Gr. *ridzotomia*); and to show them plants..." (1En 7,1)]. The first two nouns are general terms for magical practices. The "cutting of roots" means, to all probability, the making of herbal ingredients to magic, and making amulets containing herbs and roots.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ 4Q531 5,1 speaks in more concrete terms than the Shemihazah story, and mentions that the Giants were devastating fruit, wheat, trees, sheep, and cattle.

⁶⁶ Haas, Magie 170.

⁶⁷ Haas, Magie 92.

⁶⁸ The Talmud is acquainted with two sorts of *kemi'ot* (amulets): a written one (a parchment with quotations from various sources, including the Scriptures), and the *kame'a šel iqrin*, an amulet made from roots of a certain plant (Shab 61b).

Metallurgy: Asa’el and his companions teach for men metallurgy, the making of weapons and jewels. For women they make known the making up the eyes and cosmetics, and the most precious and choice stones, and all kinds of coloured dyes (1En 8,1). Metallurgy and smithing are very closely related to the notion of magic. Ironsmiths are considered as sorcerers in the belief system of the ancient and modern Near East⁶⁹ Weapons made by forgers were attributed to magical power. Jewels served originally as amulets with apotropaic function.⁷⁰

Cosmetics: The magical (and ancient) origin of make-up, especially the painting of eyes and lips, is well-known, similarly to the magic origin of jewels.⁷¹ In *Enūma eliš*, the Mesopotamian creation myth all of the gods fighting between them wear amulets, using their magic power against their enemies. According to the myth of *Inanna’s (Ištar) descent into the nether world* the fertility goddess going to the netherworld must in each gate of the netherworld to part with one piece of her seven magical powers represented by her garment and jewels. At the end of her journey she arrives naked, and delivered, without any magical power to Ereškigal, the lady of the netherworld. In the Sumerian variant of the myth two pieces of Ištar’s cosmetics and jewels are mentioned as having specific power of sexual attraction: her mascara called “Let a man come, let him come”, and her pectoral called “come, man, come”.⁷²

Interpretation of omina: The holistic worldview of the Mesopotamian man considered everything as an omen for future events, and interpretation of omina was generally practiced. Interpretative tradition was collected and systematized in series of interpretation. A collection of interpretations on heavenly phenomena and meteorological omina was the series *Enūma Anu*

⁶⁹ On the general idea see Eliade, Forgerons. In Ethiopian ironsmith and magician are denoted by the same word (*duban-ansa*), see Leslau, Dictionary 181; similarly the descendants of Cain – who are ironsmiths in the Bible (Gen 4,16-24) – in the later tradition related to them are associated with magical motifs (Syriac ‘Cave of Treasures’). In the Ethiopian tradition the belief that ironsmiths have magic capabilities and knowledge is alive to this day, they are considered to be sorcerers and therefore members of other groups do not marry their daughters to them. In an incantation of the series Maqlû (II.128) the witch (*kaššaptu*) is called silversmith, whose spells are to be solved by the incantation, see Meier, Beschwörungssammlung.

⁷⁰ Haas, Magie 197-198.

⁷¹ Haas, Magie 197-198.

⁷² Inana’s descent to the nether world lines 22-23. For the text and translation see ETCSL (The electronic text corpus of the Sumerian Literature, Oxford) <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.1.4.1#>.

Enlil (“When Anu and Enlil”) from the Neo-Babylonian era.⁷³ Its content shows a similarity with the teachings of Shemihazah and his companions, referred to in the Enochic story.

The story of the Watchers as a myth of the origin of evil

The story of the Watchers is a myth on the origin of the evil in the world.⁷⁴ According to the narrative of the Enochic collection this is the first event following the creation (the material of Gen 2-5 is not figuring in the Enochic collection). The first stage of the birth of the evil is the disfunction of the cosmic order, the mixing of the heavenly and earthly beings. Sins of heavenly beings call ethical impurities. Initiators of the sins are the heavenly beings who descend to the earthly women on effect of their desire. The Watchers are conscious of the nature of their deed, they even ally to commit the sin collectively. The narrative does not mention human responsibility, the authors and agents of the deeds are the Watchers. The deeds of the Watchers are considered in the narrative as ethical impurities. The Giants, the beings born from the cosmic disfunction start further anomalies in the world. The anomalies are further ethical sins resulting in the defilement of the earth. Impurity of the earth calls on the punishment of the Flood.

The story of the Watchers is an independent story. It is a parallel to the narrative of Gen 6,1-4, about the angels and the daughters of men, and not an interpretation of Gen 6,1-4.⁷⁵ The story of the Watchers bears a (distinctive) message which cannot be found in Gen 6,1-4. It is a determinist myth, and an alternate tradition to the message of the primeval history of Genesis. In the Enochic collection evil originates from the deeds of the Watchers, following the creation. In Genesis the origin of the evil is the Fall (Gen 2-3). The tradition of the Watchers is often referred to in Qumran texts, with the meaning of the origin of evil. On the other side, the biblical story of the Fall (Gen 2-3) is almost never mentioned.

⁷³ van Soldt, Omens.

⁷⁴ On the problem see Boccaccini, Hypothesis 72-73.

⁷⁵ There is no room here to go into the problems of the relation of the two texts. Although Wellhausenian text criticism defined Gen 6,1-4 as belonging to the Yahwistic source, there is no evidence for an early provenience of the short and disjointed text which can even be a series of reflections of a priestly redactor (4th century B.C.E.). The Enochic story of the Watchers is backgrounded by a tradition not dependent from Gen 6,1-4, which was formed prior to the end of the 3rd century, date of the manuscripts of the Book of the Watchers known to us. The Enochic story is meant in the research an interpretation of Gen 6,1-4, latest Dimant, *Enoch* 6-11. Similarly Bhayro, Daniel's; Wright, Origin. For a different view see Davies, *Enoch*.

1Enoch is a theoretical work. The origin of evil means the origin of the demons, causes of the natural evil. It seems that the author of the Enochic story uses Mesopotamian lore in a conscious manner. Evil in 1Enoch is equal to sin and impurity. The bearers of evil and impurity are demonic beings, the offspring of the Watchers. Demons are working in world history.

The story of the Watchers (1En 6-11) was written following the Babylonian exile. The terminus ad quem is the end of the 3rd century B.C.E. Its language is Aramean, the vernacular of Mesopotamia and the lingua franca for the exiled Judaeans from the 6th century B.C.E. The figure of Enoch and the revelations given to him witness a good knowledge of the Mesopotamian traditions about the *apkallū*, the antediluvian wise, a priestly tradition from the city of Eridu.⁷⁶ Mesopotamian elements in the Enochic literature are not simple borrowing. Mesopotamian lore was adapted and built in a Jewish system of thought. The message of the story of the Watchers is determined by a monotheistic worldview, based on the biblical system of ritual purity.

Beliefs concerning demons may not have been unknown for the exiled. However, everyday practice of the interpretation of omnia and magical healing rituals were new for them, and might have effected a kind of cultural shock.⁷⁷ The Enochic narrative interprets the existence of demons as the origin of the natural evil. However, the existence of the demons is not disclaimed, they are simply regarded as the evil part of the world. The phenomenon which is considered in Enoch absolutely negatively is magic and its various forms, the interpretation of omnia and the “bad” teachings of the Watchers – methods known from everyday Mesopotamian practice.

The Book of Jubilees

The Enochic myth of the origin of the evil is reworked and referred to not only in later pieces of the Enochic collection but in several works survived in Qumran written tradition, like the Book of Jubilees.⁷⁸ Fragments of some 14 Hebrew copies of the book in the Qumran library show that Jubilees was well known in Qumran. The correspondence of certain traditions found in Jubilees with those of other Qumran writings (first of all the 364-day calendrical system documented from 11QT, and 4QMMT) show that the work played an important

⁷⁶ See VanderKam, Enoch; Kvanvig, Roots.

⁷⁷ Cf. Theophrastos' consternation of Babylonian superstition, Characteres 16.

⁷⁸ 1En 85-90, the Animal Apocalypse is a historical overview based on the Biblical tradition. The Watchers are mentioned here in the antediluvian period as stars which fall to earth upon seeing the black cows symbolizing the earthly women, and begetting with them elephants, camels, and donkeys.

role in Qumran spiritual tradition.⁷⁹ Jubilees is one of the earliest examples of the genre of “rewritten Bibles”, a retelling of narratives of the Genesis and the first half of Exodus, with skips and additions. The work is framed in an overall chronological scheme based on a 364-day calendar. Jubilees is a composite work, merging various traditions and expanding the narrative of Genesis according to various aspects as calendar, genealogies, land division etc. Behind some themes (e.g. heavenly tablets) there lie various traditions.⁸⁰

Enochic tradition on the Watchers is systematically merged in the narrative of Jubilees and harmonized with it. The work is introduced by the presentment of a comprehensive angelological system. Angels are created by God before the creation of the world. They function over the works of the cosmos and natural phenomena. They form a hierarchical order headed by the Angel of the divine Presence, and the Angel of the Holiness. No Watchers or any separate group of angels is mentioned in the introductory part of Jubilees.

1. They are first mentioned in Jared’s time, when “the angels of the Lord, who were called Watchers, came down⁸¹ to the earth in order to teach the sons of man, and perform judgment and uprightness upon the earth” (Jub 4,15).

2. In Jub 5,1-11 the lettering of Gen 6,1-4 is complemented with elements from 1En 6-11. Common elements of Genesis and Enochic tradition are that the angels saw that the earthly women, “were beautiful to look at. So they married of them whoever they chose”. Enochic elements: the women bore giants (Jub 5,1); one of the sins spreading upon the earth was cannibalism (Jub 5,2); the angels and the giants were punished by binding and sword; the words about the “great day of judgment” on the angels (Jub 5,6-11). Monstrous births and the corruption of the earthly beings results in Jubilees from the deed of the angels whose positive mission was broken when they infringed their teaching obligation, and married earthly women. (Jub 5,1-2). The passage does not speak about further offspring of the angels and giants.

3. Following the Flood “impure demons began to mislead Noah’s grandchildren and to make them act foolishly, and to destroy them” (Jub 10,1). The demons were also blinding and killing Noah’s grandchildren. It is here that is definitely stated that the demons originate from the Watchers (Jub 10,5). Beside the destroyer’s nature of the demons the binding of the Watchers is mentioned (Jub 10,6-7). On the effect of Noah’s prayer the Lord has binded nine tenth of

⁷⁹ For Jubilees and Qumran thought see VanderKam, Book 145-146.

⁸⁰ García-Martínez, Tablets 243-260.

⁸¹ Association of Jared’s name and the Hebrew verb *yrd* “to descend”, “to go down”.

the demons; one tenth are allowed to work in the world under Mastema’s leadership (Jub 10:8-14).⁸²

4. The time of Noah’s sons was characterized by fighting, bloodshed, and idolatry. This was the time of the building of “Ur of Chaldees”. Mastema mislead humans by means of the spirits “to commit every (kind of) error and sin, and every (kind of) transgression: to corrupt, to destroy, and to shed blood on the earth” (Jub 11,2-6).

5. In Terah’s days ravens and birds sent by Mastema ravaged the crop of the fields for years. Abraham drove away the birds; the source of his power over the demonic beings was his righteousness (Jub 11,11-24).

6. Idols are, too, connected to demonic functions in so far as “they are an error of the mind” (Jub 12,3). Abraham was not only unwilling to sacrifice to them while living in the city of Ur but he burned the temple of the idols (Jub 12,12).⁸³

7. In his night vigil prayer Abraham asked God to save him “from the power of evil spirits who rule the thoughts of people’s minds” (Jub 12,19-20).

8. Israel is God’s chosen people, and God is Israel’s ruler; for other peoples “He made spirits rule over all in order to lead them astray from following him” (Jub 15,31-32).

9. Beliar’s function is leading astray the Israelites, since “all of the sons of Beliar will leave their sons uncircumcised” (Jub 15,33).

10. The Biblical story of the *‘aqedah* is again reformulated in Jubilees: the attempt at sacrifice is here upon the request of Mastema. Mastema sees that Abraham prefers Isaac to all others. Accordingly he asks God to test Abraham’s faith (Jub17,16).⁸⁴ In Jubilees’ tradition this is not the only test in Abraham’s life. It is here mentioned that God tested Abraham through his land and the famine, the wealth of the kings, the taking of his wife, circumcision, and the repudiation of Ishmael and Hagar. Abraham was faithful in every difficulty (Jub 17,17-18). These were followed by the test of the *aqedah* where the prince of Mastema was ashamed (Jub 18,12). Subsequent tests in Abraham’s life were Sarah’s death and the buying of the cave of Makpelah mentioned as the tenth

⁸² The name originates from the Hebrew verb *štm* “bear a grudge, cherish animosity, against” (Ar. *štm*). Hosea 9,7.8 mentions as a common noun meaning “enmity”.

⁸³ In the Book of Judith, in Achior’s speech (5,6-9) Abraham has to leave Mesopotamia because he refuses to worship the local deities. The core of this legend most likely came into being at the end of the 2nd century B.C.E.

⁸⁴ Similarly in Pseudo-Jubilees, 4Q225 frg. 2, II.6-7. The fragment preserved a tradition similar to that of the Book of Jubilees, but the text is not identical with that of Jubilees.

test in (Jub 19,8).⁸⁵ Nevertheless it seems that only the aqedah is on Mastema's request, other tests are mentioned as effectuated by angels (Jub 19,3).

11. The spirits of Mastema are mentioned as ruling on humans and turning them from following God (Jub 19,28).

12. Ham's sin punished in Canaan is mentioned by Abraham before his death. It is paralleled by the destruction of the Giants and that of the Sodomites. All these punishments were brought by sexual impurity, uncleanness, and corruption (Jub 20,4-5).

13. The period from Abraham "until the great day of judgment" is depicted as a time of misfortunes, a parallel to the Enochic scene of the antediluvian mankind. Short-living humans will grow old quickly, smitten by diseases and natural disasters. The wicked humanity corrupts the earth and animals. Their deeds are characterized by sins and impurity. Following a long period of wars and bloodshed "the Lord's servants" will rise, and a peaceful period of the righteous will follow (Jub 23,11-31).

14. The Giants are mentioned under the name Rephaim who were destroyed by God "because the evil things they did". The Amorites lived in their place (Jub 29,9).

15. During Joseph's time "the land of Egypt lived in harmony ... because of Joseph for the Lord was with him". "Pharaoh's rule was just, and there was no Satan or any evil one" (Jub 40,9-10).

16. The prince of Mastema, on Moses' way back to Egypt, wanted to kill him in order to save the Egyptians from Moses' power (Jub 48,2-3).⁸⁶ The prince of Mastema was present at the scene of the contention of Moses and the Egyptian magicians, and helped the latter (Jub 48,9). He was again the helper of the Egyptians when they pursued Israel (Jub 48,12). Prior to the exodus from Egypt "the prince of Mastema was bound and locked up behind the Israelites" for some days "so that he could not accuse them" (Jub 48,15,18). On the 19th day the angels released Mastema and his host "so that they could help the Egyptians and pursue the Israelites" (Jub 48,16). On the night of the passover Mastema's forces were sent to kill Egyptian firstborns (Jub 49,2).

17. At the end of the jubilees Israel will be "pure of every sexual evil, impurity, contamination, sin, and error. Then they will live confidently in the entire land. They will no longer have any satan or any evil person. The land will be pure from that time until eternity" (Jub 50,5).

⁸⁵ "Abraham's ten temptations" is a well-known topic in Jewish tradition, see Ginzberg, *Legends I*, 217.221.421, *II*, 225-26.347, *III*, 133.206, *IV*, 425, *V*, 218.383.426.

⁸⁶ The story is treated in Eshel, Mastema's 359-364.

