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Exploring the Hebrew Bible from a discourse analytical perspective: A case study on the polemics against other gods

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In my doctoral thesis, I investigate how biblical polemics against other gods developed. A number of texts in the Hebrew Bible denigrate both gods other than Yahweh and the people who worship them. I am interested in the formation of these texts and in their purpose. I do not think they have a purely literary function, and I wonder what might have been their function with regard to real life.

The polemical texts my study is based on show some common features. Previous studies classified Isa 40,19f.; 41,6f.; 44,9-20; 46,1f.5-8; Jer 10; Hab 2,18f.; Ps 115; Ps 135, Bel et Draco (Dan 14); Letter of Jeremiah (Bar 6); Wis 13-15; Jub 11-12 as "idol parodies"[1]. Because of their similarity in argument, expression and tone, these texts are intuitively perceived as related. Their thematical and linguistic characteristics set them apart from their immediate context.

It seems to me that this resemblance is not the result of mere literary dependence, as if all these texts were derived from one original text. Very often, the polemical texts are secondary additions to other texts, but they do not form a unified redactional layer.

On the one hand, these texts form a group that is clearly marked off, but on the other hand, it is difficult to name the defining features of that group: it is not a literary unit, and it is more than similarity of content.

For my study, I need a theoretical foundation which can explain the particular relationship of the polemical texts and which at the same time enables me to investigate the function of these texts.

Discourse analysis can meet this requirement: it provides a conceptual framework for the description and the analysis of these texts as a group, and it is concerned with the function and effects of texts. In this paper, I will argue that despite the differences between the source material used for conventional discourse analysis and the biblical texts, it is possible to use this approach for Hebrew Bible texts, and it is especially appropriate for my study on the polemical texts against other gods.

[1] Cf. von Rad 1970, 229-239 (chapter "Die Polemik gegen die Götterbilder"), Berlejung 1998, 318-411. Roth 1975 studies these texts as examples of the genre of idol parody. My own study is not focused on idols; I will also investigate if the polemical narratives in Jg 6; 1 Sam 5 and 1 K 18 are related to the texts above mentioned.

General introduction to discourse analysis

Based on the works of Michel Foucault, sociologists, linguists and historians have developed theories and methods of discourse analysis[2]. For my study I adopt the discourse theoretical approach developed by the sociologist Reiner Keller. I have chosen Keller's approach as a starting point, for my principal aim is not to develop new methods, but to apply a method that fits my research interest[3]. Keller provides a sound theoretical basis and detailed propositions for the implementation. In addition, I use some concepts to describe discourse structure that were coined by Siegfried Jäger[4]. Both authors agree that discourse analysis is essentially an interpretative process, and both developed methods for the application of discourse analysis on texts.

Before turning to discourse analysis as a method, I will briefly present the underlying discourse theory[5].

a) Discourse theory

By "discourse" I refer to a structured set of statements which produces and strengthens societal reality.

One possible approach to discourse theory is the observation that not everything can be said. What can be said at a certain place at a certain time is not just a matter of grammar or of existing words. There is an infinite number of grammatically possible utterances, but only a limited number of them is actually used and valid at a certain place and at a certain time. The set of statements[6] is limited and structured by certain rules, for example underlying deductive patterns or story lines. Utterances based on the same system of statements form a discourse.

Discourses are not mere linguistic conventions. The utterances produced according to the rules are valid communications, they can express truth and reality. (This is especially obvious in scientific discourse. To give a very plain example: a poem is nowadays not an acknowledged form of expressing new findings in natural sciences.) Mental concepts are

[2] In English, the term "discourse analysis" in most cases refers to an analysis of language use in a process of communication. This kind of analysis is not based on a discourse theory that follows Foucault. I will not discuss this approach, as it is not concerned with the relationship between texts and societal reality.

[3] Foucault does not provide an explicit, consistent theory and method of discourse analysis. Further theoretical grounding (such as provided by the sociology of knowledge) and analytical tools are therefore needed.

[4] I found Jäger's concepts of *discourse fragment, discourse strand, discursive entanglement* and *discourse plane* very useful. On his conceptualization of the structure of discourses see Jäger 2009, 159-168 (for a shorter version in English see Jäger 2006, 46-51).

[5] The following explanation of discourse theory is based on Jäger 2009 and Keller 2008. On this general level, similar statements can be found in many discourse theoretical works, although they might embed discourse theory in a different theoretical and/or disciplinary framework.

[6] "Statement" means the conceptual content on an analytical level, "utterance" is the actual linguistic entity or historical materialisation of a statement. This distinction was coined by Foucault, cf. Keller 2008, 235f.

shaped by discourses (that is to say, in a process of communication). These concepts also shape our perception of the sensible world. Discourses are thus the source of knowledge valid in a certain society and shape societal reality.

It is not possible to reach a more "real reality" behind all discourses.

Discourses do not merely influence our perception of reality in the sense that they provide interpretations of previously existing facts. They generate new realities and lead to the establishment of institutions. This is most visible in the democratic process of political debates, but it is true for all kinds of societal discourses. Discourses have creative power, they influence our actions and can thus entail the establishment of laws and institutions. For instance, an opposing discourse to the discourse on assisted suicide can lead to the foundation of hospices.

Discourses are produced by a community. A single person can neither produce a discourse nor determine the development of a discourse.

Furthermore, the individual subject is not autonomous. Every person is shaped by discourses established previously, which he or she has to join in order to enunciate something socially accepted as true.

Someone who writes a text will make use of the resources provided by the society he or she is living in, i.e. the specific knowledge and the system of statements. A text thus contains elements of societal discourses, and is at the same time a contribution to a societal discourse itself. It reproduces the statements of a discourse in an actual utterance and it may be instrumental in modifying the discourse. A text is thus a fragment of a super-individual discourse or, more frequently, consists of several discourse fragments.

b) Discourse analysis

Discourse analysis is the study of discourse, usually of a certain discourse strand (= a thematically uniform discourse). Discourse analysis aims at the reconstruction of the rules, the structure and the progression of a discourse strand. Research questions may also include[7]:

- Which aspects of reality are shaped in a discourse strand, and how are they shaped?
- How is a discourse strand entangled with other discourse strands and what effects result from this entanglement?

Discourse strands can be analyzed synchronically (What can be said at a certain place at a certain time?) or diachronically (How does a discourse strand evolve?). The analysis can focus on a particular discourse plane (= the societal location from which a discourse fragment is produced, for example politics, science, media, everyday life, etc.).

[7] On possible research questions see Keller 2008, 262-268.

The analysis of a discourse strand requires a good overview of the relevant data as well as a careful and systematic interpretation of some representative text samples[8]. As I explained before, in a discourse-theoretical perspective a text is a discourse fragment. In a discourse analysis, then, the analysis of a single text is always carried out as an intermediate step. The objective is the analysis of the discourse strand, either synchronically as a cross section, or diachronically in terms of development.

Discourse analysis denotes basically a research interest and not a specific method. Different hermeneutic tools can be used to investigate a discourse strand, depending on the character of the data.

Usually[9], the analysis of a discourse fragment starts with the analysis of its context, i.e. its historical and social setting[10].

The second step is the analysis of the linguistic and rhetorical structure of the text. The close examination of language and style helps to understand the meaning of the text. Additionally, metaphors, synonyms and other stylistic devices are recorded in order to check if they are characteristic elements in the investigated discourse strand.

The third step of the examination of a discourse fragment is the analysis of its contents. Keller suggests the use of concepts that are derived from the sociology of knowledge[11], for example classifications, phenomenal structures (= the aspects of a phenomenon as described in the discourse) and narrative structures.

Finally, after the analysis of several texts or discourse fragments the structure of the discourse strand can be described. The description of the discourse strand forms the basis for the examination of the research questions I mentioned above.

Applying discourse analysis on Hebrew Bible texts

The discourse analytical approach I described is based mainly on Reiner Keller's work (combined with some concepts coined by Siegfried Jäger). Keller developed his approach from the sociology of knowledge and applied it to contemporary sociological problems. The use of this approach might therefore not seem appropriate for the analysis of Hebrew Bible texts. However, discourse analysis is intended for a transdisciplinary area of research and for the handling of various types of source material. Approaches similar to Keller's have been developed by linguists and historians. There are discourse analytical studies on historical

[8] Keller's and Jäger's methodological propositions are basically developed for text material, but both authors point out that discourse analysis should not be limited to texts (cf. Keller 2007, 82-84; and see Jäger 2006, 56-61 on the analysis of dispositives, which includes discourses, non-discursive practices and materializations).

[9] The three steps in this order are suggested by Keller 2007, 93-108; a similar procedure is proposed by Jäger 2009, 175-187.

[10] On the analysis of context and the distinction between socio-historical context, institutional context and situational context see Keller 2007, 95f.; Landwehr 2008, 105-110.

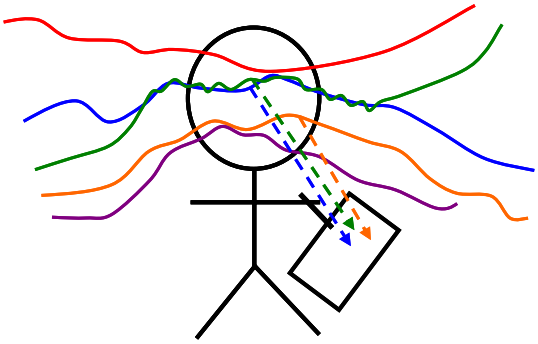
[11] Cf. Keller 2008, 240-252.

subjects, mostly based on texts dating from the 17th century onwards. The Hebrew Bible texts I will examine differ from these historical texts in various aspects: a) they are anonymous, traditional literature; b) their original socio-historical context is largely unknown; and c) they are composite texts that evolved over time. I therefore need to consider whether it is nevertheless possible and helpful to apply this method in my study. In the following passages, I will discuss these aspects and show that it is not only possible to carry out a discourse analytical study under these conditions, but rather that discourse analysis can deal especially well with this kind of texts.

a) Discourse analysis and traditional literature

The biblical texts I examine are anonymous texts. They might be written by one or several persons, about whom we know virtually nothing. Although this is not usually the case for more recent texts that are examined in historical and sociological discourse analysis, anonymous authorship is not an obstacle to discourse analysis.

Discourse theory does not attach much importance to individual authors. Of course, discourses would not exist without people producing them through their contributions. But the persons who produce texts are not autonomous agents, as their knowledge is shaped by previously established discourses. Also, they have to join existing discourses (by following their rules) in order to say something meaningful and true. From a discourse theoretical point of view, a certain configuration of discourse strands informs a certain discourse fragment.



The individual author of this discourse fragment is a person whose mind is shaped by this configuration. For the study of discourse strands, information about the identity of this person is irrelevant. It is sufficient to identify the configuration of discourse strands that forms the basis of the discourse fragment.