Demons in Jubilees

Jubilees present a hierarchized world of supernatural beings, angels and demons. Angels are vehicles of functioning of natural phenomena, and mediators of the divine will for men. They are bounding the fallen angels (Jub 5,6-11), bounding and releasing Mastema (Jub 48,15-18),⁸⁷ and testing humans (Jub 19,3).⁸⁸ Demons are hierarchized under Mastema's leadership. They have various functions. In some passages they are reported to cause diseases, afflictions and death (Jub 10,1, 49,2). The demons attacking Noah's grandchildren as well as Mastema's forces killing the Egyptian firstborns evoke the figures of the Lilith-type baby-killer demons. In the Noah scene they are reported at the same time as beings causing blindness and error. Blindness is meant here with a figurative, and not with a literal meaning. Blindness mentioned together with error is a metaphor of spiritual error and improper religious practice (a common metaphor in Qumran literature).⁸⁹ Mastema, the leader of the spirits mentioned first time in the Noah scene is again a character different from that of the demons causing illness. According to his name he is “the instigator”, a being “raising animosity”. The figure is akin with Satan of the book of Job, the *bn 'llym* who initiates at God Job's testing (Job 1,6-12).

Demons – with or without Mastema – are several times mentioned besides the above passages. They originate from the Watchers as it is referred to several times. The pericopa of the Watchers, Ham's sin and its punishment, and the sin of the Sodomites and their doom are paralleled in Jubilees as examples of sexual transgression and impurity leading to annihilation (Jub 20,4-5). The doom of the Giants is again referred to in Jub 29,9. Demons are controlled and directed by God and His angels. God diminishes the number of the demons following the Flood (Jub 10,7-14). Demonic beings appear in various shapes in the narrative. Crows and birds sent by Mastema are impending to cause starvation (Jub 11,11-24). Starvation, diseases and natural disasters referred to in Jub 23,11-31 are afflictions contributed generally to demons. The killing of children (Noah's grandsons, the Egyptian firstborns) is again a general function

⁸⁷ In Jub 10,8-14 it is the Lord who binds the demons.

⁸⁸ Jub 17,17-18 speaks on God's tests on Abraham.

⁸⁹ The historical survey of 1En 85-90 represent Israel as a herd. In the period preceding the Maccabean revolt many of the sheep become blind and fall victims to prey birds. Finally white lambs appear among the herd and begin to open the eyes of the blind and lost sheep. The Damascus Document refers to a group of the exiled who “perceived their iniquity and recognized that they were guilty men, yet for twenty years they were like blind men groping for the way. And God observed their deeds, ... and He raised for them a Teacher of Righteousness to guide them in the way of His heart”, CD I.7-11 Uncovering of ears and eyes is a metaphor for religious teaching, CD II.3, 14.

of demons in folk belief (Jub 10,1; 49,2).⁹⁰ Jubilees mentions the binding of the Watchers, of Mastema, and of Mastema's forces (Jub 5,6-11; 10,8-14; 48,15-18). The motif of binding, in order to make demons powerless, is again a well-known motif from literature related to magic and demonology.

Demons are representatives of both physical (children's death, war, famine, bloodshed) and ethical (sexual evil, impurity, contamination, sin, transgression and error) evil in Jubilees. Idols – unclean images – are their vehicles (Jub 11,2-6; 12,12). Demons are connected uniquely with ethical evil in Abraham's prayer mentioning "evil spirits ... which rule over the thought of the heart of man" (Jub 12,2-5). Spirits ordered by God over foreign peoples to rule them and to lead them astray represent a special kind of ethical evil (Jub 15,32). The originator of ethical evil is sometimes named Beliar (Jub 15,33).

Mastema appears with relation of Noah, Abraham, and Moses as an enemy of the patriarchs.⁹¹ His multiple functions are:

1. The instigator, accordingly to the etymology of his name. One of Abraham's tests (the *aqedah*) is on Mastema's request (Jub 17,16). The spirits of Mastemah as misleading spirits (Jub 19,28).

2. Mastema appears as the leader of the demons in Noah's age (Jub 10,8-14). His epithet "Prince" and the expression "host of Mastema", generally used in Jubilees, express the same status.

3. His function as a mediator of the natural evil shows up in Jub 11,11-24 when he sends crows and birds to ravage the crop. Egyptian firstborns are killed by Mastema's forces (Jub 49,2).

4. Mastema appears as a tigerish demon jumping at Moses on his way back to Egypt (Jub 48,2-3).

5. Mastema is a helper of Israel's enemies in the Egyptian scene. Aiding the Egyptian magicians against Moses he seems to be a master of magical arts (Jub 48,9). Mastema called the Egyptians so that they might pursue Moses with all the army of the Egyptians (Jub 48,12).

6. Eschatological passages in Jubilees often refer to Mastema and the demons.⁹² Jubilees' eschatological basis is the story of the judgment on the

⁹⁰ It is to be noted that Mastema is the Egyptians' helper in Jubilees. Here he appears with the primordial function of the baby-killer demon (a function generally attributed to female demons).

⁹¹ The name figure in the DSS at 19 places: CD XVI.5; 1QS III.23; 1Q33 (1Qmilhamah XIII.4; 4Q177 (4QCatena A) 9.5; 4Q225 (4QpsJub-a) 1.8, 2.9; 2ii.6, 2ii.13-14; 4Q270 (4QD-e 6ii:18; 4Q271 (4QD-f) 4ii:6; 4Q286 (4QBer-a) 7 a ii, b-d:2; 4Q387 (4QapocrJer C-b) 2iii:4; 4Q390 (4QapocrJer C-e) 1:11, 2i:7; 4Q525 (4Qbeatitudes) 19:4; 6Q18 (6QpapHymn) 9:1; 11Q11 (11QapocrPs) II.4.

⁹² There is an overall eschatology in Jubilees. From this point Davenport, Eschatology discerns three types of references: passages intending to teach eschatology (Jub 1,4b-

Watchers which serves as a prototype of the judgment to come. Eschatological references mentioning demons are Jub 5,1-19; 15,1-34; 10,1-17. The working of Mastema and the demons is connected to certain historical periods, the ages of Noah, Abraham, and Moses. They are not mentioned during the lifetimes of Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. As to Joseph's time, there is an explicit reference to the peaceful character of this period when neither Satan, nor any evil one were working (Jub 40,9-10). This situation will be repeated at the end of the jubilees when Israel will live on the promised land, and will be purified from all the sins, especially sexual transgression and error (Jub 50,5).

Jubilees presents several examples for the figure of the righteous who has power over the demons and Mastema. Outstanding figures in the book are Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses who are persevering in their faith to God. In addition most of them are holders and transmitters of special knowledge. Enoch's name is connected with the invention of the writing (Jub 4,17), Noah's knowledge about medical herbs originates from the angels (Jub 10,10-15). Abraham is the first human who speaks Hebrew (Jub 12,23-27). Jacob studies the Law before it was revealed (Jub 19,14). Moses receives the Torah from God, jointly with a revelation about the past (i.e. the content of Jubilees' narrative, a secret interpretation of Genesis revealed to an elected group). Noah, Abraham, and Moses meet personally with the demonic, and they overpower it. Their authority results from divine help deserved by their righteousness.

Demons in Jubilees represent both natural and ethical evil. The idea of demons as agents of the natural evil originates from the Enochic tradition of the Watchers, and from popular beliefs. Mastema as agent of the ethical evil is a theological construction. Mastema's figure is not a consistent character in Jubilees. In some passages he is representing natural evil, while in others he stands for the instigator. Besides Mastema other agents of ethical evil (Satan, Beliar) appear in the work. The eschatology of Jubilees is connected with the tradition of the Watchers. Enochic tradition, folk belief, scholarly explications, and traditions about Satan and Beliar – these traditions of various origin are merged and presented in the figures of the demons in the book of Jubilees, in a hierarchy and in a historical perspective.

26; 1,27-28.29c; 23,14-31); non-eschatological passages that contain significant eschatological elements (Jub 5:1-19; 8:10-9:15; 15:1-34; 16:1-9; 22:11b-23; 24,8-33; 31,1-32; 36,1-18; 1:1-5), and non-eschatological passages containing incidental eschatological terminology (4,17-26; 10,1-17; 10,18-26).

The “practical texts” in the light of the “theoretical texts”

(Enoch, Jubilees)

E. Eshel, in her article written on the literary genres in the magical texts in Qumran, defines four texts as “apotropaic hymns”:⁹³ 4Q510, 4Q511, 4Q444 (4QIncanation), and 6Q18. The first of them, **4Q510-11**, (Songs of the Wise)⁹⁴ is a collection of fragments of two manuscripts. 4Q510 has only one major fragment and eleven minor ones; 4Q511 represents a much longer copy of the same work. On paleographical basis both manuscripts are dated to the end of the 1st century B.C. The work is said to be sectarian, i.e. a work composed in the community, and representing vocabulary and ruling ideas of the community. The songs are authored by the *maškil*, the sage. The songs are hymnal poems of wisdom reflecting on the world order and the role of human being. Their main themes are: the glory of God, the activity of the righteous, and the works of the evil demons in the world. The songs reflect a dichotomic worldview. God is called the King of Glory (4Q510 fig. 1.1); God of knowledge (4Q510 fig. 1.2); Lord of the divine beings (*ʾl ʾlym*), and Lord of all the holy ones (*ʾl qdwsym*) (4Q510 fig. 1.2). His realm is above the powerful mighty (4Q510 fig. 1.3). However, God is once called El Shaddai (4Q 511 fig. 8.6), a name used especially in magical texts. Divine beings are also mentioned several times in the hymns.

The Sage (*maškil*) is characterized by the knowledge he received from God. He loathes all deeds of impurity (i.e. practice resulting in impurity) (4Q511 fig. 18, II.). There is a group mentioned in the Songs as the associates of the Sage: “those who follow the path of God”, (4Q511, fig. 2, I.6) – this means in Qumran vocabulary the right interpretation and practice of the Mosaic Law, i.e. interpretation according to the tradition of the community. Other names for this group are: “those who know justice”, (4Q511 fig. 2, I.2), the holy ones, (4Q511 fig. 35.2-3). Thus, the group is characterized by knowledge, purity, and holiness (the two latter owed to the right practice of the Law). They receive their knowledge from God.

The third element of the system are the demons. They are listed in both exemplary of the work (4Q510, fig. 1, 5-8; 4Q511 fig. 10, 1-5). According to the list they are: spirits of the ravaging⁹⁵ angels (*ml ky hbl*); the bastard spirits (*rwḥwt mmzrym*); demons (*šdym*), Lilith, (*lylyt*); owls and jackals, (*ʾhym wšym*);

⁹³ Eshel, Genres 395-415.

⁹⁴ Edited by Baillet (DJD VII 215-62).

⁹⁵ *hebel* ‘destruction’ from the root *hbl* II. act corruptly; Pi. ruin, destroy. Pun possible the root *hbl* I. bind, pledge (bind by taking a pledge).

those who strike unexpectedly to lead astray the spirit of knowledge (*hṗwg ʿym pt' pt'wm lt'wt rwḥ bynh*).

The activity of the demons is, according to the Songs, not forever, only for the period of the rule of wickedness and in the periods of humiliation of the sons of light. Periods (called *qs*, pl. *qsym*) of human history are often mentioned in several Qumran works (e.g. Peshier *'al ha-qšsym*, 4Q180-181 which is a ‘theoretical’ work on these periods in human history). The various periods are characterized by the activity of various groups, the righteous, or the evil. According to this they are labelled as periods of righteousness, or periods of sin (which mean, of course, periods of oppression for the righteous). So, the demons mentioned in the Songs of the Sage are subject to God’s power, and they are mediators of divine plans.

4Q444 – is a philosophical poem written in the first person of singular. The speaker is characterized by a “spirit of controversy” (*rwḥy ryb*), “spirit of knowledge” (*rwḥ d't*), “understanding, truth and righteousness” (*bynh, 'mt wšdq*), all originating from “God’s holy spirit” (*mrwḥ qdwsšw*) (fig. 1-4, I.2-3). Opposed to him are the “spirits of wickedness” (*rwḥy rš'h*) (4Q444 (4QIncantation) 1-4i+5:4), “the [ba]stards” (*mmzrym*) and „the spirits of impurity” (*rwḥy hṣm'h*) (4Q444 (4QIncantation) 1-4i+5:8). God’s laws (*ḥwq y'l*) fortify the author in the battle against the unclean spirits. His God-fearing (*yr'y 'l*) empower him. The terms “bastards” and “spirit of impurity” refer to the Enochic tradition of the Watchers. The spirits represent in 4Q444 the moral evil, against whom God’s law and God-fearing offer efficient weapons. This notion recalls the ideas concerning the demons and the means against them featured in the book of Jubilees.

6Q18, survived in 27 small fragments and was called by its first editor ‘composition hymnique’.⁹⁶ The name Belial (fig. 3, 3), the spirit of knowledge (*rwḥ d't*) (fig. 5, 3) is mentioned in the composition, and a reference to the final act, the divine judgement which will make an end to the destructive activity of the demons: “For eternity, they shall not destroy” (*[lw]lmym lw' yklw*) (6Q18 (6QpapHymn) 5:4). Demons are presented here again according to the tradition of Jubilees.

Other hymnic texts like **11Q5 (11QPs-a)** refer again to Satan, demons and unclean spirits: “Let Satan have no dominion over me, nor an unclean spirit (*rwḥ ṣm'h*); let neither pain nor the will to evil rule in me. Surely You, O Lord, are my praise; in You I place my hope all the day” (11Q5 (11QPs-a) XIX:15-17). “Cleanse me, O Lord, from evil’s affliction” (*mng' r'*) (11Q5 (11QPs-a)

⁹⁶ Edited by Baillet / Milik / de Vaux (DJD III 133-136; III. Grotte 6, D. Texte hymnique, 18. Composition hymnique; Pl. XXVII).

XXIV:12). The text refers to the “four songs for charming the demon-possessed with music” (*šyr lngd hpgw’yim*) (11Q5 (11QPs-a) XXVII:10). The weapon against the evil is again a forgiveness of the sins by God, and “a constant and knowing spirit” which makes impossible Satan to domine over the suppliant (11Q6 (11QPs-b) 4-5:14-16).

The Aramaic manuscript **4Q560** holds an incantation. A list of demons and illnesses (fever, chill, chest pain) caused by demonic possession is enumerated in the text. Demons are male and female (*dkr’, nqbt’*) (4Q560 (4QExorcism ar) 1i:3, 5). The exorciser compels the demons to leave the body of the sick adjuring () the name of YHWH (4Q560 (4QExorcism ar) 1i:4).

8Q5 may have been again an incantation,⁹⁷ judging from the beginning of the text: “in Your name” (*bšmk*) (8Q5 (8QHymn) 1:1). The text mentions also spirits standing in front of God (8Q5 (8QHymn) 2:6).

In the light of the demonology and known magical texts from Qumran two categories of texts deserve further interest and research:

The blessings and curses in the Qumran texts, which usually refer to Belial and demonic beings, recalling even Enochic tradition or that of the Jubilees. To present just a few examples: in IQS II.1-18 the Levites curse Belial’s lot (*gwrl*) saying: “May you be damned in return for all your wicked, guilty deeds ... licked by eternal flame, surrounded by utter darkness” (IQS II:5-8). In IQM XIII.1-7a Israel’s God is blessed, while Belial, together with all spirits (*rwh*) of his lot (*gwrl*) is cursed. The examples could be continued.

The other field is that of the objects used for apotropaic purposes called **Phylacteries (tefillin) and mezuzoth**. They were found in various Qumran caves, the majority of them found in Cave 11. Both tefillin and mezuzot contained short scriptural citations written on parchment and put in leather capsules. Tefillin were fixed on the forehead and hand on the occasion of prayer, mezuzoth were fixed on the doorframes of the entrances of houses and dwelling places. Furthermore texts straps and leather capsules were found in the caves. On the basis of the relatively high number of the texts and objects it is to be supposed that tefillin and mezuzot were written and made on the Qumran site, also for the use of members living outside of the site.⁹⁸

Scriptural texts cited in Qumran tefillin and mezuzot are practically identical with those used in later practice (usually Ex 13,9.16, Deut 6,8; 11,18).⁹⁹ No demonic beings are mentioned in them; however, they have a special relation to

⁹⁷ Edited by Baillet / Milik / de Vaux (DJD III. 161-162; V. Grotte 8. Textes non-bibliques 5. Passage hymnique; Pl. XXXV).

⁹⁸ The Damascus Document, a rule written for the members living in families was found in several copies in the Qumran library, see Baumgarten et al. (DJD XVIII).

⁹⁹ Vermes, *Worship*; Yadin, *Tefillin*.

demonic literature. The rationale of their use is the idea behind 11Q11: the holy texts have an effective power against any harmful influence, demon or tempting spirit. The Biblical verses cited in tefillin prescribe that “You shall put these words of mine in your heart and soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and fix them as an emblem on your forehead” (Deut 11,18). The objects were for everyday use. They serve as a shield in two important situations and scenes in human life: the prayer and the inner part of the dwelling place. Besides tefillin and mezuzot no other apotropaic objects were found on the Qumran site. Qumran findings of tefillin and mezuzot represent their oldest occurrence.

The importance of keeping away demons from human community: cultures being acquainted with an impurity system demonic presence is related to impurity, and demons are called impure beings. In the previous part of the article it has been demonstrated that the topic of 1En 6-11 is built around the question of impurity, and the rationale of the origin of the demons in the work is impurity.¹⁰⁰ Impurity in the Jewish impurity system is human centered. Basic impurities are bodily (physical) impurities of humans. Physical impurities result from vegetative states of humans like death or menstruation. The Old Testament system considered death, blood, leper, and bodily emissions as impure. A theoretical system of impurities in ancient Israel is given in the Priestly codex of the Leviticus.¹⁰¹ The common characteristic of **physical impurities** is: whatever has to do with the disintegration of the body is considered as physically impure.¹⁰² Belief in demons and the impurity system are related to each other.¹⁰³ Impurity is receptive to demonic and is delivered to it. Humans aim to exclude

¹⁰⁰ Other Qumran works also associate demons with impurity, see Lange, *Considerations* 254-268.

¹⁰¹ P does not discuss excrement, urine, sweat, and saliva. It can be supposed that the first two were considered as impure, see Wright, *Unclean* 735-736.

¹⁰² Douglas, Couvade, calls impurity “what is not whole or normal”. Wenham, *Inter-course*, associates purity and impurity with the ideas of life and death. The best definition of the system of physical impurities is that of Mary Boyce’s for the Zoroastrian system (very similar to the biblical one): “apart from the corpse, the chief cause of pollution is all that leaves the living body, whether in sickness or in health, the bodily functions and malfunctions being alike regarded, it seems, as daevic (demonic) in origin, perhaps since they are associated with change and mortality rather than with the static state of perfection”, Boyce, *History* 306-7.

¹⁰³ Magical practices raising demonic power are always connected with the unclean while solving the charm and healing mean at the same time a process of purification. For Babylonian examples see Haas, *Magie* 155-196. According to D.P. Wright the biblical system lacks the demonic character of other impurity systems, arguing that the Bible’s monotheistic ideal rejects any demonic impurity, see Wright, *Unclean* 739. However, the existence of spirits and demonic beings is never disclaimed in biblical sources; on the opposite, the belief is positively attested in a number of cases.

demonic influence and to impend the spread of the impure, and to defend humans from demonic harms.

The members of the Qumran community aimed to live in a priestly purity. This aim may give an explanation on several specific phenomena connected with the community. They had a sophisticated and rigorous halakhic system which remained to us in several works, preserved often in a fragmentary form, e.g. the Damascus Document and its halakhic fragments from Cave 4, and the halakhic letter 4QMMT. These works intended to regulate every fields of human life in order to keep purity in human communities. Ethical impurities were considered with a similar rigorousness. Keeping away from the living place everything impure, especially in special states of human life considered as impure, and in special situations like the time of the prayer was only a natural endeavour. In our notion of magic apotropaic texts they are considered as examples of magical practice, a practice repeatedly forbidden in the Old Testament. However, the Old Testament ban relates to the alien forms of the harmful magical practice called wizardry (*kšph*). It does not concern the belief in demons and evil forces, and the resorts of keeping away their harmful influence. One of these resorts in the antiquity was the use of the force of holy written texts. Belief in the demonic was deeply embedded in Qumran spiritual world. Its further research will enrich and help to draw a more accurate picture on the spiritual world of Jewish communities in the Second Temple era.

Summary

Apocryphal psalms and 'sectarian' apotropaic compositions from Qumran refer regularly to traditions about the origin and characteristic of evil spirits. A systematic elaboration of these traditions can be found in twocomprehensive pseudepigraphic works, in the so-called Ethiopic book of Enoch (1En 6-11) and in the book of Jubilees, both known in extenso in Ethiopian translations. Copies of the original Aramaic version of 1Enoch and the original Hebrew version Jubilees were found in Qumran. 1Enoch and Jubilees were not only known in the community, but belonged to its core tradition and inspired many 'sectarian' works. 1En 6-11, the story of the Watchers, is a narrative on the origin of the evil. Both, the originators (the Watchers) and the representatives of evil (the Giants) show demonic features. The rationale of the demons is impurity. 1En 6-11 is an alternative to the theology of the origin of evil in Genesis. Jubilees merges the traditions of Genesis and that of 1Enoch, adding new motives to the figure of the demonic evil who is called Mastema in Jubilees. Mastema is the head of a demonic hierarchy and a representative of both cosmic and ethical evil. Jubilees gives examples of persons who have power over evil demons. Persons who can obtain divine power and angelic help against evil are the righteous, which are owners of special knowledge. Apotropaic texts using the power of writing against demons hold the same ideas as 1Enoch and Jubilees.

Zusammenfassung

Apokryphe Psalmen aus Qumran und apotropäische Texte der Gemeinschaft von Qumran verweisen regelmäßig auf den Ursprung und die Charakteristika böser Geister. Systematische Behandlungen dieser Traditionen finden sich im sogenannten äthiopischen Henochbuch (1Hen 6-11) und im Jubiläenbuch. Beide Texte sind vollständig nur in äthiopischer Übersetzung erhalten aber fragmentarische Kopien des aramäischen Originals von 1Henoch und des hebräischen Originals von Jubiläen fanden sich in der Bibliothek von Qumran. 1Henoch und Jubiläen waren aber nicht nur Teil der Bibliothek von Qumran, sondern gehörten zur Kernüberlieferung der Gemeinschaft von Qumran und haben viele ihrer Texte beeinflusst. 1Hen 6-11, die Geschichte vom Fall der Wächterengel, ist eine Erzählung über den Ursprung des Bösen. Die Wächterengel als die Verursacher des Bösen und die Giganten als die Vertreter des Bösen tragen dämonische Züge. Ihr Seinsprinzip ist Unreinheit. Während 1Hen 6-11 ein alternatives Modell zur Sündenfallerzählung der Genesis darstellt, verschmilzt das Jubiläenbuch die Traditionen von Genesis und 1Henoch miteinander und erweitert die Figur Mastemas als den Repräsentanten des dämonisch Bösen um neue Motive. Mastema steht an der Spitze der dämonischen Hierarchie und repräsentiert sowohl das kosmische als auch das ethische Böse. Jubiläen beschreibt aber auch Personen, die Macht über Dämonen haben. Es handelt sich um Gerechte mit außerordentlichem Wissen, denen göttliche Macht und himmlische Hilfe gegen das Böse zur Verfügung stehen. Apotropäische Texte, die sich der Macht des Schreibens gegen die Dämonen bedienen, sind in ihrer Dämonologie mit 1Henoch und Jubiläen vergleichbar.

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The Mystical and Magical Powers of Letters and Numbers in the Jewish Tradition

Felicia Waldman

Motto: “*Semiotics is a complot of those who wish to make us believe that language serves to communicate thoughts*”.
Umberto Eco, *Limits of Interpretation*

1. Mystical Readings of the Sacred Text

Written or oral, the sacred teachings from which the mystic starts in his quest for the divine are, in the end, nothing more than a corpus of texts. The mystic interprets them by means of the religious doctrine in which he has been trained and, of course, through his own understanding capacity. Although Jewish mysticism is relatively strict, casting warning signals regarding the dangers awaiting the irresponsible who would dare start on this path without solid knowledge, still a certain liberty of movement is permitted to the disciple by the master. As the very role of mysticism is to provide the opportunity for the reinterpretation of the sacred texts the need for some space of maneuver is obvious.

Thus, the first thing that strikes the scholar who studies Jewish mysticism is the importance given to the textual interpretation. Clearly, this has nothing to do with the scientific preoccupation that tries to test and falsify hypotheses, nor with philosophical hermeneutics, which tries to study the nature of meaning.¹ This is rather an interpretation seen as a form of creation. What the great Jewish mystics in general, and the medieval ones in particular, left to their disciples and followers was the outstanding value of their commentaries and exegeses on the sacred texts. Mixing intuition with creativity, and experience with logic, they created new texts, containing some ideas from the original ones but also additional notions, which, coming from their inner self, represented them.

According to Ioan Pânzaru,² by definition the interpretation process leads to the constitution of the sense and respectively to the subjective impression of understanding, whose final result is the responsive behavior, in its turn a text. The text contains a message, sometimes a representation, but the notions are not equivalent. It may be argued, as Gershom Scholem,³ and not only, did, that the

¹ As argued by Pânzaru, *Practici* 7.

² Pânzaru, *Practici* 7.

³ Scholem, *Cabala* 21.

mystics tried to read their own thoughts in the biblical texts. This makes the analysis even the more difficult because in such cases it is hard to establish whether the biblical text provided the basis for the exegetical impulse or, on the contrary, exegesis was used as a means for legitimizing the mystic's own thoughts, in the attempt to link the old view to the new one.

On the other hand, however, it is natural, and generally accepted, that, when reading a text, each of us vibrates to those values that are already present in our inner self and not to others. That is why not anyone can read any text. Certainly, this is where training or education comes in. Or simply common sense, the knowledge gathered from day to day life or, as George Bernard Shaw defines it, the collection of prejudices accumulated by an individual by the age of 18. But here also intervenes the so-called freedom of interpretation, the game between the evident and the latent sense of the text. According to Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), the sacred books leave reason all freedom of judgment, having to be interpreted through themselves. Still, one cannot ignore the existence of a figurative approach, which takes the text's contents as a succession of masks hiding the true referents.⁴ Moreover, one may reach the point where the text's elements are simply travestied by means of a code. However, decoding is not always the same thing with interpretation.

Starting from the conception that we cannot define God univocally due to the inadequacy of language, Hermetic thinking actually states that the more ambiguous, polyvalent and full of symbols and metaphors our language is, the more appropriate it will be for naming a One in which the coincidence of the opposites is achieved and therefore the identity principle vanishes.⁵ Consequently, in this case interpretation is infinite. In the quest for the ultimate sense, the sliding of the tangible sense in all directions becomes acceptable. One defines not by description but by analogy. Each object hides an initiatory secret. But a revealed initiatory secret serves to nothing. In order to preserve its value, such a secret must lead to another secret, and so on, infinitely. The Hermetic secret must be void. As Tibetan mysticism⁶ excellently puts it, the man who

⁴ This is where symbolism comes in. In a detailed analysis, I. Pânzaru evokes in *Practici ale interpretării de text* the enterprise of certain monastic authors of the Carolingian age who, having read the free exegeses of the Church Fathers, felt the need to systematize the meaning values given to each notion in the interpretative texts. The result was a set of works that counted these symbols, which in fact prevented any new interpretation of the text.

⁵ Eco, *Limitele* 49.

⁶ In *Tainele* 62 David-Neel speaks about the Tibetan theory, which teaches that the human condition may be surpassed not by knowledge but by passing beyond knowledge, where the wise man becomes aware of the fact that knowledge itself is just a means and not an aim.

pretends he has found a secret is not an initiate, but someone who has stopped at a very superficial level of the mystery.

One may thus say that Hermetic thinking turns everything that happens into a linguistic phenomenon and at the same time subtracts all communicative power from language, leaving it with only an encoding one.⁷ The Hermetic tradition feeds any attitude for which a text is only the chain of the reactions it produces. From this perspective, any sacred text determines the apparition of a reading that Umberto Eco calls “suspicious” and translates as “excessive”.⁸ Nevertheless, to the extent to which one tries to remain within the institutionalized boundaries of the pre-established religious dogma, acceptable interpretative licenses are limited.

Having said that, let us turn to the Jewish tradition. The most important aspect of the Jewish sacred text is the manner in which it is written. Since the Hebrew alphabet contains consonants only, the written word appears as an obscure corpus, with a hidden significance. What gives life to it is the voice sound. Reading is an adventure. If it weren't for the oral tradition, which has preserved it, it would turn each time into a hangman game, in which the right sonority should be guessed. Therefore it may be said that the reading of the text has been legitimized by the centuries of vocalization and the sense of the verse has been clarified (?) by the long oral tradition, which has evolved in perfect parallel with the written one.

On the other hand, this is precisely where the doubts arise. If Torah is of divine origin, then any human intervention will be meant to remain under a question mark. Since in Hebrew changing the punctuation of a text means changing its sense, it is clear why accepting the idea that the divine text is submitted to a modulation of human inspiration raises a problem. The current reading of the Torah is ultimately authorized by usage only. And as the entire edifice of the text is founded on the manner in which the consonants are vocalized, it is obvious why in the end the understanding of the Torah is strictly connected to the vowels and why Jewish mystics have maintained that “vowels are the letters' soul” and the letters without vowels are “bodies without soul” (Zohar). The Torah's text, kabbalists concluded,⁹ was not vocalized precisely in

⁷ Eco, *Limitele* 50. U. Eco even proposes a so-called “unlimited interpretation” mysticism. Of the pre-requisites mentioned by him we shall only recall a few: a text is an open universe in which the interpreter may find infinite connections; language does not serve for finding a unique, pre-existing signified; language mirrors the inadequacy of thinking; in order to save the text by becoming aware of the signified's infinity the reader must guess that every line hides a secret; the chosen one is the person who understands that the real signified of a text is its void; etc. 57.

⁸ Eco, *Limitele* 101.

⁹ Yakov Ben Sheshet, quoted by Idel in *Cabala* 289.

order to allow the interpretation of the words in accordance with the specific significance of each possible vocalization variant. Moreover, this way Torah potentially includes all aspects and profound significances of each letter, each related to a secret, infinitely. This stands to prove the illuminated nature of the non-vocalized Torah. In this sense, the relation between vowels and consonants is seen as being parallel with the one between soul, or form, and matter. Reading the Torah means limiting its infinity, and is the expression of a potential significance inherent to consonants. Kabbalistic reading is therefore an act of cooperation with God, a con-creation of the Torah.¹⁰

Along the time, the oral tradition shifted its accent with the introduction in the sacred text of signs rendering the vowels. Apparently, as of that moment anyone could have read the Torah. Still, in the synagogue the Torah has been maintained until this day in an unaltered form. This state of fact regards two aspects: first of all, the text is written without any breaks and punctuation marks, being a continuous succession of consonants; secondly, when successively copying it, the scribes had the obligation to keep unchanged even those constructions which seemed to be mistaken according to the grammatical rules. To understand why, one must address the meanings granted to the Torah in the mystical tradition.