Discourse analysis can thus cope with anonymous texts easily. It is not concerned with the identity and mental state of individual authors. Instead, it considers a text (a discourse fragment) as a collective, societal product. Traditional literature like the Hebrew Bible provides material particularly appropriate for discourse analysis, as its texts are already acknowledged by a discursive community. It is improbable that a text completely disconnected from collective discourses, shared concerns and ways of talking, could enter such a collection. Also, a concept of the individual author as an autonomous artist does not seem to correspond to the self-concept of the authors of the texts I am studying. Pseudepigraphic texts like the Letter of Jeremiah indicate that placing the text within an existing tradition (which includes the need to comply with established rules) is considered more important than the identity of the actual author. An interpretation of these texts on a

societal rather than individual level is therefore consistent with their formation, their intention and their use.

b) Discourse analysis and the historical context of a text

Biblical texts are not released with reliable information about the date, the place and the historical circumstances of their composition. Thus, it is not possible to start with an analysis of the historical context, as is usually recommended for sociological and historical discourse analyses. Nonetheless, the lack of context information does not impede the use of discourse analysis.

I will first discuss the relation between text and context from a discourse theoretical perspective. The second part of the chapter deals with the type of context that is particularly relevant to discourse studies.

i. Context as surrounding reality: the relation between text and context

"Historical context" means the surrounding reality of a text. Contemporary exegetes have widely abandoned the view of the Bible as a book of history. They appreciate skillful writing and creative reinterpretations of events in biblical texts. A text does not need to relate historically reliable information and its relevance is not dependent on its confirmation by archeological findings. Nonetheless, a certain relation between text and real life (or context) is often assumed without further reflection.

Discourse analysis shares the concern of taking texts seriously in their own right and not merely as a source of information about the historical context. But at the same time, it is concerned with the world outside the text, with questions of power and of options of acting. Discourse analysis thus provides an appropriate framework for an exegesis which does not measure the importance of texts by their quality as historical sources and which at the same time is not a (text-immanent) literary criticism without concern for the socio-historical context.

It is important here to remember how discourse theory conceives the relationship of text and reality. Discourse theory rejects the idea that a text mirrors a pre-existing reality. Texts, as discourse fragments, do not passively represent reality, but participate actively in the shaping of reality. This discourse theoretical basis has three important consequences for the consideration of the historical context, showing that texts constitute a valuable source of information even where, as for biblical texts, the context is uncertain.

1) Historical discourse analysis is not focused on the context, using the texts merely as a source of information on past reality. Instead, it is focused on the process of the shaping of reality through discourses, i.e. on the *connection* of texts and reality. Discourse analysis usually proceeds from the texts towards reality. Its starting point is the question: "What means the fact that certain phenomena can be observed repeatedly in texts, images,

artefacts or practices? And what does this potentially reveal about the constitution of forms of knowledge, social relationships and cultural systems of meanings?"[12]

2) The historical context does not provide an exhaustive explanation of a text or the reason of its existence. A text is not a passive representation of reality, its form and content cannot be explained by stating that this was simply what "really" happened. An author has always various possibilities of acting (which includes writing) in view of a certain reality. These options are limited by socially established discursive rules. Discourse theory is not deterministic, it acknowledges the creative power of human beings. An analysis of a discourse strand is primarily concerned with the rules and the structure of the discourse strand. Individual choices of acting are thus taken into account as socially possible options and evaluated with regard to discursive rules.

3) Discourse theory disqualifies texts as historical sources in a traditional sense (they do not reflect a past reality). But at the same time it establishes the theoretical basis for an alternative appreciation of texts as important historical sources. Ancient texts, as discourse fragments, do indeed contain information on the past. Yet, an ancient text is not a window to past "reality": it is a window to past discourse. As a fragment of an ancient discourse, a text follows certain discursive rules and structures established previously. It thus provides information about such rules and structures (i.e. the societal knowledge it reproduces). But as a fragment of an ancient discourse, a text also played an active part in this past discourse and consequently in shaping the ancient reality[13]. It not only reproduced, but also produced knowledge. Thus, texts can be used as historical sources in discourse analysis, namely as sources for a history of discourses.

ii. Context as institutional context: power relations in discursive fields

After these more general considerations on the relation of text and context (as historical background) in discourse theory, I would like to turn to the more practical side of discourse analysis. What use is made of context information in discourse analysis, and what impact has the lack of such information on the analysis of biblical texts?

Since discourse analysis is not only concerned with texts, but with the shaping of reality through discourses, special attention is paid to the *institutional* context[14]. To examine the institutional setting of a text, different aspects of the surrounding reality need to be considered. Context information is required to determine the discourse plane. Information

[12] Landwehr 2008, 106 ("Was bedeutet die Tatsache, dass in Texten, Bildern, Artefakten oder Praktiken wiederholt bestimmte Phänomene zu beobachten sind, und was sagt dies möglicherweise über die Konstitution von Wissensformen, sozialen Beziehungen und kulturellen Bedeutungsnetzen aus?").

[13] Obviously, a single text is only a tiny fragment of a discourse which shapes reality. Whether the statements of a texts are an effective production (or modification) of knowledge, has to be verified in the broader context of the discourse strand (cf.Jäger 2009, 170). Reception history is particularly suited to reveal the impact of statements.

[14] On the analysis of the institutional context cf. Jäger 2009, 176-178.

about the social position and function of the author, or about the institution he or she speaks for, provide important indications on the power distribution in a discursive field. In a diachronic perspective, this kind of data informs on the effects of discourses. It might be possible, for example, to show how a discourse strand spreads to other discourse planes, or by which means and strategies it gains influence. A "successful" discourse strand will have an impact on legislation and give rise to new institutions.

Direct information on these issues is not available for the polemical texts I am studying. The bearers of this discourse strand and their institutional context are a matter of debate.

Rarely, hints on the institutional context can be discovered in the text themselves[15]. Where this is not the case, it might be possible to circumvent the lacking context information. Information on the institutional context is used in conventional discourse analysis to determine the position of power of a certain discourse fragment, the distribution of power in a certain discursive field, or the effects of a discourse (in terms of institutionalisation). Questions of power relations and effects need not to be abandoned when dealing with biblical texts. Alternative ways of investigation can be used for the same purpose.

Thus, redaction history and reception history provide information on the effects of the polemical discourse against other gods. The *Fortschreibung* of the polemical texts (which can be seen for example in the different literary layers of Jer 10) indicates that the earlier text continued to be read and was considered relevant to an ongoing discourse. Reception history shows which elements turn out to be influential. It remains to be seen if connections can be made with other discourse planes, discourse strands or even with material sources. Where the effects of the discourse are to be expected, depends on the findings concerning the discursive rules and structures. Thus, a line of reasoning characteristic of this discourse strand could have spread to another discourse strand. In this way, the discourse against other gods could have had an impact in places where a connection with this kind of polemics is not obvious[16].

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[15] Thus, the fact that an Aramaic sentence appears in Jer 10 (Jer 10,11: כִּדְנָה תֵּאמְרוּן לְהוֹם אֱלָהַיָּא דִּי־שְׁמַיָּא וְאַרְקָא לָא עֲבַדוּ יֵאבַדוּ מֵאַרְעָא וּמִן־תְּחוֹת שְׁמַיָּא אֵלֶּה:) points to a possible second discourse plane, different from the rest of the chapter: Polemics against other gods are not only a subject matter (presumably) among Hebrew scribes, but there are also people talking about other gods (and playing on words) in Aramaic.

[16] For instance, 1 Pe 1,18 (εἰδότες ὅτι οὐ φθαρτοῖς, ἀργυρίῳ ἢ χρυσίῳ, ἐλυτρώθητε ἐκ τῆς ματαίας ὑμῶν ἀναστροφῆς πατροπαραδότου) is generally interpreted against the background of the ransoming of slaves. But, in addition, "silver and gold" could allude to the polemics against other gods (cf. for example Isa 40,19; 46,6; Jer 10,5; Wis 13,10; Ps 115,4). Several elements in 1 Pe 1,18 point to this discourse: the use of φθαρτός (cf. Wis 14,8; Rom 1,23) and μάταιος (cf. Isa 44,9; Wis 13,1; 15,8 and hb. הֶבֶל), and the idea that it is necessary to turn away from the customs of the forefathers (cf. for example Jdg 6,25; Jub 11-12; apparently, this discourse strand does not share the narrative structure "idolatry is turning towards gods you and your fathers did not know before" which can be found for example in Dtn 28,64; Jer 44,3).

c) Discourse analysis and diachronic analysis

The most striking particularity of the texts I am studying, as compared to texts sociologists usually study, is that they evolved over time. This is undeniable for Jer 10, where the Masoretic text is longer and arranged differently from the Septuagint text. It seems to me that other polemical texts, too, contain additions and alterations. Such texts provide not only information that can be used for investigating the structure of a discourse strand at a certain moment in time. The diachronic reconstruction of their growth also provides information about the development of discourse strands.

The question of the development of discourse strands is not at all alien to discourse analysis[17]. The diachronic dimension of discourses is inherent in Siegfried Jäger's definition of discourses as "flow of knowledge through time". Every discourse strand necessarily has a history and evolves over time. Discourses are not dictated by nature, they do not have other explanations and causes than their own history[18]. Therefore, discourses cannot be thought of without a temporal dimension.

The diachronic investigation of discourse strands is a laborious task. Many historical discourse analytical studies focus on a cross section of a discourse strand at a certain moment in time. However, a number of studies exists which investigate how discourse strands evolved. Research questions concern the change of discourses, their entanglement with other discourse strands and their effects up to their institutionalization in laws and institutions[19].

The reconstruction of discourse development I intend to do is not essentially different from this kind of historical reconstruction. Only, in addition to developmental lines which combine several texts, I also consider developmental lines within a text. This is not necessarily problematic, since a text is not a binding unity in discourse analysis. Discourse strands consist of discourse fragments. A text can address several themes and thus contain several discourse fragments belonging to different discourse strands[20].

Within the theoretical model provided by discourse theory, various interpretative approaches can be combined. The temporal dimension is essential to the concept of discourse strands. Nontheless, the use of tools developed primarily for synchronic analysis (e.g. rhetorical criticism) is necessary to reconstruct the rules of a discourse strand. These discursive rules can be reconstructed for different stages of the development of the discourse strand.

[17] Process, change and development are essential to the research questions proposed by Keller 2008, 262f. Landwehr 2008, 21 mentions the evolution of discourses as a main concern of historical discourse analysis.
[18] Cf. Landwehr 2008, 97.
[19] An example would be Kury's study (Kury 2006) on the discourse strand of "Überfremdung" (= being swamped by foreigners/strangers) in Switzerland. He analyses the evolution of this discourse strand from its formation at the beginning of the 20th century up to its institutionalisation in law in 1931 and its effects on (Jewish) refugees during the Second World War.
[20] Jäger 2006, 47.

Discourse analysis thus allows for the integration of various methods (diachronic and synchronic) that are currently used for the study of biblical texts.
The evolution of the texts (both in the process of their formation and in the history of their reception) provides important information about the characteristics, the development and the effects of the discourse strand. The polemical texts I am studying seem to have gone through a lively process of editing. I think that, in this case, a discourse analytical study based on carefully reconstructed stages of the growth of the texts will be an appropriate way of proceeding.

Discourse analysis: its suitability for my study

Although developed for other fields of research, discourse analysis appears to be a possible and reasonable approach for Hebrew Bible texts.
To be useful and beneficial for my project, it should enable me to investigate my initial questions. As I stated at the beginning, I need a theoretical framework for the description and the analysis of the polemical texts as a group, and I am concerned with the function of the polemical texts with regard to real life. How does discourse analysis then meet this requirement?

From a discourse analytical perspective, the polemical texts against other gods can be described as fragments of a certain discourse strand. These texts show similarities of style and motifs, because they participate in the same discourse strand and thus follow the same discursive rules. Literary dependence has to be taken into account, but it is not the only possible connection between the texts.
The conceptualisation of the polemics as a discourse strand also allows for the investigation of its development. Rules can be modified, the discourse strand can be entangled with other discourse strands or split up into several discourse strands. Many of the polemical texts are secondary additions to other texts and show traces of textual growth. The reconstruction of their redactional history allows to observe very closely the development of the discourse strand they participate in.
Discourse analysis is essentially concerned with the power of discourses. It is not only text analysis, but it is focused on the process of the constitution of knowledge. This knowledge forms the basis of human actions. Thus, from a discourse analytical point of view, texts cannot be thought of without a connection to non-textual reality and a potential impact on real life. Discourse theory provides a general answer to the question of the function of texts: Discourses shape reality by producing and reproducing knowledge, and a text (as a discourse fragment) participates in this process. The vague question of the function of the polemical texts can be stated more precisely when considered from this point of view. To

study the function of the polemical texts, I have to investigate how the discourse strand they participate in shapes reality. The question of the function can therefore be put in these terms:

- Which aspect(s) of reality does this discourse strand shape? (e.g. foreign gods, idols, idol worshippers...)
- What knowledge about this aspect (or these aspects) does this discourse strand establish? (e.g. certain classifications, narratives, instructions, self-positioning...)

Additionally, the discourse analytical description offers a new perspective on the biblical texts. This is especially helpful to circumvent engrained categories of thinking. I will conclude this paper with a short example on Wis 13-15.

Older studies on Wis 13-15 tended to assume a binary opposition between biblical and hellenistic features[21]. This has proved inappropriate in view of the historical circumstances and has been abandoned by more recent scholars[22]. A discourse analytical approach does not focus on pre-defined social groups, but on discourse strands. The question then is: In which discourse strands does Wis 13-15 participate (and how are they entangled), and what discourses is it opposed to?

Potential results can be:

- Wis 13-15 is a fragment of the polemical discourse against other gods: Its opening sentence is closely parallel to Jer 10,14[23]. It shows some characteristics that might be part of the rules of this discourse strand, for example the use of μάταιος (13,1; 15,8; cf. Isa 44,9; corresponds to the Hebrew הֶבֶל), the insistence on the materials the gods are made of (namely silver and gold, and wood), or the inclusion of short narrative sequences illustrating the unworthy provenience and the incapacities of the gods (13,11-15; 14,1; 14,7-9; cf. Isa 44,14-17). This discourse strand appears to belong to a special discourse, produced and shared in Jewish and Christian communities.
- Wis 13-15 contains fragments of a cosmological discourse: Wis 13,1-9 links polemics with the discourse on systematic explanation of the nature of the universe. This discourse strand can be traced back to pre-Socratic natural philosophers. Platon's Timaios as well as Gen 1 participate in this broad discourse strand. Within the cosmological discourse,

[21] Cf. for example Gilbert 1973.

[22] "Hellenistic" education is part of the author's identity (cf. Winston 2005, 9). Philosophy and religious tradition are not separated in Middle Platonism which constitutes the intellectual background of Wis (cf. Collins 1997, 200-202).

[23]

Wis 13,1	Jer 10,14
Μάταιοι μὲν γὰρ	נִבְעַר / ἐμωράνθη
πάντες ἄνθρωποι	כָּל־אָדָם / πᾶς ἄνθρωπος
φύσει,	
οἷς παρῆν θεοῦ ἀγνωσία	מִדַּעַת / ἀπὸ γνώσεως

various subordinate discourse strands compete. Thus, the discourse fragment Wis 13,1-9 could be part of a discourse opposing a Stoic cosmological discourse.

- Wis 13-15 contains fragments of an anti-Egyptian discourse: The critique of animal worship (Wis 15,18f.) appears to be a characteristic feature of anti-Egyptian discourse. This discourse strand is not limited to religious polemics. It seems to be based on the discourse on barbarians, and was particularly brought forward by Octavian's propaganda against Antony during the civil war[24].

Apparently, fragments of several discourses are combined in Wis 13-15. Some of these discourse strands are limited to certain restricted groups, while others are accessible to a more general public. A description of this discourse entanglement and its effects might be an adequate and illuminating alternative to the separation of Greek/pagan and Jewish/biblical elements.

Discourse analysis, thus, is a very suitable tool to investigate my initial questions. The conceptualisation of the polemics as a discourse strand not only provides a coherent theoretical framework within which the questions of development and of function can be addressed. The use of discourse analysis can also contribute to open up new ways of thinking. This is particularly relevant for my study, as a deeper investigation of the polemical texts is often inhibited by the assumption of a natural opposition between monotheism and polytheism. The discourse analytical approach allows a different perspective on these texts, which will potentially provide new insights on the social meaning of the polemics against other gods.

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1. Introduction[1]

1.1. The problem

At the core of the problem with the Biblical Hebrew verbal forms lies the question of how to interpret their temporal meaning. The disagreement on this matter sometimes surface very clearly in translations. A collation of thirteen translations of Ps 18 in various languages showed a total agreement on the temporal interpretation of only 35 out of the 98 finite forms of the psalm.[2] Only two of the translations agree in all instances.[3] All the translators render the forms differently depending on context, but seem to a large extent to be guided by different principles (or intuitions) as to how this interaction between form and context works. In the cases of the two Swedish translations, for instance, the freestanding *yiqtol*s in verse 21 are rendered as present tense in KB 17 and past in Bibel 2000:

KB 1917: Herren **lönar** [PRES] mig efter min rättfärdighet.
The Lord **rewards** me according to my righteousness.

Bibel 2000: Herren **lönade** [PRET] min rättfärdighet.
The Lord **rewarded** my righteousness.

The same verbal form separates the translations again in verse 34, but this time KB 1917 chooses the preterite and Bibel 2000 the present tense:

KB 1917: … du som **gjorde**[PRET] mina fötter såsom hindens
… you who **made** my feet like the feet of the deer

SB: Han **gör**[PRES] mig snabbfotad som gasellen
He **makes** me swift-footed like the gazelle

[1] This paper has been reworked since the abstract was submitted on OTSEM's website. The main difference is that chapter 1.4. has been added. The abstract is therefore somewhat misleading as to the contents of chapter 1. For a better overview of this chapter, I refer the reader to the summary in 1.6.
[2] The translations are from Bibel 2000, EÜ, KB 1917, KJV, NJB, NRSV, TOB, Alter 1985, Dahood 1965, Kraus 1978, Michel 1960, and further the Septuagint and the Vulgate, although it cannot be proven that they are based on the same original text as the others. There is total agreement on the temporal interpretation of the finite forms in verses 8-17 and 26-30.
[3] Kraus 1978 and Michel 1960.

While only sporadically visible in the translations, the lack of consensus on the exact nature of the Biblical Hebrew verbal forms leaves permanent imprints in grammatical terminology. Most commonly, the terms that are used for the forms signify some kind of tense, aspect, or modality, which means that they either signify (tense) or imply (aspect and modality) some temporal meaning.[4] If we once again exemplify with *yiqtol*, but now in a more restricted sense, excluding the variant which normally has a proclitic *wa-* appended, we find this form characterized in the literature as "present-future"[5], or simply "future"[6], "simultaneous"[7], "modal-futural"[8], or just "modal"[9], "imperfective"[10], both imperfective and future,[11] and "non-perfective".[12] It is sometimes even claimed that the form does not express any temporal value whatsoever.[13] Matters are further complicated by the existence of various grammatical terms that relate in unclear ways to the concepts of tense/aspect/modality. For example, in Diethelm Michel's nomenclature, *yiqtol* expresses "abhängige Handlung",[14] Péter Kustár by a similar notion calls the form "determiniert",[15] and Wolfgang Schneider says that its fundamental property is to indicate a certain "Sprechhaltung"

[4] As the reader may notice, when tense and aspect values are used for the forms, they are specified in terms of their subclasses (future, imperfective, etc.). In contrast, the term "modal" is used as such, without further qualification. On this matter, see section 2.1.3 below.

[5] Blau 1976 § 20.1. Another way of referring to the same concept is to use the negative term "non-past" (e.g. Hetzron 1987, 697).

[6] Silverman (1973, 168) terms *yiqtol* "simple future" (as opposed to "*waw* future" = *w^{e}qatalti*), but see also p. 175 where he states that this form "always refers to future or present time in its widest sense".

[7] Kuryłowicz 1972, 84, § 14. More exactly, Kuryłowicz speaks of "simultaneity" as the *value* of *yiqtol*.

[8] See Zuber 1986, 16 (German:"modal-futurisch").

[9] Hatav 1997, 198. Joosten (1997, 58), too, calls *yiqtol* a modal form, but he also speaks about it as a "future/modal" (67, 68, 70).

[10] See, among others, Tropper, 1988. 178; Gentry 1998, 15; Cook 2006, 32. The same notion is also referred to by various equivalent terms such as the French "inaccompli" (Cohen 1924, 12) or the English "incompleted" (Weingreen 1959, § 29).

[11] Andersen 2000, 50.

[12] Waltke & O'Connor 1990, §§ 29.6.e.; 31.1.2.a. As "non-perfective", the *yiqtol* is the unmarked counterpart of the perfective *qatal*, which is to say that the form becomes imperfective when contrasted with the perfective form, even though by itself it is neither perfective nor imperfective.

[13] Sperber 1966, 591-592; Hughes 1970, 13; Greenstein 1988, 14. As opposed to those who call *yiqtol* "non-perfective", or "non-past", these authors do not reckon with stable meanings in other forms of the verbal system, whereby the meaning of *yiqtol* can be defined.