Torah's mystical sense is tightly linked to its being considered to be of divine origin. Regarded from this perspective, the sense cannot be communicated straightly; it needs to be deciphered behind the appearance. Thus, what can be read in the Torah is just a surface layer, which, once removed, reveals an entire secondary world. In the attempt to analyze these hidden aspects, Gershom Scholem proposes as starting point three principles: 1. the principle of God's name; 2 the principle of the Torah seen as a body and 3. the principle of the unending richness of the divine word's significance.¹¹

The importance of God's name – or names – and their magic values is a paramount topic. Whether extracted from Torah's text or obtained through letter combinations, these names have been used in magic practices ever since the Hellenistic age. Therefore the fear that their unreasonable use may determine true disasters, breakings in the natural balance of things, should not surprise. The attempt to preserve Torah's hidden sense from such unwanted interventions resulted in a new conception, which stated that Torah's paragraphs were not, in fact, reproduced in writing in their true succession, known only to the chosen initiates, so that not anyone who read it might perform miracles (or on the contrary, destroy the world). There are various theories and treatises providing

¹⁰ Idel, *Cabala* 290.

¹¹ Scholem, *Cabala* 46. G. Scholem underlines that these three principles or analysis perspectives do not share the same historical and psychological origin.

the most diverse explanations in this regard. Scholem gives two examples: a book preserved in manuscript only, *Simushe Torah* (The Book on the Theurgic Use of the Torah), which relates that together with the Torah Moses also received from God the letter combinations representing its esoteric aspect,¹² and Moses ben Nahman (Nahmanides)'s comment of the Torah:

“We possess an authentic tradition that Torah is entirely composed of God’s names, in such a manner that the words we read could be cut up in a completely different way, in [esoteric] names... In the haggadic affirmation that Torah was originally written with black fire on white fire, there is a confirmation of our opinion that the writing used was continuous and without separation into words, which allowed its use both as a succession of [esoteric] names (al derech ha-shemot) and in the traditional manner, as history and commandments. Thus, the Torah was given to Moses in a form in which the separation into words brought with it its reading as a sum of divine commandments. At the same time, however, he also obtained, in an oral form, its transmission as a succession of names”.¹³

In this context the importance of the oral tradition becomes obvious. This esoteric outlook also explains why the Torah becomes unusable in case it has an additional, missing or changed letter.¹⁴ Here again Scholem provides us with an example: as Rabbi Meir (2nd century), renowned teacher of the *Mishna*, underlined, this might have negative connotations as well. While he was a Torah copier with Rabbi Ismail, the latter taught him: “My son, pay attention to your job, for it is a godly work; it is enough to skip or add a single letter to destroy the entire world ...”¹⁵ In these circumstances, a single step was necessary for passing from magic to mysticism, which the kabbalists undertook by accepting the idea that not only was the Torah made up of God’s names but that it represented, in fact, one single great name of the divinity. This outlook is grounded on the mystical unity of the Torah, whose primary aim is not to transmit a specific meaning but to express the mightiness and majesty of God, which are concentrated in His “name”. Going even further in this direction, an old *Midrash* mentions even that the Torah came before the creation, being at the same time God’s source of inspiration and His instrument. In an attempt to express this theory in a more rational manner, Joseph Gikatilla, Spanish kabbalist of the 13th century, states that the Torah is not exactly God’s name, but the explanation of God’s name. From this purely mystical perspective, the

¹² Scholem, *Cabala* 47.

¹³ Quoted by Scholem, *Cabala* 48.

¹⁴ Especially since in Hebrew there are double letters – two letter rendering the same sound and two sounds rendered by the same letter.

¹⁵ According to Scholem, *Cabala* 48.

Torah is regarded as a warp in which the true name – the Tetragrammaton YHWH – is woven secretly and indirectly. Another step further taken later brings the kabbalists to the conclusion that there is a kind of equivalence between God and the Torah. The letters are seen as the divinity's mystical body and God as the letters' soul.¹⁶

Torah is thus represented as a body. Regarded as such, it becomes clear why certain passages from it seem less important than others, just like the parts of the human body. On the other hand, however, the true mystic will find the secret meanings even behind the most common verses. The Zohar shows that:

“Whoever deals with the Torah ensures the evolution of the world and allows each element to fulfill its function, for there is no member in the human body that does not have its correspondent in the world taken in its entirety. Because, just as man's body is composed of members and articulations of various ranks, each having an action and a reaction on the others and together making up a body, so is the world: all the creatures in it are organized like the members, in a hierarchical relation to each other, and when well organized they make up, in the most accurate sense of the word, a body. And everything is organized according to the initial principle of the Torah because the Torah is composed entirely of members and articulations organized in a hierarchical relation to each other and, when well organized, they make up a unique body” (Zohar, I, 134 b).

This parallel is taken even further in *Tikunei Zohar*, which considers that the Torah is equal with Israel, in itself regarded as a mystical body. “The Torah has a head, a body, a heart, a mouth and other members, just like Israel” (Tikun 21, f. 52 b). The mystical body of Israel's community does not refer to the Jewish people only but it is considered to be, at the same time, an esoteric symbol of God's presence, the *Shekhinah*. The parallelism of the two symbols goes so far that it leads to the conclusion that the Jewish people's exile is the physical equivalent and even the result of the *Shekhinah*'s exile following the breaking of the vessels and / or the Fall, which determines a permanent interconnection between the two motives. Here also intervenes the old separation of the Torah into the “written Torah” and “oral Torah”. In the esoteric sense, the written Torah is represented by the Tanach, the oral Torah is made up of the explanations and comments provided by the wise scholars in connection with its text and together they are a unity.

Naturally, under these circumstances the written Torah started to be identified with the giving sphere of the divine and the oral Torah with the receiving sphere of the *Shekhinah* and of Israel's community. Moreover, here

¹⁶ This image reminds of the relation between consonants and vowels, and it is precisely where the contradiction between the human and the divine intervention in the reading of the Torah becomes obvious.

we find again the conception that the initial Torah was written with black fire on white fire, mentioned earlier. The white fire signifies the written Torah, in which the letters' form does not appear, and the black fire the consonants and vowels that give birth to the oral Torah. The only man who has ever reached the written mystical Torah, hidden in the unseen form of the white light, was ultimately Moses – the rest of the prophets and mystics have managed to catch glimpses only. Taken to the extreme, this theory actually maintains that there is only an oral Torah, the written Torah being regarded exclusively as a mystical notion. In its current form, the written Torah is only a reproduction of the mystery's translation.

At this point the unending richness of Torah's significances becomes obvious. It is clear that in his experience the mystic passes beyond the external sense of the sacred text and plunges into deeper and deeper layers of meaning. Torah now appears as the representation of a lively hierarchy of semantic layers and significances. If in the first phase this was all about the Torah's hidden and visible, esoteric and exoteric dualism, later on this view was refined under various influences. Jewish mystics and especially the kabbalists were not seeking in the Tanach the allegoric representation of philosophical ideas but a symbolic representation of the process of divine life. This led to the emergence of a theory proposing four levels of reading – literal, philosophical-allegorical, haggadic and mystical-theosophical.¹⁷ Gershom Scholem identifies the root of this conception in *Midrash ha-Ne'elam on the Book of Ruth* where it is stated that:

“Torah's words can be compared with a nut. How come? Just as a nut has an exterior cover and an inner core, so does every word of the Torah acquire an exterior reality [ma'aseh] – Midrash, Haggadah and Mystery [Sod] – each representing a meaning deeper than the previous”.¹⁸

Nevertheless, this theory found its most famous expression in the (lost) story of Moses of Leon, called *Pardes*. The pun between Pardes with the literal meaning of Paradise (orchard and by extension Heaven) and PaRDeS as the collection of the initials of the words Peshat (literal meaning), Remes (allegorical meaning), Derasha (Talmudic and Haggadic meaning) and Sod (mystical meaning) gave birth to a long tradition of interpretations in Jewish mysticism and not only. As Moshe Idel shows in his turn,¹⁹ there were kabbalists, like Abraham Abulafia, who thought that the curse in the literal

¹⁷ These four levels of reading may be found, as mentioned previously in this study, both in Christian and Islamic mysticism. Nevertheless we shall not further detail this aspect, as it is not the intention of this research to pursue the historical evolution of these notions and the manner in which they influenced each other.

¹⁸ Scholem, *Cabala* 64.

¹⁹ Idel, *Cabala* 282.

sense was blessing in the hidden sense and the curse in the hidden sense was blessing in the literal one, granting negative, even demonic, connotations to the latter. To them, the literal meaning remained the patrimony of the many and the esoteric one the patrimony of the chosen few.

Another thesis of crucial importance to the reading of the sacred text is that behind every word, or even letter, there are seventy aspects, or “faces”. Initiated by a late *Midrash (Bemidbar Raba, 12th century)*, this theory starts from the conception that there were seventy nations populating the Earth. The Talmud states that each commandment given by God on Mount Sinai was instantly divided in all the seventy languages so that everybody could receive it at the same time (Talmud, Shabbat 88b). This idea later crystallized in the conception of the seventy meanings, representing the secrets that may be found in each word.

It is obvious that the number is ultimately more or less arbitrary, with all its attributed significances, its only purpose being to underline the inexhaustible totality of the divine word. At this point a parallel may be identified with another type of symbolism. On the one hand, Jewish mystics see creation as a game of the divine names and their respective letters, and on the other hand, as an emanation process of energy and light. The two views are mutually complacent but they are also confusing to each other. Thus, the letters and names represent a concentration of energy and they illuminate the mystic who, through his meditations, catches a ray of the infinite light, but there are 22 letters and 10 spheres of energy and light emanation (*Sefirot*), representing the primordial numbers and at the same time the divine commandments. Several explanations were proposed in order to balance these discrepancies. The kabbalists considered, for instance, that the light and the mystery of the Torah were one and the same thing, given that the numerical value of both words in Hebrew is identical: 207. As the *Midrash ha-Ne’elam* shows, when God said “Let there be light” he was referring to the mystery of the Torah, in which He included the light, but in an occulted form, so as not to overwhelm human beings. The world could not withhold God’s majesty manifested in its plenitude. “That is why Torah’s stories are only its exterior garments”, states the Zohar (Zohar I, 140 a).

Moreover, this outlook was taken to the extreme when, during the 16th century, the kabbalistic School of Safed proposed an even wider interpretation. Thus, if following the exodus from Egypt, and respectively when the Torah was given to them on Mount Sinai, there were 600,000 souls, so are, in each generation, 600,000 fundamental souls of Israel. For each of them the Torah has a particular significance and message, which only the addressee can penetrate. This mystical idea, according to which each soul has its own path to the understanding of the Torah, was however troubled by the fact that in its written form, the Torah has only 340,000 letters. In order to explain this inadequacy the kabbalists came up with an original solution: there were indeed 600,000 letters

on the first table but part of them were lost when they were transcribed on the second. Nevertheless, by a secret combination process the current letters may lead to the 600,000 in the original text. This idea is grounded on a tradition stating that there were in fact two sets of tables of the Law, one received by Moses on Mount Sinai, which he alone could read, and a second set, rewritten after the first one was broken during the period of idolatry of the Golden Calf. When the first tables were broken the letters engraved on them flew off thus leaving the spiritual elements visible only to the mystic, who must discover them in the hidden layers of the Torah in its current form.

Naturally, the interpretation of Torah's significances did not stop here. There were two ideas that still needed reconciliation: the existence of the original Torah and the existence of the physical Torah, respectively, if the Torah preceded the creation, what did it look like before the Fall. The solution, proposed by Moses Cordovero and taken over by many after him, was the very evolution of the world. If the world acquired material manifestation after the Fall, so did the spiritual letters of the Torah. From this perspective it may be said that the commandments were initially warnings. On the other hand, this theory presupposes that in the Messianic era people will shake off their material body and recover the mystical body Adam had before the Fall. At that moment Torah's letters will be reorganized in the divine formula and will compose new words that will speak of different things. In a profound sense, this outlook maintains that, in fact, the same letters reproduce, in their various combinations, the diverse aspects of the world.

Another interesting theory analyzed by Gershom Scholem in this context is that proposed by *Sefer ha-Temuna* (Book on Appearance or Book on Image, referring to the letters' image seen as the mystical appearance of the divine), published in Catalonia in 1250.²⁰ This work no longer speaks of the various aspects of the Torah during one stage or another of the creation, but of the aspects of a succession of creations. Each aspect is governed by one of the seven subordinated *Sefirot*, because God's creative power becomes manifest in each *Sefira* and in a cosmic unit decisively formed by it, called *Shemita*. Starting from the prescription related to the Sabbatical and the Jubilee year in Deuteronomy 15, this conception states that each *Shemita* brings about another attribute of the divine, as the dominant power in the corresponding creation process. Only in the final succession of the seven *Shemitot* that make up the great Jubilee year of the worlds will God's entire creative power become manifest. This view is based on the same conception that Torah's absolute being becomes more and more relative, and reveals itself differently in each *Shemita*. In each such period the text will read something completely different, for in any

²⁰ Scholem, *Cabala* 91.

of them the divine wisdom of the original Torah is represented under another aspect. Here, too, the letters are combined in various patterns, according to the linguistic context of the respective cycle.

In an attempt to explain the current state of facts, the book's author shows that, just like in the succession of the *Sefirot*, the first three *Shemiotot* are a period of grace, a period of rigor or judgment and a period of mercy, mankind being now in the second. So, in the first period, when creature and Creator were in a happy relationship, the Torah contained no interdictions, but only statements. In the period in which we live the Torah has taken the form we know today, adjusting itself to the circumstances. Evidently, the next period, that of mercy, will mark the return to purer forms and harmony. Regarded from this perspective, the current form of the Torah is accepted as final for this eon, with the amendment that it may have an entirely different face in other eons.

Even in this context, however, the idea that, irrespective of the manner in which they are combined, the letters' number should remain the same is strongly underlined. Starting from this rule, some mystics who had embraced this outlook concluded that in this *Shemita* there is a letter missing from the Torah. The limitation of our live can only be the result of an absence, of an imperfection. In order to account for the current state of the world, a letter from the present form of the Torah must be incomplete. As each letter is a concentration of divine energy, any letter rendered in an incomplete form will prevent the manifestation of the light and of the hidden forces. The blame was finally laid on letter *shin*, which, some kabbalists said, should have not three arms, as it has in the current writing, but four.²¹ Other, more radical, kabbalists decided that we are, in fact, dealing with a total occultation. To account for such a state of the world a letter must have completely disappeared from the alphabet. However, we must not despair. Although invisible to us, the 23rd letter of the true alphabet will become accessible by revelation in the next *Shemita*. This absence may additionally account for the negative aspects of the Torah – its presence will help turning them into affirmations.

An even more radical version of this theory, rendered in *Sefer ha-Temuna* (f 31 a), maintains that it is not just a letter that's missing from the Torah, but two books. Based on a passage from the Talmud (Shabbat 116 a) where it is written that the final Torah contains seven books, this outlook starts from the idea that, if there were seven *Sefirot* manifested in the seven cycles of the eons, then there should be seven books corresponding to them. Only the above-mentioned pre-requisites have led to the fact that in this *Shemita* just five of them are readable, the other two having been occulted. Their occultation, how-

²¹ The theory is based on the fact that the Talmud recommends the impression of both forms of letter *shin* on the leather straps fixed on the forehead with the phylacteries (*Tefilin*).

ever, seems incomplete since verses 10,35 and 10,36²² of the fourth book of Moses, Numbers, allude to the two missing books and may be regarded as their compression. These occulted parts diminish Torah's inner force, which may be extended only in a future eon. In support of this thesis kabbalists also quote verse 1,3 of Genesis²³ as an allusion to a *Shemita* made up exclusively of light without darkness, the remains of a fuller Torah, communicated in the *Shemita* of Grace but refused to us. In this context, an interpretation like that of Rabbi Mordechai Yaffe of Lublin (end 16th century) according to which the current *Shemita* began with the revelation on Mount Sinai can raise but question marks. The idea that the flood and the Sodom and Gomorrah episode could have taken place in a *Shemita* of Grace seems at least eccentric.