[14] Michel (1960, 254) defines what is meant by his terms: "Das Perfectum wird zur Wiedergabe einer Handlung gewählt, wenn diese als selbstgewichtig, als absolute angesehen […] Das imperfectum wird zur Wiedergabe einer Handlung gewählt wenn diese ihre Bedeutung von etwas ausserhalb der Handlung selbst liegenden, also relative ist" (it is to be understood that Perfectum = *qatal* is "akzidentiell" and Imperfectum = *yiqtol* is "abhängig"). According to Michel (1960, 255), this description of the Biblical Hebrew verbal forms conforms with the views of Köhler, Brockelmann, and Nyberg.

[15] Kustár (1971, 44-46) claims that his concept "determiniert", as well as its counterpart "determinierend" (represented by *qatal*), are aspects. His definition of aspect is very far from

("linguistic attitude"), which characterizes the subtype of discourse that he calls "Besprechen" ("discussion").[16] Harald Baayen follows Schneider but employs the term "focal referential concern" for the same function.[17] He also ties *yiqtol* to the function of establishing "tight linkage" with the preceding clause.[18] We will return to Schneider's and Baayen's theories later on.

Further disagreement arise in the discussions about the so-called "consecutive forms" *wayyiqtol* and *w^{e}qataltí*, which, in contrast with *yiqtol* and other forms, are often linked with the concept of *sequentiality*, i.e. (roughly) the phenomenon of temporal succession between events.[19] Two closely related problems with far-reaching consequences for the description of Biblical Hebrew verbal semantics are involved here. The first is whether sequentiality is a property that may be contained by verbal forms, just like tense, aspect, and modality. This seems to be the opinion of, e.g., Galia Hatav who defines sequentiality as an aspect that can be marked morphologically, and claims that this is the case with *wayyiqtol* and *w^{e}qataltí*.[20] John Cook, admits that verbal semantics contribute to the sequential interpretation of clauses, but considers the syntactical arrangement of the clauses to be the most crucial factor in this regard.[21] The second problem is whether *wayyiqtol* and *w^{e}qatal* should count as verbal forms at all, rather than just *yiqtol* and *qatal* preceded by the proclitic *waw* (a conjunction corresponding to English "and"/"but"). In this matter, too, both opinions exist. What both these problems have in common is the more

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mainstream, though, and it is difficult to see how it can be functionally related with the other categories in the TAM-complex. See the description on pages 45-46 in his study: "Durch den gebrauch der qṭl- und jqṭl-Aspektkategorien unterscheidet der Sprechende die Handlungen danach, welche von ihnen in dem unmittelbaren Verhältnis der Handlungen zueinander als determinierend und welche als determiniert zu betrachten ist, d.h. welche Handlungen als Ausgangspunkt, Grund determinieren des Moment, Zweck, Ergebnis oder Schlusspunkt der anderen Handlung zu betrachten sind, und welches die Handlungen sind, auf deren Grund, Zweck, oder determinierendes Moment der Sprechende hinweisen will."

[16] The linguistic attitude characteristic of *Besprechen*, or discussion, is a tense and responsive state of mind. Thus Schneider (2001, § 48.1.): "Besprechende Rede **engagiert** ihn [i.e. den Hörer]: Sprecher und Hörer haben zu agieren und zu reagieren."

[17] Baayen 1997, 247. Both Schneider and Baayen follows Weinrich (1977) in this regard. Other proponents for the same approach are Talstra and Niccacci (see 2.2. below).

[18] Baayen 1997, 248. De Regt treats the same concept in terms of "cognitive proximity" (de Regt 2008, 82-87).

[19] Note that the term "sequentiality" (alt. "sequence") for temporal succession, which is common within Hebraistics, can be misleading, since the term also is used for a syntactic phenomenon, viz. the chaining of clauses with non-finite verb forms. This is pointed out by Cook (2004, 250; Cook, however, speaks about "underspecified" rather than "non-finite" forms). Peckham also sees it as a syntactical phenomenon (but he does not state that the verbal forms in the sequence must be non-finite. Cf. his definition: "Sequence is the syntactic relation of clauses of the same kind"; Peckham 1997: 164). Further down, I will abandon the term "sequentiality" in favour of "contingent (temporal) succession" [not in the present paper].

[20] Hatav 1997, 54-55.

[21] Cook 2004, ch. 2.1.; see esp. pp 253-254.

general question whether sequentiality in clauses with *wayyiqtol* and *w^{e}qataltí* is a discourse-pragmatic or a morpho-semantic phenomenon.

Moving up to a higher level of abstraction, we find that even the definitions of the grammatical terms themselves are disputed. Above all, "aspect" is the difficult one. In the classical theory of aspect, only two categories are recognized: *perfective* and *imperfective*. Perfective aspect thus means viewing an event as completed (cf. "I have done"), whereas imperfective aspect means viewing it as uncompleted, i.e. ongoing ("I am doing"). In modern linguistic theory, however, many new categories have been suggested, even though none has gained such a widespread acceptance as the original pair. As things stand, it is very difficult to get a clear idea of how many "aspects" there are, which they are, and how they relate to each other. This confusing state of affairs is certainly true also for Biblical Hebrew. For example, adherents of Comrie's aspectual model may accept his further subdivisions within the imperfective category, which include *habitual*, *continuous*, *non-progressive*, and *progressive*.[22] Completely different is Rundgren's system with its primary, secondary and tertiary aspectual oppositions *stative*:*fiens*, *cursive*:*constative* and *punctual*:*neutral*.[23] Ultimately, the proliferation of supposedly aspectual categories is probably due to the fact that the meta-category of aspect traditionally was defined only in terms of its own sub-categories perfective and imperfective. In other words, there was no general definition of aspect by means of which it would be possible to exclude the existence of other members of the class aside from perfective and imperfective. Still today, there is no authoritative and universally accepted definition of aspect.

1.2. Aim

The aim of the present study is to increase the understanding of the semantic properties that lie behind the temporal meanings of the Biblical Hebrew verbal forms. To this end, special attention will be paid to the category of aspect. The investigation requires

1) a definition of aspect that a) is compatible with the traditional definitions of the aspectual sub-categories perfective and imperfective, and b) can be used to decide what other aspectual categories there are aside from perfective and imperfective;

[22] So Rogland 2001, 7. Cf. Comrie 1976, 25.
[23] Rundgren 1961, 72.

2) a plausible explanation of how the temporal meanings of the Biblical Hebrew verbal forms in specific cases can be implied from context and given aspectual values.

The study will also deal with two of the notions that are most commonly associated with the forms of the Biblical Hebrew verbal system, namely linguistic attitude and sequentiality. The questions that need to be answered are:

3) What is linguistic attitude and sequentiality?

4) Do these notions affect the usage of the Biblical Hebrew forms, and if so, how do they interact with aspect?

1.3. Scope

Before moving to more substantial issues, it is appropriate to discuss certain factors having to do with the scope of the study: first, the body of data that will serve as witness to the language here called Biblical Hebrew ; and, after that, the two factors within this body of data that most often – though not in the present study – are allowed to delimit the scope of studies of the Biblical Hebrew verbal system: the diachronic diversity and the distinction between prose and poetry.

1.3.1. Source material

The linguistic data of this investigation is taken from the Hebrew Bible as it is preserved in the Massoretic tradition. A more comprehensive investigation would broaden the scope and consider manuscripts of other textual traditions as well as inscriptions and ostraca that belong to the same linguistic stage as the preserved text of the Hebrew Bible. However, these witnesses have been omitted for practical reasons.

Given that the Massoretic punctuation system for indicating vowels and geminated consonants was developed many centuries after the consonantal text was recorded, it is possible that the pronunciation of certain words have been corrupted. As far as the verbal system is concerned, it has been claimed in (at least) two recent studies that the *patach* (the vowel [a]) and the gemination of the *yod* in the "consecutive" imperfect, *wayyiqtol*, is a Massoretic invention.[24] Evidence for this is sought in the fact that this pronunciation is not reflected in the fragments of the Hebrew-Greek transliteration in the second column of Origen's *Hexapla*, or in the

[24] Furuli 2006, 147, Van de Sande 2008, 204.

Samaritan Pentateuch.[25] This explanation presupposes the somewhat unlikely scenario that the *wayy*-pronunciation was so valuable for the Massoretes as to impel them to meddle with their sacred tradition. The generally held opinion is that the Massoretes did not invent forms, but that some punctuations reflect pronunciations that may be late or dialectical.[26] The alternative and perhaps less far-fetched explanation is that the Samaritans (as well as Origen's source) had failed to preserve an old pronunciation, which since long had been out of use in non-Biblical Hebrew. But however that may be, it is not of crucial importance, for the meaning of linguistic forms depends not only on their phonological structure, but also on syntactical and pragmatic factors (see 1.4.2. below).

The present study is intended to be as broad as its subject ("Biblical Hebrew") suggests. Hence, in principle, the whole of the Massoretic text is of interest. However, this is not a complete survey of data; it is an attempt to apply new theory on data that have been gone through over and over again by generations of grammarians. In order to get the selection of data as representative as possible, a corpus has been established, which includes texts from the main diachronic stages, prose and poetry, and a broad spectrum of text-types. The corpus is presented in the chapter that lays out the principles for defining text-types.

1.3.2. Diachronic diversity

The texts of the Hebrew Bible may originate from a period of many centuries. It is common to distinguish between three diachronic stages within Biblical Hebrew: Archaic Biblical Hebrew (ABH), Standard Biblical Hebrew (SBH), and Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH).[27] Should we not expect the verbal system to have changed enough over time as to warrant a study of diachronically conditioned usag*es* rather than one universal usage?