It is interesting to note that the conception regarding the existence in the Torah of certain occulted parts, which would once become visible, resisted throughout time until the emergence of Hassidic mysticism. In an attempt to combine the observance of the Jewish tradition and profession of faith according to which there is no Torah other than the one given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai with the *Midrashic* interpretation of Isaiah 41,4 "The Law [Torah] will come from me" as "A new law [Torah] will come from me", Hassidic mystic Rabbi Levy Isaac of Berdicev proposed the following explanation for this phenomenon:

"But so it is that even the blank spaces in the Torah roll are made up of letters, it's just that we cannot read them like we do the black ones. But in the Messianic era God will show us, too, the blank spaces in the Torah, whose letters are unknown to us now; of course this is what is meant by the reference to the 'new Torah'."²⁴

It is evident that from the religious authority's point of view such a position provides too large a space of maneuver because it actually justifies any deviation and even heresy. In these circumstances, it was not very hard for a mystic like Shabbatai Zvi to take this step astray in 1665. Considering that redemption made it possible to upset the old law and set up a new *Shemita*, he actually tried to force God's hand by declaring himself the Messiah. Starting from an older theory, first expressed by the author of the *Tikunei Zohar*,²⁵ regarding the existence of two different aspects of the Torah, "*Torah de-Beria*"

²² "And it came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Moses said Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee". "And when it rested, he said, Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel."

²³ "And God said Let there be light; and there was light".

²⁴ "Imre Tzaddikim", Shitomir 1900, in the notes of a disciple on the lectures of the Rabbi of Berdicev, quoted by Scholem, Cabala 93.

²⁵ According to Scholem, Cabala 95.

(Torah in the stage of creation)²⁶ and “*Torah de-Atzilut*” (Torah in the stage of emanation),²⁷ Zvi’s adepts considered in their turn that the new spiritual Torah, brought by him on earth, replaced the Torah of the stage of creation. This way they tore away Torah’s mystical contents from the text’s significance and indirectly from the symbols of the traditional Judaic life style, setting them in contradiction and thus giving birth to a mystical nihilism taken almost to the absurd: “the suspension of the Torah is its fulfillment”.

2. Kabbalistic Hermeneutics

2.1 Theory and Practice in the Kabbalah

Various scholars have claimed that the Kabbalah is a theoretical rather than practical doctrine.²⁸ However, the authors of the mystical texts that make up the Kabbalah note quite clearly that for the untrained the danger comes precisely from the possible inappropriate use of the practical recipes contained therein. The kabbalists’ conception that by manipulating the letters’ order one may disclose, in given circumstances, Torah’s secrets is not an abstract theory but a current practice.²⁹ The fear that by mistaking one of Torah’s letters one may destroy the world is not a theoretical one. Neither does the creation of a Golem stop at the theoretical level, even though this human creative capacity has never been proven in a scientific experiment. These are ultimately elements of magic, which in certain historical periods the Jewish religion accepted and, to a certain extent, even embraced. A proof may be found in the very Talmud, whose authority is doubtless, where the story is told of two rabbis who used to create by secret methods, every Shabbat eve, a three-quarter grown calf, which they would afterwards eat (Talmud, Sanhedrin 65 b).

Paradoxically, the practical aspects of the Kabbalah were highlighted in Gershom Scholem’s studies, although he saw in the Kabbalah a *corpus* of rather

²⁶ Mentioned in Proverbs 8,22 (“The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old”) as the one shown to us by God in creation.

²⁷ Mentioned in Psalms 19,8 (“The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes”) as being untouched and still sealed in its divine nature. It is this non-created, emanation-related feature of the Torah that validates the mystical thesis concerning its identity with God.

²⁸ M. Idel believes this outlook is based primarily on the absence of information, inaccessible to the foreign scholar due to the fact that a large number of documents are still in manuscript or, although published, have never been translated from Hebrew (Idel, *Cabala* 55).

²⁹ Idel, *Abulafia*’s 293.

theoretical teachings. In Scholem's interpretation,³⁰ the process described by the kabbalists as an emanation of divine energy and light is also characterized as a disclosure of the divine word. The parallel between the two essential forms of kabbalistic symbolism is perfect. The kabbalists speak of attributes and spheres of light and in the same context they speak of divine names and of the letters they are composed of. As mentioned earlier here, these two types of description appear constantly together. The secret world of the divinity is one of sounds, language, names that reveal themselves following their own law. The elements of the divine language, the letters composing the sacred text are more than simple conventional means of communication. Each of them represents a concentration of energy and expresses a rich range of meanings that cannot be entirely rendered by human language. The revelation of these meanings and thereby of the divine majesty depends therefore on the mystic's capacity to release the hidden energy.

In a more recent analysis, Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan has proposed,³¹ in his turn, a division of the Kabbalah in three categories: theoretical, meditative and practical. The theoretical Kabbalah deals with the dynamics of the manner in which God reveals His divine being through the various channels of the divine realm (*Sefirot*) and the various levels of reality (*Atzilut, Beriyah, Yetsirah and Asiyah*). The meditative Kabbalah is preoccupied with man's union with the divine through these channels and worlds. The practical Kabbalah, more controversial, is focused on the permutation of the divine mystical names for magical purposes. Kaplan identifies the source of the latter in Lurianic Kabbalah, in the concept of *Kavanah*, the mystical intention and the meditation accompanying the act of fulfillment. The act in itself is seen as body and the mystical *Kavanah* as soul of the action in fulfillment. "If someone fulfils the sacred act without the right intention then everything is body without soul", says Isaac Luria.³² Although the concept itself appeared earlier, being briefly mentioned in the Zohar, Luria seems to have been the first to integrate it in a coherent system. Proposing specific meditative practices associated virtually to each aspect of everyday life and each human activity, Luria developed the idea of a permanent meditative state. Formal prayer, in which each word had kabbalistic significance, was seen as a *summum* of the entire set of such meditations.

In Scholem's expression, *Kavanah* designates the aspect of the divine visible in each concrete act prescribed by the ritual, and the totality of these acts constitutes the movement symbolized by the rite. The outer action is thus transformed into a mystical movement whereby the human will attempted to

³⁰ Scholem, *Cabala* 45.

³¹ Kaplan, *Meditation* 225.

³² Quoted by Scholem, *Cabala* 144.

comply with the divine will. In these circumstances, the *Kavanah* becomes a mystical tool whereby each cultic action of the initiate is turned into a mystery. Since no mystical writing makes any concrete description of the phases of this practice, Moshe Idel concludes³³ that this might have been a de-automation process in which each word of the prayer had to be uttered in a well-defined and punctual manner. For instance, in the case of ecstatic mysticism, Abraham Abulafia proposed to recite the letters with melodic intonation or, in other words, to reduce the linguistic material to its primary elements, considered as absolute monads. This way the classical language was turned into a series of magical sounds with the intrinsic purpose of facilitating the return to the primordial language.

By means of the *Kavanah* the mystic raises from the lower worlds to the highest realms, through concentration on the *Sefirot* and the relationships between them. The ten *Sefirot* are mystically expressed by the correct combination of the letters that represent each of them. Initially, the relation between the symbol and the symbolized was balanced, with one word corresponding to each *Sefira*. Later on, however, the conception evolved into a priority order. *Sefer Yetsirah* proposed YHVH as the supreme divine name and mentioned that its six primary combinations “seal the world”. Regarded as “divine lights”, the ten *Sefirot* are contemplated from the viewpoint of quality, number and name in order to increase the intellect’s and imagination’s training in view of the mystic’s immersion in the superior emanations of the divine reality, culminating in *Ein Sof*. The correct permutation of letters and names facilitates the mystical concentration and awakening. The practice is completed with the visualization of the *Sefirot* or, in certain kabbalistic traditions in which this is expressly forbidden, with the visualization of the colors associated to the *Sefirot*. Evidently, such visualization focuses on the letters of the divine names associated to the *Sefirot*, regarded as symbols. It is reasonable to assume that this visualization process allowed the raising of the kabbalist’s imaginative faculty to a higher ontological level, from where he could determine the divinity’s descent on earth. The process induced a paranormal state of consciousness, with theurgic powers.

Some kabbalists, like Yohanan Alemanno (15th century), considered that the *Sefirot* were a more or less mechanical super-structure, perfectly easy to manipulate by a skillful magician. The significance of the letters and divine names used in prayer thus changes. They are turned from channels of exploration of the divine process into the components and instruments of a practice. They no longer represent a *modus cognoscendi* but a *modus operandi*.³⁴ Starting from the relation existing between each *Sefira*, a letter, a divine name and a certain

³³ Idel, *Cabala* 151.

³⁴ Idel, *Cabala* 277-278.

expression, Alemanno was convinced that it was possible to determine, by use of appropriate words, the manifestation of a certain *Sefira*, in order to obtain the desired effects on the world. This shows an evolution from the simple contemplation of the divine harmony to the use of knowledge of the celestial mechanism for practical purposes and from the kabbalistic symbol to a magical language respectively.

By promoting the theory that the variation of vocalization allows for the interpretation of a given phrase in various manners, Jacob ben Sheshet (13th century) paves the way for a free exegesis of the sacred text: depending on the diverse vocalizations any kabbalistic notion can be associated to each divine name and to each *Sefira*. A special technique, identified, with small variations, in many kabbalistic authors by Moshe Idel,³⁵ consisted in vocalizing the word *Devareka* in order to visualize the letters of the Tetragrammaton in a circle (or sphere) colored in fire-like red. The circle consisted in a diagram containing three concentric circles, each representing a *Sefira* whose name was written on the respective circle. Near the name were indicated the corresponding color and a vocalized Tetragrammaton.³⁶ The resulting image was more than a simple drawing – it was an anthropomorphic configuration symbolizing an aspect of the divine realm. Such detailed instructions suggest a long evolution, developed by each generation of kabbalists, of certain practical applications designed to involve the macrocosm. That is why it was so important to preserve the secret and the oral transmission to the initiates only.

The main theurgic purpose of the *Kavanot* was to elevate the mystic, by *Gematria* and combinations of the divine names but also by visualization of colors, in complex combinatory and permutation techniques, to the higher realms, allowing him to take part in the *Tikkun Olam*. Scholem identifies the source of this conception in the *Zohar*, where there is a description of the four consecutive functions of prayer: purification and fulfillment through sacred acts, involvement of the natural world of creation, which, if put into language, would sing hymns together with the people, reaching the realm of angels, and participation in the *Tikkun* process of the Divine Name, in which the *Sefirotic* world is located.³⁷ The unification of the letters of the divine name YHWH was thus regarded in perfect parallelism with the unification of everything that existed, in the process of restoration of the original harmony. Such unifications, in their turn expressions of man's unification with the divine, were called *Yechidim*. Concretely, a long series of *Yechidim* was devised based on the

³⁵ Idel, *Cabala* 154.

³⁶ The color associations may vary, since with Chaim Vital the Tetragrammaton is white.

³⁷ Here appears once again the idea of the human co-participation in the divine process.

manipulation of the letters of the various divine names. Sometimes two or more of these names were combined together, their consonants anagrammed and their vocalizations varied. Moreover, an old Jewish tradition taken over by the kabbalists from the *Hekhalot* literature claimed that each letter of the divine name was in itself a divine name,³⁸ by vocalization.

The letters were used at both the cosmological and theological level, in a complex system of utterances and meditations. Eleazar of Worms (12th - 13th century) included in his book *Sefer ha-Shem* (Book of the Name) a combinatory table of the divine names' letters – proof of a long practice – which became a pattern for many later ecstatic mystics. At about the same time an unknown author³⁹ wrote in a book entitled *Sefer ha-Hayim* (Book of Life) that it was enough to utter the divine names or those of the angels to obtain what you wanted or to receive information about secret things: the Holy Spirit would reveal them to you. In his turn, Eleazar was convinced that in the state of ecstasy induced by the utterance of the divine names he could obtain the revelation of future events. Nevertheless, as Moshe Idel remarks,⁴⁰ this was not a simple utterance of certain combinations elaborated after a pre-established scheme but a component of the mystical practice, which, together with meditations, body movements, breath control, etc. was designed to involve the mental faculties, creating a certain psychical state. That was why one of the dangers awaiting the mystic in his experience, as underlined by Abraham Abulafia (who provided, in his turn, a model table⁴¹ for reciting all the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet in combination with the Tetragrammaton) was that it was possible, in the absence of an appropriate training and control, for the sublime elements he would meet on his way to unbalance him. In the view of another kabbalist, writing at the same time with Eleazar of Worms, Moshe of Taku,⁴² if the seeker did not master the technique, after uttering the divine name he would return to the initial state of confusion of the reason. In his turn, Moses Cordovero thought in *Pardes Rimmonim*⁴³ that this technique was designed to determine the *unio mystica* by attracting the divinity down, outlook that may also be found in Renaissance Hermetic magic.

According to Kaplan, since the Divine Names reflect spiritual forces, which have their counterparts in the human psyche, the effects of these *Yechidim* in

³⁸ Even the divine names used in this mystical-magical practice were taken from *Merkabah* mysticism: Adiriron, Bihiron, etc.

³⁹ Quoted by Idel, *Cabala* 145.

⁴⁰ Idel, *Cabala* 146.

⁴¹ As M. Idel proves, such tables had both mystical and magical purposes.

⁴² Quoted by Idel, *Cabala* 145.

⁴³ Quoted by the same Idel, *Cabala* 149.

elevating the mystic's consciousness can be dramatic.⁴⁴ This also evidences the magical value of this mystical technique: by ascending in the realm of the *Sefirot* the mystic can influence them. To exemplify the manner in which the *Yechid* facilitates the mystical elevation, Kaplan indicates:

“The lower soul (nefesh) is from the Universe of Asiyah, which is associated with the name Adonay (“Lord”, the divine name associated with the Sefira Malkhut). One should therefore meditate on the name Adonay (ADNY) binding it to the name YHWH (“Yahweh”, associated with the Sefira Tiferet) in the Universe of Asiah. He should then bind this to the name Ehyeh (AHYH “I Am” associates with the Sefira Keter) in the Universe of Asiyah. He should then meditate on this, elevating the name Ehyeh of Asiyah, and binding it to Adonay of Yetsirah. Adonay of Yetsirah should then be bound to YHWH of Yetsirah. (One proceeds in this manner) step by step, until he reaches Ehyeh of Atzilut. He should then bind Ehyeh of Atzilut to the very highest level, which is the Ein Sof”.⁴⁵

This theme of the step-by-step ascent through the successive levels of consciousness is not exclusively Jewish. It also appears in Gnosticism and in Hellenistic Hermeticism, which have undoubtedly influenced the evolution of Kabbalah. It is also the source of the later development of the non-Jewish Hermetic tradition that has led to the emergence of modern occultism. However, unlike the other movements, concerned with the negation of the world and personal transcendence, the Kabbalah constantly pursued the repair of the world as a whole.

If the *Tikkun Olam* has a positive aspect, related to the restoration of the rightful connection between the things in their true unity, the process has a negative aspect as well, for which Lurianic Kabbalah uses the term *Berur* (textually “selection”). *Berur* is the separation and elimination of the demonic forces, of the other side (*Sitra Ahra*). According to the Lurianic theory of the ritual, Torah is intended to constantly provoke a rejection and progressive elimination of the *Sitra Ahra*, which is now mixed up in all things and threatens to destroy them from the inside. That is why the *Kavanah* ritual warns against the dangers and gaps the mystic can come across on his way. From this perspective, the end of the Morning Prayer, when the initiate would throw himself to the ground, constituted an enterprise that could have endangered his life. After having reached the peak of his fervor and after feeling included in the divine name that he had “united”, the mystic had to jump into the *Sitra Ahra* to free the holy sparks imprisoned in the *klippot*.