Indeed, some differences exist. Typical for ABH a high degree of free-standing *yiqtol* with the same function as the narrative *wayyiqtol*.[28] Special features in LBH includes *inter alia* a decrease of *yiqtol* and virtual disappearance of *w^{e}qataltí* for expressing habitual events in the past, and an increase of the periphrastic *hayah* (perfect of *hyh* = to be) *qotel* in the same function. However, except for the case of the past habitual *w^{e}qataltí*, these

[25] Ben-Hayyim 2000, 171. The texts of the Samaritan Pentateuch provide no evidence, though, since their indications for vowels and gemination are deficient. The conclusions have to be made from contemporary reading practice (see Ben-Hayyim 2000, 5-13, 29).
[26] See Sáens-Badillos 1996, 78-79; Tov 2001, 47-49.
[27] Kutscher 1982, 12; Sáenz-Badillos 1993, 52. There is also a bipartite division, expressed with different terminology, which draws the main line between SBH and LBH, thus conflating the earlier phases into one. For a brief overview, see Young 2002, 3-4. In discussing these matters, I do not take a stand as to whether it is possible to date Biblical texts chronologically on the basis of linguistic criteria.
[28] Sáenz-Badillos 1993, 58.

differences are only tendencies.[29] Even if they are likely to reflect a real development in the verbal usage, the conclusion of the research done in this field seems to be that there are no *fundamental* differences between the various linguistic stages.[30]

1.3.3. Prose and poetry

Another argument against a comprehensive description of the Biblical Hebrew verbal usage is the differences between prose and poetry. No doubt, most of the difficult usages occur in the poetic texts. Scholars often explain them as violations of grammar or poetic licence, or say that the grammar of poetry differs from that of prose.[31] Grammatical irregularities due to strict adherence to various poetic functions are found in all kinds of languages. Possible cases of poetic licence having to do with verbal usage are found for example in Medieval Romance verse. Harald Weinrich holds that especially the common and sometimes very abrupt switches between the *passé simple* (a preterite aorist) and *présent* (present tense) in the narration of past events is more likely motivated by the poetic demand for rhyme or assonance than by the narrator's wish to switch temporal perspective.[32] Others believe that the irregularities are due to metrical reasons.[33]

Rhyme or meter, if not non-existent, are certainly not enough constitutive for Biblical Hebrew poetry to force verbal forms to behave irregularly. The most characteristic feature of Biblical Hebrew poetry is parallelism, a kind

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[29] See Eskhult 2000; Joosten 2006, 141.

[30] Free-standing *yiqtol* with narrative function occur not rarely in later poetic texts (cf. for example Bloch 2009, 61-66 on Isa 41:1-5 and Ps 44), and is even found in the prose text of Daniel (Dan 8:12). *Hayah qotel* with habitual meaning is used also in SBH (Ehrensvärd 2003, 171, note 33). On past habitual *yiqtol* in LBH, see Eskhult 2000, 85. Some scholars even argue that there is an essential continuity in the verbal usage all the way down to Qumran Hebrew (QH). Thus, Holst (2008, 140) finds that the usage of *yiqtol* and *w^{e}qataltí* in instructional and hortatory discourse is the same in QH (represented by the War Scroll) as in SBH. Furuli (2006, 85-88), who has investigated all available data concludes that there is no difference in the understanding of the conjugations in QH as compared to Biblical Hebrew.

[31] Cf. for example Bergsträsser's (1929, § 6.i.) well known dictum that the verbal usage in Biblical Hebrew poetry has developed to "einer völligen Verwischung der Bedeutungsunterschiede der Tempora und einem Regellosen Promiscuegebrauch sämtlichen Tempusbezeichnungen". Nyberg (1952 § 86.mm-oo) hypothesizes that some "irregularities" in the verbal usages of the poetic texts may be due to the lack of knowledge as well as the dogmatic preferences of the Massoretes. Hatav (1997, 24) leaves out the poetic material from her thesis with the motivation that "[t]he verb forms forms function differently in prose as opposed to poetry." A similar expression is found in Fensham 1978, 10. Niccacci (1997, 77-18) counts "non-detectable versus detectable verbal system" among his "main characteristics of poetry versus prose" (in a more recent work he has abandoned this description; see Niccacci 2006, 247). The influence of poetic license on verbal usage is reckoned with by e.g. Michel (1960, 11-13), Gross (1976, 32 note 50), Hatav (1997, 24), Joosten (2002, 52), and Joüon/Muraoka 2008, § 11.a.

[32] Weinrich 1977, 252. Weinrich also says that the opposite opinion is common.

[33] For a survey of the research in the field, see Fleischman 1990, 67 ff.

of repetition of semantic or grammatical patterns in two or more adjacent lines. Wilfred G.E. Watson describes, in his work on classical Hebrew poetry, one characteristic of parallelism that is pertinent to verbal usage. Having first surveyed a number of repetitive verse patterns found in the poetry, he concludes that "the poets were well able to exploit repetition", and continues:

> Too much of the same word or phrase, though, can lead to monotony and therefore become boring.[34]

To prevent this monotony, Watson explains, there were some manoeuvres to ensure variation. For instance, the poets could alternate between *yiqtol* and *qatal* when verbs of the same root are used in two parallel bicola, as in Ps 38:12:

> oh^{a}bay w^{e}re^{ʿ}ay mimmænni nig^{ʿ}i ya^{ʿa}modu
> friends.my and.companions.my from.me sore.my stand.they[*yiqtol*]
>
> uq^{e}robay merāḥoq ^{ʿ}āmādu
> and.neighbours.my from.afar stand.they.[*qatal*]
>
> "My friends and my companions stand far from my sores,
> and my neighbours stay far away from me."

But this poetic device is perhaps at work not only in the case of parallelization of verbs of the same root. Adele Berlin may well be correct when saying that it lies behind other cases of conjugation-alternation as well, such as Job 6:15 (below). According to Berlin, the tense-shift here "occurs not for semantic reasons" but functions as "a kind of grammatical parallelism" (1985, 36):[35]

> aḥay bāg^{e}du k^{e}mo nāḥal
> brothers.my treacherous.they[*qatal*] as brook
>
> ka^{ʾa}piq n^{e}ḥālim ya^{ʿ}aboru[yiqtol]
> as.stream (of)brooks vanish.they
>
> "My brothers are treacherous as the brook, as the stream of the brooks they vanish."

This phenomenon is, to my knowledge, the only possible case where it has been demonstrated how the choice of verbal forms in Biblical Hebrew verse may have something to do with a well-defined kind of poetical feature. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that this does not entail that the

[34] Watson 1984, 279.
[35] See Berlin 1985, 36.

verse-lines in question are "ungrammatical". Berlin's claim that the semantics of the form has nothing to do with the choice of forms may be an overstatement. True, the shift of conjugations may appear to us as a kind of antithetical grammatical parallelism, but what stops it from also being regarded as an "antithetical semantic parallelism" by force of the opposite perspectives offered by the forms? In my opinion, to establish with reasonable certitude what counts as a real instance of poetic licence requires that the poetics and the grammar of the text are analysed separately. We can tell what is ungrammatical only by means of grammatical principles we know from other texts. On the other hand, we cannot explain every seeming anomaly as poetic licence just because it happens to occur in poetry. In other words, no valid argument in favour of a special grammatical treatment of poetic texts should be based on our *lack* of understanding – it has to be substantiated by positively formulated evidence. Given the scarcity of such evidence, the only viable attitude as far as the matter of verbal usage is concerned is to expect that poetry is as representative of "the grammar of Biblical Hebrew" as prose. Even more, we should not preclude that poetry can shed light on certain obscure verbal usages in prose, just as well as the other way around.

1.4. Theoretical considerations

A study of the meaning of verbal forms may become a bewildering enterprise without a clear conception of what is meant by "meaning" as well as "verbal forms". First of all, the reader should know that the word "meaning" is not used as a technical term in this study; i.e. it means no less and no more than it does in everyday language. If more precision is required, the word will either be qualified, or other terms will be used. The aspects of meaning that are most important for our purpose will be treated below in terms of "semantic" and "pragmatic meaning". That discussion prepares the ground for a description of verbal forms as meaning-bearing units whose meaning are defined by the linguistic system they belong to and the contexts in which they are used.

1.4.1. Semantics and pragmatics

Language is a tool for communication, functioning within a communicative situation consisting of sender, receiver, and the things referred to. An important consequence of this, famously described by Karl Bühler in his *Sprachteorie*, is that the linguistic expression is many-sided and can only be fully understood in relation to each of these entities. To illustrate, the cry "Wolf!" would, with Bühler's terminology, be interpreted at the same time as an *expression* (*Ausdruck*) of the mind and emotions etc. of the sender, an

appeal (*Appell*) to the attention and responsiveness etc. of the receiver, and a *representation* (*Darstellung*) of the certain species of animal that is being referred to.[36] Even though these three functions always co-occur, any one of them may come more or less to the fore depending on what particular speech-act is being performed. For instance, if the utterance "Wolf!" is intended as a warning, the appeal-function of the utterance is felt very strongly. The expressive function would be more palpable if the same word were exclaimed by a person with a very strong (positive or negative) sentiment towards the animal, who unexpectedly came across a track of it in the neighbourhood. Finally, the same word can be used first and foremost for representation – we may think of a more educational situation, where it is used as an answer to the question "What animal left this track?"

Of course, there are limits as to the functional flexibility of words. We notice in the examples above that, even though the interpretation of the word "wolf" varies with the *balance* among the expressive, representative, and appeal-functions of each utterance, one factor remains stable all the way through, namely the *representation per se* of the thing spoken of by means of the word. In other words, whereas the nature of the expression and the appeal are completely different in each utterance, the representation can be uniformly defined in all the three of them. In a certain sense, then, the word "wolf" encodes the representative function of language. However, not only representation, but also expression and appeal can be encoded. A good example of the whole spectrum of functions is offered by the moods of the verb, fully conjugated in a language like Latin. Thus, the imperative (*dice* = say!) encodes the appealing function of language, the subjunctive mood (*dicas* = may you say) the expressive, and the indicative (*dicis* = you say) the representative function.

Now, most ordinary people would no doubt agree that not only the statement accomplished by the indicative, but also the command encoded in the imperative, and the wish expressed by the subjunctive are *meanings* of those same forms. It is equally certain, however, that within the linguistic discipline devoted to the study of meaning in language, viz. *semantics*, representation is the function that has received by far most of the attention. One may point to several reasons for this: First, representation is the dominant function in language.[37] Second, there has been an intense activity among semanticists working within the field of truth conditional semantics, a method that is applicable only on representation.[38] Finally, influential

[36] Bühler 1965, 28-29. The example is mine. Notice that the word "expression" here is used in two senses: When it occurs in the phrase "linguistic expression" it refers to the speech-product, whether in terms of a specific utterance or in terms of the linguistic forms that the utterance is made of (morphemes, words, phrases); when it is used in isolation it refers to the relation between the speaker and the linguistic expression.
[37] This is stressed by Bühler 1965, 30.
[38] See Palmer 1981, 42-43; Davis 1991, 7.

theoreticians have explicitly stated that semantics concerns only the relation between the linguistic expressions and the things they represent.[39] This has been done in an attempt to draw the line theoretically between semantics and the neighbouring discipline of *pragmatics*. Thus, everything that concerns the relation between the linguistic utterance and the sender and receiver, i.e. the *users* of the linguistic expression, has been assigned to pragmatics. Such a distinction excepts the study of expression and appeal (hence subjunctive and imperative forms) from the province of semantics and confines it to the field of pragmatics.[40] However, according to another distinction very commonly drawn, semantics has to do with *conventional* meaning and pragmatics with *situational* meaning.[41] By conventional meaning is understood a meaning that is consistently associated with a particular linguistic form in all utterances. The form in question is then a specific structure on sub-clause level encoding, as it were, meaning (morpheme, word, or phrase). We may call such a form a *semantic unit*. Situational meaning is a meaning that is associated with a semantic unit in (a) particular utterance(s) by force of certain conditions in the utterance-situation. In this view, expression and appeal can and should be treated in semantic analysis, since these functions can be encoded by semantic units – for instance in imperatives and subjunctives – and thereby also decoded from such units regardless of the context of use.