⁴⁴ One may identify here an obvious and striking similarity with the Mantras of Indian Tantra and even with Gnostic practices.

⁴⁵ Kaplan, *Meditation* 225.

“Only the perfect Tzaddik can fulfill this meditation, because, for his merits, he is worthy of descending and undertaking those selections in the Klippot, the realms of the “other side”, even against their will. Otherwise, when he put his soul at stake and sends it down there, in the Klippot, he may not only be unable to bring out the souls fallen there but he may also lose his own soul to those realms”.⁴⁶

Given the importance of God’s names, the kabbalistic traditions requested that they be taught from master to disciple in a special initiatory ritual. Since the mere utterance of the divine names may suffice for a creative act as well as for a destructive one, such teaching could only be oral. The tradition was probably older but the kabbalists were the first to mention it in writing. In one of his books, Eleazar of Worms described in detail such an initiation, underlining the fact that it was necessary first of all that before the lesson the two would sink in a running water of 40 feet and wash themselves and secondly that the teaching process itself would take place above the water (gazing at the water). Another theurgic rite, “the dressing of the name”, consisting in the manufacturing, following certain instructions, of a physical mantle with magical values that would give the adept an irresistible power and whose use was necessarily accompanied by the invocation of the related angels, was also strictly connected to the presence of water. The water symbolism was probably taken over from earlier *Merkabah* mysticism. However, regarded from this perspective water loses its quality of danger and becomes creative, just like the fire in the story of the two rabbis who study the “Account of the Chariot”, where instead of burning the trees it makes them sing.

Moshe Idel speaks⁴⁷ of the presence in Jewish mysticism of a “capture theurgy”. Related to the concept of *Shekhinah* and to the effort to bring back and perpetuate God’s presence in the world and in the Community of Israel by a human-divine co-participation, this theurgy has its source in the Hebrew Book of Enoch. Here one may find an interesting description of the magical art, which angels Uzza, Azza and Azziel passed on to mankind, so that people could attract the celestial forces on earth and use them. In his turn, Metatron is thought to support the use of magical techniques in view of revealing the secrets of the lower and higher worlds and the mysteries of knowledge to mankind. Although this looks like (and indeed is) a sort of idolatry, the technique seems to have been considered effective, since there are even descriptions of instruments used to this end. It is possible that, following the same pattern, through its con-

⁴⁶ Scholem, Cabala 151, quoting from Chaim Vital, *Sha’ar ha-Kavanot*. This reminds of the “Pardes” view on the dangers befalling the mystic and of the outcome the enterprise had for Elisha (Aher).

⁴⁷ Idel, Cabala 230.

struction and the religious service given inside it, the Temple could have served to attract and perpetuate the *Shekhinah* amidst the Community of Israel.

God's descent was conceived as part of the revelation process of Torah's secret. Not by chance the ritual took place between the two Cherubs, which symbolized the perfect union (including the sexual aspect) and God's will, in the absence of which they would have remained separated, but also the dynamic human participation in the divine activity. This is ultimately an attempt to prompt revelation by magical techniques. After the disappearance of the Temple, based on the outlook that having been created in the likeness of God man was a microcosm, a new idea emerged, which regarded the human copy as a potential replacement for the Cherubs. Kabbalah exploited this opportunity in the mystical-magical rituals that prepared the mystic for union with God, both physically and psychically. Only the perfect man can become the recipient of the divine potencies, by attracting the *Shekhinah*.⁴⁸ In the words of Moses of Leon (13th century), man must become a throne on which a superior throne can be seated. This way he can receive the divine inflow, which allows him to take part in the theurgic repair of the *Sefirot*. Joseph Gikatilla (13th century) considers that any of man's limbs could become a throne for the celestial entity to which it corresponds, if the mystic purified himself and observed the precepts. In the opinion of Abraham ben Eliezer ha-Levy (15th - 16th century), after a perfect religious life the mystic's flesh becomes transparent and therefore able to receive the *Sefirot*. This religious view does not exclude at all the magical techniques; on the contrary, it includes them for the same purpose – to attract the divine forces. The prayer ritual was completed with the utterance of the divine names designed to perpetuate God's presence once caught. The mystic would thus become a member of the *Shekhinah*.

Another applicability of this type of practical, magical and capture-type of Kabbalah is identified by Moshe Idel⁴⁹ in a kabbalistic tradition developed after the anti-Jewish persecutions of 1391 in Spain that culminated in a series of writings published shortly before the expulsion of 1492, amongst which the best-known is *Sefer ha-Malakh ha-Meshiv*. Here, for the first time, the kabbalists explicitly assure the reader that it is possible to determine the coming of Messiah by means of a magic act able to break the course of history and provoke a radical change in the natural order. In this book the mystic does not consider himself to be the author of the expounded ideas but a mere instrument through which his revelation is passed on to the entire world. A particular feature of this type of Kabbalah is the presence of demonic magic, which

⁴⁸ This is also valid in the relation between the Tzaddik (righteous man) and the Shekhinah (female aspect of the divine) in Hassidism.

⁴⁹ Idel, *Mesianism* 47.

culminates in the demonization of Christianity (as a perfectly symmetrical feedback to the Christian demonization of Judaism) but also of medieval philosophy and science, whose representatives were regarded as embodiments of Satan. These kabbalists pursued the restoration of a pure Judaism both culturally and spiritually, considering that the proximity of the Messianic era authorized the disclosure of all the secrets occulted after the exile.⁵⁰ The mystical path was to them a channel through which they would receive magical recipes for the defeat of Christianity. The revelation of the divinity allowed for the descent of a superior magic, essential for the neutralization of the evil forces and the attainment of redemption. For these kabbalists, too, magic was a means of separation from the *Sitra Ahra*. The difference from other kabbalistic approaches lies in the fact that here, the participants in the apocalyptic war are not the people but the evil forces themselves. The central idea of this tradition was that the Messianic era had already arrived and that for the embodiment of Messiah the only necessary action was to defeat the evil forces by vows uttered in pre-established ceremonies and by use of various magical techniques. Just like in the case of classical mysticism, even this magical effort was collective and had a distinct ethical dimension. This type of magic seems to have been largely abandoned after the expulsion from Spain.⁵¹

Unlike in other circumstances, in the cases described so far the magical techniques were used to allow the mystic to take part in the divine activity and to obtain union with God respectively. Whether he used combinations and permutations of letters and divine names or even instruments, the mystic's aim was exclusively religious. It may be said that the main technique of this "capture theurgy" was the magical reading of the Torah. In fact, let us not forget that, as previously shown in this study, Torah is the basis of the universe's existence and its actualization puts order into chaos. Since the Ten Commandments are regarded as a manifestation of the ten aspects of the divine, it is obvious that they – and implicitly those who observe them – sustain the entire world.

2.2 Methods: Gematria, Temurah, Notarikon

At this point we should review some of the methods used in the mystical and magical reading of the Torah. In his analysis on the evolution of Jewish thought, and implicitly Jewish mysticism, Moshe Idel speaks of a process of arcanization,⁵² showing that although Judaism was initially a mostly exoteric

⁵⁰ This refers to the Roman period.

⁵¹ M. Idel argues that this was the result of the fact that some kabbalists considered this approach a mistake, which triggered the exile (Idel, *Mesianism* 52).

⁵² Idel, *Hermeneutics* 165.

religion, during the ages it assumed some of the most complex esoteric expressions known in religion in general. This swinging from exo- to esoteric led to the emergence of often in disagreement, but always profound, forms of thought. Although it contributed, on the one hand, to the emergence of new forms of conceptualization of the sacred text, the arcanization process also determined, on the other hand, the development of the first systematic treatments of the modes of interpreting it. This systematic hermeneutics was designed to prove the connection between the new forms of interpretive literature and the earlier, more traditional ones.

Regarded from this perspective, the numerical interpretation of the canonic text is the most intra-textual of the hermeneutical methods, because it starts from the assumption that through the hidden numerical correspondences between its elements, the text elucidates itself. Unlike the narrative approaches, which infused new meanings into older texts, the numeric approaches were often meant to reinforce the uniqueness of the sacred text, and to reveal, through the disclosure of such affinities, the divine wisdom.

Various scholars have claimed that the Hebrew numerical exegesis was probably taken over from the Pythagorean speculations. But, as Moshe Idel underlines, in the case of Judaism the mystic's interest did not stop at the mathematical level, which considered the letter's numerical value in itself, but went further on to the semantic one, which considered the affinity between words with the same numerical value.⁵³ The primary purpose of Gematria, then, was to compare the semantic values and not the numerical values of the words. A second purpose of the numerological exercise was to extract information from the text by transforming words into figures. The most famous instance of use of Gematria in this regard was the deduction of the precise measure of the huge size of the divine body from a biblical phrase.

Although Gematria was not a kabbalistic invention, being inherited from older forms of Jewish mysticism, a first definition of it is given by Eleazar of Worms:

“Gay means in Greek number, and matrya – wisdom. Another interpretation: Gay means a valley, matrya means mountains, namely if you throw the mountain into the valley, it will be equal. So also you should do to the Torah and you should find out what the sages said, or in the Midrash or in the Talmud, by the way of Gematria, or by the way of allegory... But you should not resort too much to Gematria – because even the clowns do – less people will deride you”.⁵⁴

Based on the numerical equivalence between “Elohim” on the one hand and “throne”, but also “judgment”, on the other hand, Eleazar shows by means of

⁵³ Idel, *Hermeneutics* 171.

⁵⁴ Quoted by Idel, *Hermeneutics* 172.

Gematria why this divine name is associated with *Sefira Din*. The idea of this correspondence was not new and whether Eleazar invented this demonstration or he only inherited it, it provides an example of the use of Gematria to underline the relation between elements of the same conceptual system in an intra-corporeal strategy. By his reference to the clowns the kabbalist emphasized the need for a conservative and careful approach of this technique. Nevertheless, this does not mean that Gematria applications may not lead to the emergence of new conceptions. The juxtaposition, based on numerical equivalence, of elements between which there is no visible relation may sometimes lead to unexpected connections that are, nevertheless, acceptable from the conservative viewpoint.

At the same time, however, it is also possible that the use of Gematria may alter the hidden meaning of the text by turning the allusion in verses into a pernicious matter, as Nahmanides (13th century) underlines.⁵⁵ Aware that the use of this technique may lead to aberrations (and not only from the point of view of religion), Nahmanides is, in his turn, the adept of a conservative Gematria, which should not generate new ideas. To him, numerical calculation operates rather as a mnemotechnique preserving the secrets of the oral Torah given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai.

At the opposite pole we find Abraham Abulafia who grants numerical methods a much more radical applicability, using various means to deconstruct the text before reconstructing it, providing entirely new meanings in an inter-corporeal approach. Numerology may therefore be used in both conservative and radical approaches. Symbolism and allegory are conservative from the point of view of the text's structure and radical due to the inter-corporeal tendencies. Moshe Idel shows⁵⁶ that, if the German mystics known as the *Hasidei Ashkenaz* used a radical form of Gematria, taking the interpreted elements out of the context and ignoring their canonic order for the sake of an intra-textual relation, the ecstatic kabbalists applied this radicalism to both methods – intra-textual and inter-corporeal. To Abulafia, Gematria is more than an exegesis of the sacred text – it is a form of knowledge and understanding of reality that goes much farther than philosophy. If for the Greeks numerology was a means to measure nature, for the kabbalists together with letters and names it provided an easier and more direct access to the essence of reality. But this is not about the external, tangible reality, but about the one contained in the sacred text. This approach starts from the outlook that language is not just a means of reflection but also of understanding, and considers that the information included in the text is superior to any natural science.

⁵⁵ Quoted by Idel, *Hermeneutics* 174.

⁵⁶ Idel, *Hermeneutics* 179.

It is interesting to note that in his book *Sefer ha-Hokhmah* Eleazar of Worms describes seventy-three ways of interpreting the Bible. The author underlines that he has taken them over from the esoteric tradition inherited from his master, Rabbi Yehuda ha-Hasid, and mentions that they represent the seventy-three gates of wisdom, which decode the secrets of the fifty gates of understanding. For the kabbalists, then, the exegetical methods are not only methods to elicit secrets from a text but also secret topics in themselves. Although in fact an exoteric exegetical method, also used in the rabbinic literature, in the Kabbalah numerology was considered part of the esoteric tradition.⁵⁷ This outlook was natural in an environment in which the revelation of the occulted recipes was meant for the specially trained initiates only, being dangerous for the rest of the world.

Numerical calculation does not change the word but enriches it with semantic charge by confronting it with other words with the same numerical value. Gematria preserves, therefore, the text's stability. Entirely different is the case of another form of exegesis, by definition radical, the combination of letters. Like Gematria and for the same reasons, this method was considered secret by the kabbalists, although there were mentions about it in the Talmud. The combination of letters was not regarded as a simple exegetical method but as the essence of the language structure. For Abraham Abulafia this was evident: *gematria tzerufotyot = shivim leshonot* or, in translation, "letter combination" is mathematically equal with "seventy languages", which, let us remember here, represents in the kabbalistic tradition the number of languages existing on earth at the moment when Moses received the Torah from God on Mount Sinai.

The combination of letters consists, in fact, in two main methods: Temurah – permutation of the letters inside a word or replacement of a letter with another – and Notarikon (or *tzerufei 'otyot* in Hebrew) – combination of the initials of the words of a sentence in a new word or, on the contrary, creation of a sentence from the letters of a word. Evidently, in both case we are dealing with a game designed to facilitate Torah's secrets. As previously shown in this study, for the kabbalists Torah was woven from letters placed in a different order than their real succession. Their (re)combination was considered to be a path to the knowledge and even experience of God. On the other hand, however, the method was used, together with Gematria, by the ecstatic kabbalists for mystical purposes – to determine the descent of the divine inflow. The first such mention appeared in the 16th century in a treatise of Rabbi Yehuda Albotini but the outlook was

⁵⁷ In Hermeneutics 180. M. Idel analyzes numerology's affiliation with the esoteric tradition, following the evolution of this exegetical method from its primary forms, identified in Mesopotamian practices, through the rabbinic literature up to the Kabbalah.

probably older. In this sense it was used in both mystical and magical practices until the late Hassidic period.

2.3 Applications: The Golem

As mentioned above, there was always a practical magic side to Jewish mysticism. This was not reduced to the mere use of figures, or letters and names combination and permutation techniques only, but also included various forms of universal magic. In a book entitled *The Onyx Stone*,⁵⁸ Joseph Tzaiah (16th century), speaks of the association between the ten *Sefirot* and the fingers, in a genuine treatise of chiromancy. Moreover, for meditation on the *Sefirot* he proposes a system of magic squares based on numerology, in which each row represents a house and each number a room, and the mystic passes from one “house” to another in search of the light. In his turn, Joseph Karo used magical techniques to foretell the future.

The purposes of the kabbalists’ magical practices were not always exclusively religious. There are, in Jewish mysticism in general and in Kabbalah in particular, many magical recipes, with quite precise instructions regarding the steps one must undertake to fulfill a creative act. Although this provided the basis for a long literature describing supposedly true stories about such creations, for the perspective of this study relevant is their symbolic aspect only, just as in Jewish alchemy relevant is the quest for gold as a mystical rather than a practical enterprise.

The best-known model of human creation is undoubtedly the Golem. The representation of the Golem has varied during its historical evolution. Initially regarded as a simple legend, it was later transformed into the object of an initiation ritual that confirmed the adept’s mastering of the esoteric science, just to end by degenerating back into a telluric myth, in the hands of the uninitiated. Gershom Scholem identifies a quite detailed reproduction of the legend in an account published at the beginning of the 19th century in the newspaper *Zeitung für Einsiedler* (Paper for the Hermits).⁵⁹

“After saying certain prayers and fasting for a number of days, the Polish Jews make a human face out of clay or argyle, which, upon uttering the miraculous *Shem ha-Meforash* [God’s name] above him, should come to life. True, he cannot speak, but he understands some of the things he is told or commanded. They call him Golem and use him as a helper for household works. But he is never allowed to leave the house. On his forehead it is written *Emet* [truth]; he grows day by day, becomes bigger and stronger than the others in the house, even though in the beginning he was so little. Therefore they wipe the first letter off his forehead so that only *met* [dead]

⁵⁸ Published in 1538 (according to Cohn-Sherbok, *Judaică* 172).

⁵⁹ Scholem, *Cabala* 177.

would remain there. After that he falls down, to be dissolved, once again, into clay. The Golem of one man grew so tall, and he still let him grow on and on, until he could no longer reach his forehead. For fear of that, he asked his servant to take off his boots, thinking he could touch his forehead once he bent down. Indeed so it happened and the first letter was wiped off, but that large amount of clay fell over the Jew and crushed him”.

The parallelism with the divine creation of the first man is evident. The magician who creates a Golem follows in fact the biblical recipe. Nevertheless, it is arguable whether this enterprise is, in each case, an attempt to imitate God’s creation or, on the contrary, to compete with it. The kabbalistic conceptions regarding this creation act vary. Although they all agree that Adam was created from *adama* (earth), the quality of the raw material is regarded differently. To some exegetes of the sacred text this was not just any kind of earth, but the cleanest and finest clay taken from the center of the Earth, which unified in it all the elements. This idea appears in the Judaic Hagadah but also in the writings of Philon of Alexandria. Another tradition, however, speaks about clay taken from all over the Earth, which is why its adepts concluded that in Adam was contained the entire world.⁶⁰

On the other hand, in the Bible (Psalms 138,16) Adam himself is called Golem, but there the term is used to name what is yet uncreated, yet untouched by the divine breath (in a state of potentiality). In various writings analyzed by Gershom Scholem⁶¹ emerges even the idea of the existence in Adam, during the creation process, of a telluric spirit – the Golemic state – that preceded the inflow of the divine breath. In this state – sometimes associated with the *nefesh* aspect of the soul – he could have perceived the things but not influence them. That is why the man-made Golem may understand and carry out his creator’s commands but he cannot speak or take the initiative. Moreover, some Midrashic texts proposed the image of a Golem of cosmic dimensions, stretching from one end of the world to the other, which could explain why in later descriptions of the Golems they would grow endlessly and had to be stopped by returning them to ashes. This outlook goes even further, maintaining that Lilith, as Adam’s first wife, was in her turn made of clay, which would justify her claim to equality with her husband. Not by chance Jewish demonologic magic – and implicitly black magic – started with the utterance by Lilith of the Divine Name. What is interesting from this perspective is the fact that in this context the utterance of the Divine Name stands for “straying from”, and giving up, the divine in favor of the demonic.

⁶⁰ *Midrash Abkir* quoted by Scholem, *Cabala* 181.

⁶¹ Scholem, *Cabala* 182.

It is obvious that, in the case of the Golem, the creative capacity is achieved by means of magic using letters and divine names. Starting from the kabbalistic outlook that Torah is the tool of creation and, although the passages and the letters' order have been modified, the initiate can still read in its prescriptions for the creation of objects and beings, the recipe for manufacturing a Golem is, supposedly, quite simple. Once a Golem is built up from clay, the creator must inscribe the word *emet* [truth] on his forehead, in a physical ritual accompanied by the utterance of the divine names. When he begins to grow out of control, the creator shall return him to ashes by wiping the first letter (*aleph*) of the word on his forehead, thus leaving the new word *met* (dead). The difference between the human and the divine creation, then, lies in the last step of the process, the inflow of breath (the *ruach* aspect of the soul), inaccessible to man. This absence is also manifest in the fact that in most cases the Golem cannot use language (representation of the rational soul = life).

The conceptions about the Golem are mostly based on a Talmudic legend relating that Rava created a man and sent him to Rabbi Zera. The fact that the man did not speak told Zera that he was the result of a magic act and therefore had to be destroyed. A second story in the Talmud that has provided the grounds for the development of this myth is that of the two Rabbis, Hanina and Oshaha, who, on each Shabbat eve, used to create, following the instructions in the book of creation, a three-quarter grown veal, which they would then eat. But the most important source of the Golem-related speculations remains *Sefer Yetsirah*. Here it is mentioned that "all that was created and spoken came out of a name", evidently God's. The universe, tells *Sefer Yetsirah*, was created with the help of the 22 letters, just like its miniature replica: man, so that between the two there would be a perfect correspondence (each part of the human body is associated with a letter).⁶² Therefore it is not surprising to see that the description of the manner in which the letters were used as structural elements in the creative process was interpreted as a key to magic practices. Moreover, the text accounts for a successful attempt: Abraham "looked, watched and saw, searched and understood and sketched and inscribed and combined and made [which means created] and succeeded".⁶³ This information, often taken in its speculative sense, may just as well represent a profound knowledge (mastering) of the procedures whereby, assisted by the power to understand the interdependence between objects and the potency of letters and words, "anyone" could repeat creation in its complete form.

Mentions about the creation of a man following the biblical recipe re-appear in the 11th century works of exeget Rashi of Troyes, who compares the creation

⁶² For a detailed description see Idel, Golem 53-58.

⁶³ Quoted by Idel, Golem 59.

techniques expounded in *Sefer Yetsirah*⁶⁴ with the ones expounded in the Talmud, but also in the better known commentary on the Book of Creation of Yehuda ben Barzilai (11th - 12th century), who underlines its quality of textbook of magic. Nevertheless, the first to grant major importance to the myth and to turn it into an initiatory ritual are the German Pietists. In a translation of *Sefer Yetsirah* they re-actualize an older interpretation of Genesis 12,5, which states that the verse “Abram and Sarai took on their journey westwards all the souls they had made in Haran” actually refers to a practical application of the Patriarch’s knowledge of creative magic.⁶⁵ The same German Pietists return into linguistic circulation the term Golem to name the creatures made in the image of man by means of magical recipes. At the same time, however, they are also the first to mention the interdiction regarding the practical use of the recipe, which marks the transformation of the legend into an initiation ritual. The Preface to an anonymous commentary on *Sefer Yetsirah*, called Pseudo-Saadia, quotes a late *Midrash*⁶⁶ that describes how Ben Sira and his father, Jeremiah, built a man in an initiation process, using the word *emet*. A similar description can be found in *Sefer ha-Gematriot*, a collection of traditions compiled by Rabbi Judah ha Hasid’s disciples. Not by chance the process takes place in the presence of two or three adepts, in compliance with the instruction in *Mishna Haggigah* 2,1 banning the revelation of the secrets of creation before more than two people. Actually, the story is recounted in many exegeses of the Book of Creation. Among these an important place is reserved to a pseudo-epigraph of Yehuda ben Batira (12th century), which stands as proof that there was a connection between the German kabbalists and the French ones in Languedoc. This text states quite clearly that turning the symbolic ritual of creation of a Golem into a physical reality would be like turning against God, because since the Golem is created with the formula *YHWH Elohim Emet* (YHWH true God), when wiping letter *aleph* off, the conclusion remains that God is dead.

The first complete recipe for the manufacturing of a Golem, containing extremely detailed instructions, seems to have been published by Eleazar of Worms, in *Peulat ha-Yetsirah*, although the complete tables of the alphabetic combinations are missing, precisely in order to avoid misinterpretations and profanation. But in this case the creation act takes place mainly in the sphere of meditation. The ritualistic character of Golemic creation is also obvious in Pseudo-Saadia, which gives, in its turn, practical information on what needs to be done, including the succession of reciting and the combinations of divine names and vowels. In addition to that, Pseudo-Saadia introduces a new and unprecedented

⁶⁴ Zucker, *Sefer*.

⁶⁵ Quoted by Idel, *Golem* 63.

⁶⁶ Analyzed by Scholem in *Cabala* 196.

instruction, that the Golem must be buried in the earth so as to stand up from it, which, in Scholem's view, seems to indicate the penetration into the myth of a symbolism of rebirth. This text is also the only source mentioning that the Golem is endowed with *neshamah* soul. Other kabbalistic texts, which seem to have inspired Abraham Abulafia, give the myth an ecstatic dimension, turning the Golemic ritual (with all its components, including the respiratory and body techniques) into a ritual related to the union with the divine name.

In its original intent, then, as it was imagined in the initiatory circles of German Pietists and French kabbalists, the creation of a Golem did not have a practical purpose only but also a spiritual one – to prove the creative power of letters and numbers and thereby of the divine names. In fact, most texts underline the fact that any human creation is deemed to be incomplete, since true creation is accessible to God only. On the other hand, the danger of such an enterprise does not lie, in this outlook (though it does in later traditions), in the uncontrollable telluric force of the Golem, but in the fact that, as the accounts show, the inappropriate application of the magic recipe leads not to the distortion of the Golem, but to the destruction of his creator.

Medieval mysticism (like that of Yohanan Alemanno, 15th century) marks a shift in the evolution of the Golem mythology. As Moshe Idel underlines, “the medieval technique for creating a Golem was the Jewish answer to astral and talismanic magic,”⁶⁷ being obviously influenced by Hermeticism.

In his turn, Moses Cordovero brings a new conception in the legend, considering that the Golem cannot have any kind of soul but only vitality, which means that his destruction does not break Torah's precepts. In his view, the magic recipe is used to raise a telluric force that, in fact, does not abandon its fundamental state. The only thing that moves it is the superior, divine light reflected in it. Therefore to him the creation of a Golem has no spiritual significance.⁶⁸

Straying from the practical tradition, the kabbalists start speaking of the Golemic creation as of something that might have happened in the past but which is no longer accessible to them. If the previous kabbalistic writings might have indicated that the mystical-magical practice of creating a Golem was once accessible to any initiate who knew the secret, as of this moment the view changes. Accounts start to flourish about supposedly successful attempts to manufacture Golems by cotemporary people, which are mixed up with Christian motives and often reflect black magic practices. In a paradoxical process, this idea is applied backwards, to the past, leading to strange situations like the one in which Solomon ibn Gabirol (11th century) is being said (in the

⁶⁷ Idel, Golem 270.

⁶⁸ Idel, Golem 421.

17th century) to have created a female Golem to help him with his household. This way, the mystical aspect of this enterprise was abandoned.

Instead of Conclusion

All the theories mentioned in this study show that, during the evolution of Jewish mysticism in general and in the medieval period in particular, Torah's mystical essence was mostly rendered by the various manifestations of an occultation phenomenon. Whether we refer to the occultation by symbols, the existence of 4 levels of reading, 70 meanings of letters and words and 600,000 personal decoding keys, the occultation by games that change the letters' order or the physical occultation of a letter or even two books, Torah's mystical sense was ultimately based on an absence, just as mysticism itself is founded on an absence – the greatest – of the divine, due to the fact that man has lost direct touch with God. Jewish mysticism in general and the Kabbalistic movement in particular thus aimed at making up for this loss, recovering the connection and restoring the harmony of the original order by use of letters and numbers, seen as the main instruments of creation. In this attempt these tools acquired not only mystical but also magical abilities, becoming capable of manipulating the divine, for better or for worse. Whether used constructively or destructively, their power was obvious and to many Jewish mystics they constituted the engine that moved the world.

Summary

In Jewish interpretation of the Holy Scripture, the article discusses the importance of the concept of letters and numbers as the basic instruments of creation. This approach to scriptures is seen as a form of creation and hence creates a certain liberty in the reading of the Torah's mystical sense. A deeper meaning is hidden in the text that awaits revelation by the learned and prepared sage. This study surveys the various attempts to disclose the secrets concealed in the Torah, i.e. the use of symbols, the existence of four levels of reading, the seventy meanings of letters and words, the 600,000 personal decoding keys, the interchange of the sequence of characters, and the supposition that e.g. a single character or even two whole books could be missing from the Torah. The author concludes that these are perceived as hermeneutical means to enter and understand the divine. Special attention is given to the methods based on letters and numbers which the kabbalists developed to access not only the divine secret concealed in the text but also the divine itself, i.e. gematria, temurah and notarikon. The last section of this article is devoted to the magical use of letters and numbers in a practical exercise: the Golem, seen as a (limited) imitation of (or competition with?) the divine creation.

Zusammenfassung

Der Beitrag befasst sich mit der Bedeutung von Schriftauslegung in der jüdischen Tradition, wobei besonders auf die Vorstellung von Buchstaben und Zahlen als grund-

genden Schöpfungsinstrumenten eingegangen wird. Diese Deutungsstrategie wird im Judentum als schöpferischer Akt verstanden, was Freiheiten in der Erschließung des mystischen Textsinns der Tora erlaubt. Unter der Haube des auszulegenden Texts befindet sich eine tiefere Bedeutung, die der Weise erschließen kann. Im vorliegenden Beitrag werden die Versuche der Weisen vorgestellt, Einblick in die Geheimnisse der Tora zu gewinnen: die Verwendung von Symbolen, die vier Ebenen des Lesens, die sieben Bedeutungen von Buchstaben und Worten, die 600.000 Schlüssel, Verschiebungen der Buchstabenfolge und die Annahme, daß ein einzelner Buchstabe oder auch zwei ganze Bücher in der Tora fehlen könnten. Es zeigt sich, daß diese Methoden als hermeneutische Ansätze fungieren, die es erlauben, in das Göttliche einzudringen und es zu verstehen. Ein besonderes Augenmerk liegt auf den kabbalistischen Methoden, welche auf der Gleichsetzung von Buchstaben und Zahlenwerten beruhen. Gematria, Temura und Notarikon wurden entwickelt, um sowohl die im Text verborgenen göttlichen Geheimnisse als auch das Göttliche selbst zu erschliessen. Der letzte Teil des Aufsatzes wurde einem Beispiel der magischen Verwendung von Buchstaben und Zahlen gewidmet, dem Golem als einer eingeschränkten Nachahmung der göttlichen Schöpfung.

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Jewish and Biblical Studies in Central Europe (JBSCE)

On March 6th 2007, scholars from Austria, Hungary, and Romania met at Pázmány Péter Catholic University in Piliscsaba close to Budapest to launch an international society for Jewish and Biblical Studies in Central Europe (JBSCE). In this volume of *Biblische Notizen*, the three lectures held at the 2007 meeting will be published.

The JBSCE wants to facilitate and enhance communication and cooperation between specialists in Jewish and Biblical studies in the region of central Europe by biannual meetings. To achieve this goal a board was elected and a statement of purposes was phrased.

The first conference of the JBSCE will be held at Pázmány Péter Catholic University in Piliscsaba, Hungary, on February, 1st - 2nd, 2009. The conference will be dedicated to the topic of "The Stranger in Judaism and Other Concepts of Jewish Tradition". The conferences' main lectures series will be grouped around the topic of the stranger. In addition to the main lectures, scholars can present papers in various areas of Jewish and Biblical studies (for a list of areas and field chairs, see below). Scholars are invited to apply for presentations by emailing a title and an abstract to the respective field chairs.

Statement of Purpose

The JBSCE is an interdisciplinary society which wants to enhance communication and scholarly interaction between specialists in the fields of Biblical and Jewish Studies in Central Europe. The JBSCE advocates religious tolerance among its members as by the range of its topic the JBSCE addresses both Jewish and Christian scholars.

The society is interested in various fields of study: Tanakh / Old Testament, New Testament, ancient, rabbinic, medieval, and modern Judaism, as well as Jewish history in general and Yiddish studies. Early Christianity will be recognized in so far as it is still rooted in its Jewish origins. Islamic studies are also included in so far as they further the understanding of Judaism.