Obviously, we are left here with two incompatible conceptions of semantics and pragmatics.[42] What should we make out of it? In my opinion, to confine semantics to the representational function of the linguistic expression is untenable. For one thing, it is too much in conflict with the common understanding of the word "meaning" to exclude the expressive and

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[39] For historical outlines, see Lyons 1977, 114-117; Recanati 2004, 443-444.

[40] The first, and one of the most influential, scholars to distinguish in this way between semantics and pragmatics was Charles Morris. In his *Foundations of the theory of signs* (1938) he stated that semantics is the study of "the relation of signs to the objects to which the signs are applicable", and pragmatics is the study of "the relation of signs to interpreters ["interpreters" corresponds to "sender" and "receiver" above]" (Morris 1971 [1938], 21-22). The popularity of this simple and catchy formulation seems to have overshadowed the fact that Morris later widened the scope of semantics. In *Signs, language, and behavior* he states that "other modes of signification than the designative must be dealt with in semantics". According to the reformulated definition "*semantics* deals with the signification of signs in all modes of signifying" (Morris 1971 [1946], 302). This means that semantics includes other functions than representation (representation corresponds to Morris' "designative mode of signification").

[41] Recanati 2004, 445; cf. Trask 1999, 243.

[42] Recanati writes about the theoretical impasse arising from these conflicting views: "Some linguistic forms (e.g. *goodbye*, or the imperative mood) have a 'pragmatic' rather than a 'semantic' meaning: they have use conditions but do not 'represent' anything and hence do not contribute to the utterance's truth conditions. Because there are such expressions – and arguably there are many of them and every sentence contains at least one – we have to choose: either semantics is defined as the study of conventional meaning, or it is defined as the study of words-world relations. We can't have it both ways."

appeal-function of linguistic expressions from a scientific study of meaning in language. For another, it does not accord with the original understanding of semantics to do so. The pioneer in the field, Michel Bréal, included these functions on equal terms with the representative function in his work *Essaie de sémantique,* a book that was written long before the attempts to distinguish semantics from pragmatics.[43] More to the point is the statement that semantics deals with the conventional meaning of linguistic forms. The conventional meaning of linguistic forms has in practice been the object of "semantic" investigations from Bréal and onwards. Further, given that the usage of linguistic expressions are governed by special conventions, the study of their meaning must necessarily begin with exploring these conventions. Without knowing the conventions, we have no access to meaning.

In spite of this, there are a couple of thinkable objections against the view that semantics and pragmatics can be differentiated in terms of conventional versus situational meaning. The first is that "pragmatic" (hence allegedly situational) meanings are often more or less conventionalized.[44] For example, the cry "Wolf!" may be a conventional form for warning among shepherds. This objection can be countered by the argument that such a convention is valid only under special circumstances, so that it in reality the meaning is given by the linguistic form *plus situation*. The *representation* of a certain kind of animal, in contrast, is achieved entirely by means of the form "wolf", regardless of situation. That answer, however, will in turn evoke another objection: If semantic meaning is inherent in the form regardless of situation, why then do forms often seem to be used with another meaning than their alleged semantic meaning? For instance, how is it possible, as often in German, to give commands in the second person indicative? Consider the following example:

> Jetzt gehst du raus aus meinem Haus!
> Now go.PRES:IND. you out of my house
> "Now, get out of my house!"[45]

To this objection we may answer that the fact that semantic meaning is inherent in the forms does not entail that this meaning is overt in all utterances. In certain utterances, contextual conditions may indicate that the semantic meaning of a form is not communicated. Instead, certain aspects of the semantic meaning are used to imply another meaning. Thus, in the above

[43] See Bréal's treatment of the "subjective element" in language (Bréal 1924, ch. 25). Note also that Bréal contrasted semantics not with pragmatics (or syntax), but with phonetics (Bréal 1924, ch. 1).
[44] Hopper & Traugott 2003, 80-84.
[45] Retrieved August 11 2010 from http://w3.restena.lu/primaire/weiswampach/atremuth/00_01/tiere/Tiergedichte.html

example, the fact that the listener is not leaving the house at the moment of speech prevents the sentence from being interpreted as a declarative utterance, despite the indicative mood (this is so, because the listener supposes that the speaker is truthful). At the same time, the present tense affords a sense of instant relevance, or urgency, which lends itself well to the command function. The reason that we can recognize semantic meaning even if it is concealed in specific utterances is that semantic meaning is not defined primarily by the conditions of the utterance, but by the conditions of the language system of which it is part. This means that the semantic meaning of a form such as the present indicative appears against the background of our knowledge of the meaning-potential of the other forms of the system, rather than against the background of the speech situation[46]. Accordingly, we say that the command-function is not a part of the semantic meaning of the German present indicative, because another form, the imperative, by comparison is much more specialised for this function. In principle, then, semantic meaning of a certain form is best reached at by ways of apophatic reasoning: It is what the other forms available in the system do *not* mean when contrasted with it. Conversely, all meanings that are not typical of a form in comparison with the other members of the system will be pragmatic meanings. This is not to say that pragmatic meaning always differs from semantic meaning. Pragmatic meaning *confirms* the semantic meaning of a form if the context of an utterance does not imply a meaning that is more typically conveyed by another member of the system. That is what happens when an indicative is used for a statement and an imperative is used for a command. Semantic meanings are thus always unique (such as the command function of the German imperative), whereas pragmatic meanings *may* be shared by other linguistic expressions (e.g. the command-function of the German present indicative). The conventional nature of semantic meaning consists in the restrictions of the linguistic system that the individual has to accept in order to be able to communicate successfully.

At this stage I would like to emphasize that the idea of stable and system-dependent form-meaning relations does *not* require us to envisage language as some kind of closed system, a fixed and publicly accessible data-base that is stored in the mind of every speaker. Such a notion would fly in the face of the indisputable fact that the knowledge of existent forms and the opinions of form-meaning-relations varies across time and social contexts. I assume here that the semantic meanings of linguistic expressions do not reside in the linguistic data as such, but rather in how they are viewed by those who use them: The whole dichotomy between semantic and pragmatic meanings of forms hinges on the simple fact that they can be viewed from opposite

[46] Compare with the system-dependent concept of meaning developed by theoreticians such as Saussure (1922, 160) and Bühler (1965, 183ff).

perspectives. Semantic meaning is *thought of* as belonging to the form (not by arbitrariness, but due to the speaker's knowledge of the contents of the language-system and how it is generally being used). Therefore, semantics views forms in isolation, it is *analytical*, bent on decomposing all formal structures down to its smallest meaning-bearing parts, the morphemes. Pragmatic interpretation of forms is *holistic*, looking for what function the form gets in the larger picture, the context. By the context of a form we understand ultimately everything that is found to be coherent with it, that is, the surrounding parts of speech in which they occur, from single clauses up to entire conversations or monologues, but also the non-linguistic context such as the time and place for the discourse, and various factors connected with the participants of the communication, like worldviews, knowledge, focus of attention, intentions, etc. As already have been intimated above, semantic and pragmatic perspectives on the meanings can be combined in a unified analysis, in which pragmatic meanings are seen as implicatures of the semantic meanings. Hence, pragmatic meanings actually contains two meanings, namely semantic plus implied, pragmatic meaning.

1.4.2. Semantic units

The relevance of the previous section for our purpose is that the Biblical Hebrew verbal forms are a kind of semantic units. A few more words need to be said about this concept. Semantic units are produced by associating conventional meanings with linguistic expressions. Linguistic expressions come to us in the shape of acoustic patterns – *phonological structures*. Although the phonological structure is highly indicative for the meaning of a linguistic expression, there is no one-to-one correspondence between phonological structures and semantic meanings. This fact is evident e.g. in the phenomenon of word-inflection, where the same semantic unit may be represented by more than one phonological structure. Thus, verbal forms, like the Biblical Hebrew *qatal* appears in different phonological structure depending on person (*qāṭal*, *qāṭ͏ָ֫la* etc.) or stem (*qāṭal*, *hiqṭil* etc.). The other side of the coin is that the same phonological structure can be used for two, or more, semantic units in the same language. For instance, in English the phonological structure [bɪlː] may be used for referring to such unrelated things as 1) some male persons (Bill), 2) pieces of paper with notes on it (pay one's bill), or 3) a body-part of certain animals (the bill of the duck).

Because of the insufficient correspondence between phonological structures and semantic meanings we need additional criteria to identify semantic units, viz. *syntactic* and *pragmatic* criteria. The syntactic criteria depend on language-specific conventions that require semantic units to occur in a certain order in utterances. Various types of semantic units, like nouns, verbs, adjectives etc. have their typical positions in the order. Consequently, it is possible to infer the semantic identity of ambiguous phonological

structures from their syntactical position.[47] The English present and infinitive are distinguished in this way:

> Because I **live** [predicate position: PRES], you also will **live** [main verb: INF].[48]

Since both the phonological structures and the syntax is part of the conventions of specific languages, both phonological and syntactic criteria indicate semantic meaning.

When ambiguous phonological structures are deemed syntactically equivalent, so that no differentiation is possible based on position, users have to rely on contextual cues, i.e. pragmatic criteria, to decide their meaning. Thus, the structure [bɪlː] will mostly be associated with the meaning 2) above if uttered at a restaurant table and with the meaning 3) at a lecture on ornithology. Semantically ambiguous words like the ones mentioned in the examples above are often called *homonyms*. A narrower definition states that true, or absolute, homonymy only exists when the semantic units are syntactically equivalent (such as [bɪlː] 2 and 3 above).[49]

We should endeavour to distinguish between homonymy and *polysemy*. Whereas homonymy occurs where there is ambiguity as to semantic meaning, polysemy can be described as ambiguity as to pragmatic meaning. The latter case of ambiguity exists when one and the same semantic meaning of a phonological structure is found to be applicable within two or more distinct kinds of situations. For instance, an interpreter may abstract the meaning "paper with notes on it" from *bill* 2) above and find it applicable both to a situation when such a paper puts somebody under obligation to pay something (pay the bill [2a]) and when it enables him to do it (pay with a bill [2b]).

The difficulty in practice to tell homonyms from polysemes is underscored in every handbook of semantics, yet it is necessary and inevitable to try it.[50] Here, the distinction has been treated in theoretical terms as a matter of semantic versus pragmatic interpretation. In the framework of the present study this discussion leads to the question how to define the forms of the Biblical Hebrew verbal system. Which semantic units can be found in it? For example, should *yiqtol* be regarded as one form, or two (long and short *yiqtol*; see ch. 1.5. below), or perhaps even three (long *yiqtol*, short *yiqtol* preterite, and short *yiqtol* jussive)? The working hypothesis here is that it consists of two forms, as I will explain below.