To achieve its purpose, the JBSCE will organize scholarly meetings on a regular basis. For the time being a biannual scheme is envisioned. These conferences will consist of plenary sessions with main lectures (on invitation only) as well as other program units which might run parallel to each other (contributions by application). The main lectures will be grouped around a conference topic. Meeting participants will cover all costs themselves (including a conference fee). It is not envisioned that organizers of the respective meetings will

raise funds. At the moment, a publication of conference proceedings is not intended.

For each of its meetings, the JBSCE will elect an honorary president. The presidency is intended to recognize and honour the achievements of outstanding scholars in the different fields of study covered by the society. As this is intended to be an honorary title, no responsibilities in administering the society or organizing its meetings will be involved.

The JBSCE will be administered by a secretariat which is elected for a tenure of six years. Among other things the secretary will be responsible for the organization of the society's meetings. The individual fields of studies covered by the JBSCE will be headed by field chairs. The field chairs will be involved with the organization of the society's regular meetings (organization of main lectures and other program units) and serve as advisors to the secretariat in other matters of the society. Field chairs will also be elected for a tenure of six years but will rotate on an alternate scheme from the society's secretary.

The society will not ask for special membership fees. But the conference fees of the periodical meetings will contribute also to funding the administrative costs of the JBSCE.

The Board of the JBSCE

- President of the 2009 meeting: Ida Fröhlich, Pázmány Péter, Catholic University (frohlich@btk.ppk.e.hu)
- Secretaries (6 years): Felicia Waldman, University of Bucharest (fwaldman@gmail.com)
Armin Lange, University of Vienna (armin.lange@univie.ac.at)
- Field chairs (4 years):
 - Tanakh/OT: Jože Krašovec, University of Ljubljana (joze.krasovec@guest.arnes.si),
Eckart Otto, Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich (eckart.otto@lrz.uni-muenchen.de)
 - Ancient Judaism: Jan Dušek, Charles University Prague (dusek@etf.cuni.cz)
Géza G. Xeravits, Reformed Theological Academy Pápa (xeravitsabris@yahoo.com)
 - Rabbinic Judaism: Gerhard Langer, University of Salzburg (Gerhard.Langer@sbg.ac.at)
József Zsengeller, Reformed Theological Academy Pápa (zsengeller@t-online.hu)
 - Medieval Judaism: Mauro Perani, University of Bologna (mauro.perani@unibo.it)
David Biernot, University of Prague (Biernot@seznam.cz)
 - Modern Judaism: Klaus Davidowicz, University of Vienna (klaus.davidowicz@univie.ac.at)
 - Jewish History: Anca Ciuciu, University of Bucharest (anca1789@gmail.com)
 - Yiddish Studies: Armin Eidherr, University of Salzburg (armin.eidherr@sbg.ac.at)
 - NT and Early Christianity: Hermann Lichtenberger, University of Tübingen (hermann.lichtenberger@uni-tuebingen.de)
Zlatko Pleše, University of Zagreb (plese@email.unc.edu)
 - Islamic Studies: Gyongyi Hegedüs, St. Francis Xavier University (ghegedus@stfx.ca)

Literaturinformation

Gesamtkoordination und Neues Testament: Michael Ernst

Altes Testament: Karin Schöpflin

Initialen:

P.A-G. Peter Arzt-Grabner

K.S. Karin Schöpflin

M.E. Michael Ernst

G.X. Géza Xeravits

F.V.R. Friedrich Vinzenz Reiterer

J.Z. József Zsengellér

Eckart Otto / Reinhard Achenbach (Hg.), *Das Deuteronomium zwischen Pentateuch und Deuteronomistischem Geschichtswerk* (FRLANT 206), Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2004, ISBN 3-525-53070-6.

Der Band enthält teils englisch-, teils deutschsprachige Beiträge, die auf dem SBL International Meeting im Juli 2002 in Berlin gehalten wurden. R. Achenbach umreißt in der Einleitung (1-13) die Fragestellungen, die für die redaktionsgeschichtlichen Prozesse bedeutsam sind, die zu einer Abgrenzung des Pentateuch aus einem Hexa- bzw. Enneateuch geführt haben: (1) „in welcher entstehungsgeschichtlichen und in welcher redaktionsgeschichtlichen Korrelation stehen die Gesetze des Bundesbuches, des Deuteronomiums und des Heiligkeitgesetzes zueinander?“; (2) „in welcher literarhistorischen Korrelation steht der historisierende Rahmen des Deuteronomiums zu den beiden Ursprungslegenden Israels Exodus- und Vätergeschichte?“; (3) „in welcher literarhistorischen Korrelation stehen die Redaktions- und Bearbeitungsschichten des Deuteronomiums zu den Bearbeitungs- und Redaktionsschichten der in den Büchern Josua, Richter, Samuelis und Könige zusammengestellten Erzählzyklen?“; (4) „worin liegt die Absonderung des Deuteronomiums von denselben im Rahmen des Pentateuchs begründet?“. Außerdem bietet diese Einleitung knappe Zusammenfassungen der Einzelbeiträge: E. Otto, *The Pentateuch in Synchronical and Diachronical Perspectives: Protorabbinic Scribal Erudition Mediating Between Deuteronomy and the Priestly Code*“ (14-35); M.M. Zahn, „reexamining Empirical Models: The Case of Exodus 13“ (36-55); R. Achenbach, „Grundlinien redaktioneller Arbeit in der Sinai-Perikope“ (56-80); C. Nihan, „The Holiness Code between D and P. Some Comments on the Function and Significance of Leviticus 17-26 in the Composition of the Torah“ (81-122); R. Achenbach, „Numeri und Deuteronomium“ (123-134); G.N. Knoppers, „Establishing the Rule of Law? The Composition Num 33,50-56 and the Relationships Among the Pentateuch, the Hexateuch and the Deuteronomistic History“ (135-152); W.M. Schniedewind, „The Textualization of Torah in the Deuteronomic Tradition“ (153-

167); T.C. Römer, "Cult Centralization in Deuteronomy 12: between Deuteronomistic History and Pentateuch (168-180); H.-C. Schmitt, "Dtn 34 als Verbindungsstück zwischen Tetrateuch und Deuteronomistischem Geschichtswerk" (181-192); K. Schmid, „Das Deuteronomium innerhalb der, deuteonomistischen Geschichtswerke' in Gen – 2Kön" (192-211). Ein Stellenregister beschließt den Band. K.S.

N. Calduch-Benages / J. Liesen (eds.), *History and Identity. How Israel's Later Authors Viewed Its Earlier History (Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Yearbook 2006)*, Berlin / New York: Walter de Gruyter 2006, xii + 415 Seiten, ISBN 978-3-11-018660-4.

Although it was inaugurated into the scholarly public only recently, the *International Society for the Study of Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature* proved to be a very fruitful organisation, which, on the one hand, can mobilise a wide community of scholars, and, on the other hand, can produce first rate literature of their research. The present volume testifies both of these efforts of ISDCL. Actually, the volume contains edited versions of the papers presented at the International Conference of the Society, held in Barcelona, 2005. The topic of the conference was the historical consciousness of early Judaism, and the various papers explore how different streams of Judaism interpret or re-interpret their past, and define their own place in history. The scope of the essays covers a great deal of material. Diachronically, they interested in various problems from the Hebrew Bible to the New Testament; and synchronically, they investigate diverse nearly contemporaneous streams of thought in early Judaism – such as the deuterocanonicals and Qumran, or Philo, Josephus and the nascent Christianity. Some of the articles focus on really rarely investigated sources, e.g. Artapanus.

The content of the volume is as follows. It begins with five essays devoted to the protocanonical books of the Old Testament. F. Raurell, "The Notion of History in the Hebrew Bible" (1-20). M. Witte, "From Exodus to David-History and Historiography in Psalm 78" (21-42). A. Passaro, "Theological Hermeneutics and Historical Motifs in Pss 105-106" (43-55). P.C. Beentjes, "Israel's Earlier History as Presented in the Book of Chronicles" (57-75). J. Vermeylen, "The Gracious God, Sinners and Foreigners: How Nehemiah 9 Interprets the History of Israel" (77-114). The next section, consisted also of five contributions, deals with the deuterocanonicals. "M. Navarro Puerto, "Reinterpreting the Past: Judith 5" (115-140). R. Egger-Wenzel, "The Testament of Mattathias to His Sons in Macc 2:49-70. A Keyword Composition with the Aim of Justification" (141-149). A.A. DiLella, "Ben Sira's Praise of the Ancestors of Old (Sir 44-49): The History of Israel as Parenetic Apologetics" (151-170). M. Gilbert, "The Origins According to the Wisdom of Solomon" (171-185). J.M. Asurmendi, "Baruch: Causes, Effects and Remedies for a Disaster" (187-200). Then five papers follow, dealing with different early Jewish groups or authors. J. Corley, "The Review of History in Eleazar's Prayer in 3 Macc 6:1-15" (201-229). H. Lichtenberger, "Historiography in the Damascus Document" (231-238). O. Kaiser, "'Our Forefathers Never Triumphed by Arms...' The Interpretation of Biblical History in the Addressees of

Flavius Josephus to the Besieged Jerusalemites in Bell. Jud. V.356-426" (239-264). C. Termini, "The Historical Part of the Pentateuch According to Philo of Alexandria: Biography, Genealogy, and the Philosophical Meaning of the Patriarchal Lives" (265-295). E.-M. Becker, "Artapanus: 'Judaica'. A Contribution to Early Jewish Historiography" (297-320). The volume ends finally with three articles, focusing on the thinking of groups which survived long after the sunset of the period of early Judaism. S.C. Reif, "The Function of History in Early Rabbinic Liturgy" (321-339). O. Wischmeyer, "Stephen's Speech Before the Sanhedrin Against the Background of the Summaries of the History of Israel (Acts 7)" (341-358). A. Borrell, "Abraham and His Offspring in the Pauline Writings" (359-368).

The volume closes with indices, and, following the very welcomed custom of the DCLY volumes, among them there is an "Index of Subjects", which facilitates highly the use of the book. The reviewer, who has enjoyed well reading the very learned previous Yearbooks of the Society, can only say that the present collection is a worthy addition to this promising new series.

G.X.

Biblisch-historisches Handwörterbuch (BHH), CD-ROM und Palästinakarten, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2004, ISBN 3-525-50176-5.

Die gedruckte Fassung kann durchaus als legendär bezeichnet werden, nicht nur weil sie längst vergriffen ist. Das BHH kann noch immer zurecht als „unverzichtbares Hilfsmittel zum historischen Verständnis der Bibel und ihrer Umwelt“ bezeichnet werden. Ein großes Plus der seit einiger Zeit auf CD-ROM vorliegenden Version ist somit allein schon darin zu sehen, dass dieses Werk auf diese Weise überhaupt wiederaufgelegt wurde. Der Mac user wird froh sein, unter den Systemvoraussetzungen nicht nur die Angaben für den Betrieb am Windows PC zu finden (ab 486, Windows 95, 98, ME, NT, 2000 oder XP), sondern sich darauf verlassen zu können, dass sämtliche Funktionen auch auf dem Mac (ab Version MacOS 10.2) zur Verfügung stehen. Sollten dennoch technische Probleme auftauchen, wird einem über die auf der Rückseite angegebene E-Mail-Adresse prompt und individuell weitergeholfen, wie der Schreiber dieser Zeilen aus eigener Erfahrung bestätigen kann (z.B. dass die für Mac zusätzlich benötigte Programmdatei gratis von <http://www.digitale-bibliothek.de/Mac> heruntergeladen werden kann).

Die Gestaltung der Oberfläche ist schlicht und funktionell, die Suchfunktionen liefern nicht nur Hinweise zu den Hauptartikeln, sondern zu sämtlichen Erwähnungen eines Begriffes. Häufig ist also eine komplexe Suche ratsam, um aus der Fülle der Ergebnisse rascher zum gewünschten Textabschnitt zu gelangen.

Hervorgehoben sei auch noch das umfangreiche Bildmaterial, das in einer eigenen Datenbank abrufbar und auch exportierbar ist.

P.-A.-G.

Albert J. Harrill, *Slaves in the New Testament. Literary, Social, and Moral Dimensions*, Minneapolis: Fortress 2006, ISBN 0-8006-3781-X.

Der Verfasser ist Professor für Religionswissenschaften, Geschichte und Jüdische Studien an der Indiana University und hat sich bereits als großer Kenner der literarischen und rechtlichen Quellen zur antiken Sklaverei hervorgetan. Auch sein Zugang zur ntl. Thematik ist ein rein historischer, und im vorliegenden Band schränkt er die Sichtweise ganz bewusst und gezielt auf jene ein, die durch die antike griechisch-römische Literatur geprägt ist. Seine Grundannahme lautet, dass (auch) die Autoren der ntl. Schriften in ihren Stellungnahmen zur vielschichtigen antiken Sklaverei geprägt waren von literarischen *topoi* und sog. „stock figures“, also (mit Ausnahme des Onesimos im Phlm) weniger individuelle Sklavinnen oder Sklaven vor Augen hatten, als vielmehr bestimmte Typen, wie sie in der griechischen und römischen Komödie oder in den Handbüchern zur Landwirtschaft begegnen.

Die einzelnen Kapitel sind verschiedenen Abschnitten des NTs gewidmet: als Hintergrund für Röm 7 geht H. ausführlich auf das Selbstverständnis eines typischen Sklaven angesichts der *uctoritas* seines Herrn ein, während im Zusammenhang mit 2Kor 10,10 auf die schwache körperliche Konstitution des Sklaven verwiesen wird. Als typische „stock figure“ sieht H. die Sklavin Rhoda in Apg 12,13 und präsentiert eine Fülle von Parallelen aus der antiken Komödie. Auf ähnliche Weise erfolgt seine Interpretation des ungerechten Verwalters in Lk 16,1-8. Besonders ausführliches Vergleichsmaterial wird zu den relevanten Abschnitten der Haustafeln in Kol 3,22-4,1 und Eph 6,5-9 geboten, für die H. auf die umfangreichen Handbücher zur Führung des „Hauses“ und landwirtschaftlicher Betriebe zurückgreift. Dabei wird nicht nur die Vielschichtigkeit der antiken Sklaverei als solcher deutlich, sondern auch die in manchen Fällen durchaus auf Gegenseitigkeit beruhende Abhängigkeit zwischen einem Sklavenbesitzer und seinen sklavischen Verwaltern, die auf Gerechtigkeit, Verlässlichkeit und Frömmigkeit gründete und die Voraussetzung für den wirtschaftlichen Erfolg darstellte.

Die Tatsache hingegen, dass Sklavenhändler von vornherein als lasterhaft, betrügerisch und hinterlistig galten, wird in 1Tim 1,10 zur Abschreckung vor Gegnern der Gemeinde eingesetzt. Derartige Übertragungen finden sich auch in der griechisch-römischen Literatur.

Das vorletzte Kapitel des Buches greift über die ntl. Zeit hinaus und behandelt Darstellungen christlichen Martyriums während der Christenverfolgungen. Den Abschluss bildet eine ausführliche Studie über die Verwendung und Interpretation der ntl. Passagen zur Sklaverei durch Mitglieder verschiedener christlicher Konfessionen in den USA im 19. Jh., die sich entweder für oder gegen die nordamerikanische Sklaverei aussprachen. H. beleuchtet damit ein Kapitel Rezeptionsgeschichte, die immer wieder in erschreckendem Ausmaß von Ideologie und Vorurteilen geprägt war. Auch dieses Kapitel ist – wie das gesamte Buch – allein schon durch die gelehrte Darbietung des umfangreichen Quellenmaterials gewinnbringend zu lesen.

P.A.-G.