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[47] See Lyons 1977, 555-556, on syntactical equivalence.
[48] Joh 14:19 (KJV).
[49] Lyons 1977, 560.
[50] See Lyons 1977, 550-555; Palmer 1981, 101-102, Hurford & Heasley, 1983, 124; Saeed 2003, 64-65.

1.4.3. Pragmatic units

In the previous section we saw that the production of linguistic meaning may be conceived of as a process in which both phonological structures, syntax, and contexts are brought to bear on the interpretation of the linguistic expression. Semantic units were defined as meaning-bearing entities characterized by conventional, language-specific phonological structures and syntactic positions. Analogously, we may speak of *pragmatic units* as the universes that contain the semantic units and condition the meaning they convey in specific utterances. Now, given that a proper understanding of semantic units depends largely on where to draw the line between semantic and pragmatic meanings, a comprehensive account of the meaning of the Biblical Hebrew verbal forms should ideally identify not only the relevant semantic units, but also the pragmatic units they occur in.

The importance of bringing contextual factors to bear to the analysis of the function of the verbal forms is stressed within text linguistics. One of the most influential proponents for this approach is Robert E Longacre. He has developed a general typology for describing various types of discourse (=text-types), such as narrative, hortatory, and procedural discourse, etc., which he also has applied rather extensively to Biblical Hebrew.[51] The basis for his classification of texts is the intent, or performative function of the text as a whole. Longacre calls this function the "notional structure" of the text. The simplest way to characterize the text types is to describe their notional structure in terms of performative verbs. Thus, Longacre writes:

> In terms of such … verbs, narration in its notional structure employs *I recount*; procedural discourse in its notional structure employs *I prescribe*; expository discourse, *I explain*; and hortatory discourse, *I propose*; i.e. *suggest*, *urge*, *command*.[52]

For each text-type, certain clause types, hence also certain verbal forms, typically contribute more than others to promoting these fundamental intentions, or speech acts. Forms that are crucial in this regard are used for building up the "mainline", or "backbone" of the text; non-crucial forms are used for "supportive", or "backgrounded" material.[53] For instance, the typical mainline form in a narrative of past events in English would be the preterite, and in a hortatory text it would be the imperative. One could say, then, that these forms *mark* past narrative and hortatory discourse in English.[54] However, the marked pattern can be set aside for various reasons. Longacre notes, for example, that a text at a certain stage in its development may

[51] See Longacre 1989; 1992; 1995.
[52] Longacre 1996, 15.
[53] See Longacre 1996, 21; 1992, 178. Cf. also Dawson 1994, 102.
[54] Or, perhaps it is more to the point to put it the other way around, and say that narrative and hortatory discourse confirms the semantic meaning of those same forms.

contain information that is more central to the understanding of the whole than other parts of the text, such as the climax of the plot in a narrative. Such focal parts of the text are often characterized by extraordinary phenomena, such as sudden changes of vantage point, tense, syntactic patterns, etc.[55] The historic present is but one well-known device employed to enhance the vividness of climactic passages in narrative texts. In these special cases the marked pattern of the text-type is set aside.

Longacre's theory of texts will be presented in more detail in a later chapter. The important thing at this stage is to recognize how it serves our purpose: Founded ultimately in an appreciation of texts as speech acts, this approach *provides the holistic perspective* we need to catch sight of all kinds of pragmatic meanings of the Biblical Hebrew verbal forms. A complete description of text-types built on this foundation would amount to nothing less than a comprehensive survey of the various pragmatic units that are relevant for the understanding of the meanings of the Biblical Hebrew verbal forms (a "pragmatic verbal paradigm" for Biblical Hebrew, if you like).

Regrettably, no such investigation of the various text-types of Biblical Hebrew has been made, and it certainly lies outside the scope of the present study to undertake that task. To the extent that the relevant contexts of the verbal forms are being described in this study, it is done heuristically, by means of a somewhat modified version of Longacre's text typology.

1.5. Preliminaries on the Biblical Hebrew verbal system

The verbal forms that this study centers on are those whose temporal functions are most disputed, i.e. those typically used in declarative utterances: the prefix conjugation *yiqtol* (long and short variants; see below), the suffix conjugation *qatal* and the participle *qotel* in predicative position. However, the object of this study is not any particular group of forms in the verbal system, but certain functions operating within it. Other forms, as the imperative *q^{e}tol*, will be brought into the discussion insofar as their usages reflect these functions.

The "consecutive" constructions *wayyiqtol* and *w^{e}qataltí* are often referred to as "verbal forms" and treated as such, on equal footing with the free-standing *yiqtol* and *qatal*. This is quite remarkable considering that these constructions according to the standard grammatical analysis are nothing but the ordinary (short) *yiqtol* and *qatal* forms plus a conjunction, corresponding to the English "and"(/"but") – a conjunction that is always proclitic in Biblical Hebrew, regardless of whether the following word is a verb or not. Now, since the variant *wa-* occurs exclusively in the *wayyiqtol*-construction, it has sometimes been suggested that it contains a remnant of

[55] Longacre 1996; ch. 3; see esp. p. 40-41 about tense.

some morpheme with a past tense meaning aside from the conjunction. If so, it might be considered as a kind of augment on the verb. But this hypothesis creates more problems than it solves: First of all, it seems to ignore the many apparently non-past *wayyiqtol*s that are found in poetry.[56] Further it is rather odd that the conjunction should be obligatory with the augment. Finally, even if these difficulties were resolved, it remains to explain why the *w^{e}* of the *w^{e}qataltí*, which is only the conjunction without augment, should be analogous with the *wa-* of *wayyiqtol*[57], and why both constructions should be linked with the phenomenon of sequentiality. In a more recent variant of the augment-hypothesis proposed by Ola Wikander, it is assumed that the *wa-* really is the conjunction and nothing more, but that it took on temporal meaning at a certain juncture in the linguistic development in order to distinguish preterite *yiqtol* from non-preterite *yiqtol*.[58] Even this version of the hypothesis does not address the problem with the non-preterite *wayyiqtol*s in poetry, nor the question of how it relates to *w^{e}qataltí* and the phenomenon of sequentiality. In fact, the strength of the augment-hypothesis depends largely in the fact that *wayyiqtol* is used as narrative form analogously with the augmented aorists of some Indo-European languages. But, as Wikander himself seems to hint in a small but significant disclaimer, being a narrative form is not the same thing as being a preterite tense.[59]

In my opinion, in order to understand properly the meanings of the Biblical Hebrew verbs, it is necessary not to confuse the syntactic function of the proclitic conjunction of *wayyiqtol* and *w^{e}qataltí* with the semantics of the verbal form. From a semantic point of view, these constructions are more naturally treated under the same heading as the free-standing (short) *yiqtol* and *qatal*.[60]

On the other hand, there are very strong arguments in favour of treating the prefix conjugation *yiqtol*, not as one form, but two. It is practically uncontested that the multitude of meanings of this form in Biblical Hebrew

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[56] Several examples of this usages can be found in Prov 31 and Isa 44:12-20.

[57] For surveys, see Kustár 1972, 28-29, Gross 1976, 16-17, note 5. Cf. also Waltke & O'Connor 1990, § 33.1.2.b., who comment on Kustár. For a criticism of Ewald's augment-hypothesis, see McFall 1982, 51-54.

[58] Wikander 2010, 263.

[59] See Wikander 2010, 264: "In contrast to the classical use of the simple prefix and suffix forms, it [viz. *wayyiqtol*] seems to have real temporal (or at least "narrative") value."

[60] This principle is witheld e.g. by Brockelmann 1951, Michel 1960, Rundgren 1961, Kuryłowicz 1972, Kustár 1972, Johnson 1979, Isaksson 1987, Gibson 1994, Furuli 2006, van de Sande 2009. The opposite principle, as I said, is ubiquitous. For an explicit argument in favour of treating the consecutives as forms, see Bartelmus 1982, 66-67. Sometimes, presentations of the Biblical Hebrew verbal system can be somewhat ambiguous as to the grammatical status of *wayyiqtol* and *w^{e}qataltí*. For example, Rogland (2001), while counting them as "primary members" (p. 9, note 49) of the Biblical verbal system, nevertheless also writes: "As far as the parameters of tense and aspect are concerned, the inverted forms *wayyiqtol* […] and *weqataltí* are treated as syntactic variants for *qatal* and *yiqtol*, respectively" (p. 11).

can be partly explained by assuming that it has a double origin. A long and a short variant of the corresponding form occur in several other Semitic languages, notably in the closely related old Northwest Semitic dialects which are known from the Amarna-letters and from the tablets of Ugarit.[61] The short forms have typically a double jussive/preterite meaning, while the long forms express for instance present and future tense, past progressive and general/habitual meaning.[62]

It is generally assumed that there are some remnants of a similar morphological distinction in Biblical Hebrew , appearing as a quantitative difference in the syllable following the second root consonant of the verb, most consistently in the *hif'il*-stem, but also in the 3rd singular masculine person in the *qal* stem of *verba tertiae he*, *mediae geminatae* and *infirmae*. In this regard, the Hebrew long and short forms are constructed differently as compared to their corresponding forms in e.g. the West Semitic languages and Akkadian, but the functional similarity, especially the characteristic jussive/preterite-split of the short variants, proves beyond doubt at least the typological affinity.[63]

In the light of these diachronic and typological evidence, a reasonable hypothesis for a *synchronic* grammatical analysis is that the prefix conjugation in Biblical Hebrew contains distinct meanings, and that, for the users of that language, context alone was sufficient to tell which of them applied in a given case.[64] In the present study, when referring specifically to either of these hypothetic semantic units, I use the terms (long) *yiqtol* and (short) *yiqtol*, respectively.

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[61] Müller 1988, 164-166; Waltke & O'Connor 1990, §29.4f-j. As for the different functions by the long and short variants in the Canaanite dialects reflected in the Amarna letters, see Moran 2003 [1950], 41-49. In Ugaritic the form/function correspondence is not as easy to prove, since the morphological differences between the forms are mostly not reflected in the consonantal script which is used in the documents. According to Gordon (1955, §13:.32) there are some indications that the long form at times is used as a narrative form. Greenstein (1988, 13-14), on the other hand, has questioned that the short form is used at all as a preterite in Ugaritic. His view is refuted by Smith (1991), 65-67.

[62] The future meaning of the long forms is likely to be the result of an extended usage in which the imperfect meaning of the form is neutralized. Such usages of imperfectives are very comon cross-linguistically; cf. Bybee *et al* 1994, 277.

[63] It is unclear exactly how the Hebrew long and short variants of the prefix conjugation are *morphogically* related to the corresponding variants in the other Semitic languages. According to Müller (1988, 165-166), it is only in the case of the *hif'il* stem of the strong and the geminated verbs that the Biblical Hebrew short from stems directly from an original West Semitic *yaqtul*. In the other cases, he claims, the forms with a short second syllable have developed from the form with long second syllable.

[64] Of course, we have to admit the possibility that there may have been some difference that was overlooked by the Massoretic scribal tradition, for instance a difference in stress, as have been argued by Zevit (1988, 28) and Bloch (2009, 42).

1.6. Summary

The main difficulty with the understanding of the Biblical Hebrew verbal forms is to explain their temporal meanings. This study will deal with that problem by exploring the concepts of aspect, linguistic attitude and sequentiality. Explanations that are valid for as much of the Hebrew Bible as possible will be looked for. A distinction is made between semantic (conventional) and pragmatic (situational) meaning. Semantic meanings are contained in semantic units, such as verbal forms, and are extracted from those units through comparison with the usages of the other (syntactically equivalent) units that are contained in the same linguistic system. Pragmatic meanings are meanings that arise by implication from semantic meanings in various contexts. They may confirm or differ from the semantic meanings. The contexts that condition these implications may be called pragmatic units. Pragmatic units can be classified as text-types such as narrative, hortatory discourse, etc. *Wayyiqtol* and *w^{e}qataltí* are not treated in this study as semantic units of the Biblical Hebrew verbal system. *Yiqtol* is assumed to be a homonym for the semantic units (short) *yiqtol* and (long) *yiqtol* respectively (insofar the phonological structures are indistinguishable).

2. Comments on the state of research

2.1. Tense, aspect, and modality

Tense values are of course expressed semantically in language by verbal tense forms, but they are also pragmatically implied by forms marked for aspect or modality. Due to their functional overlap, these concepts are often referred to by means of an acronym, most commonly TAM. Opinions differ as to how the TAM-complex is encoded the Biblical Hebrew verbal system. In the following sections I present some proposals for what may be called the tense- (absolute or relative), aspect-, and modal approaches.

2.1.1 Tense

Tense locates events in time in an absolute or a relative sense. In absolute tense the event is located either before (past), simultaneously with (present), or after (future) the moment of speech. In relative tense, events are located in a corresponding manner to a point in time before or after the moment of speech, for example as a future in the past:

> She was about to leave.

The Biblical Hebrew verbal forms were first described as absolute tenses by the Jewish grammarians of the Middle Ages. According to them, the *qatal* was a past tense form and the *yiqtol* a future. The ubiquitous future use of *w^{e}qataltí* and past use of *wayyiqtol* was explained as due to the proclitic *waw*, which allegedly had the function of converting the tense of the form to its opposite – hence the term "*waw* conversive" (Heb. *waw-hahippuq*). The system was complete by featuring the predicative participle *qotel* as a present tense.[65]

With the provision of the conversive *waw*-thesis, the grammarians managed roughly to square the Biblical Hebrew verbal forms with a classical tense system. Nevertheless, for a sceptic it was an easy task to find counterexamples enough to refute the alleged tense values of the forms. Not

[65] McFall 1982, 128.

least the very common use of *yiqtol* with present meaning speaks against its designation as a future.[66] New theories were bound to emerge.

N.W. Schroeder was the first to propose a solution basesd on relative tense. He claimed that there was no conversion of tenses involved in the case of the *waw*-prefigated conjugations, but rather a transposition of perspectives. Thus, the future use of *w^{e}qataltí* meant that the speaker transposed himself mentally to a future vantage point and regarded the event as if they were already past, albeit still future in relation to the time of speech. Conversely, the speaker may also transpose himself to the past and predict an event by means of *wayyiqtol*. The predicted event thereby became future relative to what preceded – hence the designation "futurum relativum".[67] We should notice that this is not what is normally meant by "relative tense". A real future in the past, such as the one in the example, is not future primarily to a preceding event, but to a reference point.[68] Further, a real future in the past does not imply that the event referred to is completed at speech time, which is the case with narrative *wayyiqtol*. That would require a second transposition, by which the speaker and listener returned mentally to the here and now of the speech situation, so that they could view the event as past relative to the time of speech, after first having viewed it as future relative to a past reference point.

This, if anything, is mental acrobatics. Even if it is possible to think it, it is not likely that any language would develop such complicated strategies to express something as simple as past tense. Nevertheless, the introduction of relative points of reference paved the way for a less rigid thinking about how temporal relations could be expressed by Biblical Hebrew verbal forms. Moreover, since comparative Semitic studies made it possible to treat the *wa*-prefigated *yiqtol* as a preterite rather than a future, the approach has become much less far-fetched. Thus, while the advocates of absolute tense today are few and tend to be moderate as to what they claim, several ambitious relative tense-theories have emerged in recent studies.[69]

According to Rüdiger Bartelmus, the Biblical Hebrew verbal forms present a complete relative tense system. The function of the forms is to express *Vorzeit*, *Gleichzeit*, or *Nachzeit* primarily in relation to speech time, secondarily in relation to a past or future point of reference. Interestingly, the place of the future in the past in his model is occupied by *wayyiqtol*, and

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[66] McFall (1982, 20) summarizes his findings from the translation of *yiqtol* in various languages (including English, French and Latin): "There are over 700 examples of it translated by the Past tense; over 3,300 examples as a Present against 5,400 example as a Future."

[67] McFall 1982, 22.

[68] Schroeders theory is perhaps most aptly described as a mixture of a relative tense and a consecutive-theory.

[69] For a moderate proposal for absolute tense, see Blau 1976 § 20.1, who describes *qatal* as "roughly corresponding to the 'past'" and *yiqtol* as "roughly corresponding to the 'future'".

understood in terms of temporal succession, which creates basically the same problem as in Schroeder's model.[70]

Jerzy Kuryłowicz's system is simpler.[71] He holds, that only two values are marked in the Biblical Hebrew verbal system, *viz*. *anteriority* and *simultaneity*. Other functions pertaining to temporality, such as aspect, are only implied (context-conditioned). Further down, I will argue that Kuryłowicz's notions anteriority and simultaneity are implied by the aspectual pair perfective/imperfective rather than the other way around.

Some scholars prefer to see tense in Biblical Hebrew as a discourse level function. Alviero Niccacci relates tense functions to the hierarchical structure of texts (mainline vs. off-line):

> [V]erb forms have *fixed temporal reference* when they are verbal sentences [verb-initial] and/or indicate the mainline of communication On the other hand they have a *relative temporal reference* when they are nominal clauses [verbless or noun-initial] and indicate a subsidiary line of communication.[72]

Recently, Sven-Olof Dahlgren has made use of Niccacci's principle to prove that the Hebrew verbal forms express relative tense.[73] Another discourse-oriented approach to tense is taken by Tal Goldfajn. Her thesis is that tense in classical Biblical Hebrew prose is built up around two temporal "perspectives" (or "set-ups") – one default perspective in which the time of reference is simultaneous with speech time, and another contextually specified perspective with the reference time prior to speech time.[74] As this contains a concept of shifting perspectives from different perspectives, it may be called a relative tense-approach.

It is obvious that relative tense theories give a more precise understanding of how temporality is expressed by the Biblical Hebrew verbs than the *waw*-conversive theory does. But to say that relative tense is what the forms mean is a mistake. Tense, whether "absolute" or "relative", is always relative to a reference point. Hence, to distinguish between relative and absolute tense forms is meaningless unless the relative tense forms imply *another* reference point than the moment of speech. Such is the case in the periphrastic phrase *was about to do* in the above example. Since Biblical Hebrew verbal forms can have *both* the moment of speech and another moment as their reference point, all depending on the context, their own meaning is *neither* absolute nor relative tense.[75] To put it another way, relative tense may be a pragmatic meaning of the forms, but not a semantic. That is also exactly what the

[70] Bartelmus 1982, 71.
[71] See Kuryłowicz 1972; 1973.
[72] Niccacci 1994, 129.
[73] Dahlgren 2008.
[74] Goldfajn 1998, 114.
[75] Cf. Comrie 1985, 58: "Relative tenses thus have the present moment as one of their possible reference points, but this is a problem of interpretation rather than of meaning."

tense-based analyses of Biblical Hebrew prove when they posit tense as a text-level phenomenon.

2.1.2. Aspect

2.1.3. Modality

The temporal implications of modality are often productive in the grammaticalization of various temporal functions. For example, future tense in English may be expressed by auxiliary verbs with dynamic as well as a deontic modal meaning:[76]

> I will finish my dinner.
>
> I shall finish my dinner.

Past habitual or generic events are also commonly expressed by modal phrases in many languages, including English:

> I would finish my dinner.

Such facts have led Beat Zuber to suggest that there is a modal function encoded in the Biblical Hebrew *yiqtol* and *w^{e}qataltí*, which puts them in contrast with the indicative forms *qatal* and *wayyiqtol*.[77] In later studies by Joosten and Hatav, the other finite forms plus the predicative participle have been included in the opposition, so that we get an indicative subsystem consisting of *qatal*, *wayyiqtol* and *qotel* versus a modal, which, aside from *yiqtol* and *w^{e}qataltí*, also includes the imperative, the jussive, and the cohortative.[78]

The major problem with applying the term modal to *yiqtol* and *w^{e}qatal* is, in my opinion, that it becomes too vague to have any real explanatory power. As for the modal properties of the volitive forms (imperative, jussive, cohortative), they are well defined and always used in their natural function of commands or wishes. But what specific modality is able to generate all the various functions of *yiqtol* and *w^{e}qataltí*: directive modalities (instructions and commands), generic statements of all tenses, future, present and past negations (*yiqtol*), questions (*yiqtol*), etc? We must keep in mind that "modality" is only a meta-term, just like "tense"; it needs to be further specified in order to be applicable to linguistic data. In order to prove that a

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[76] "Dynamic" modality expresses the will and other subject-internal factors in an event, "deontic" modality stands for subject-external factors such as obligation or permission. On this terminology, see Palmer 2001, 9.
[77] Zuber 1986, 7-15.
[78] Joosten 1997, 57-58; 2002, 67; Hatav 1997, ch. 4.

future or a past habitual is modal, one has to be able to state the specific kind of modality and to show how the implicatures can be made. This is possible with the above-mentioned English phrases indicating future and past habitual meaning, but it has not been done with *yiqtol* and *w^{e}qatalti*.[79]

2.2. Linguistic attitude (”Sprechhaltung”)

Harald Weinrich is a linguist whose influence within Hebraistics has been considerable. Significant for his theory of the verb is the refusal to credit any of the categories tense, aspect or modality to be primary functions of the verbal forms.[80] Their basic function, he claims, is rather to signal by which attitude (“Haltung”) the listener should receive the utterances in which they occur. The attitudes can be either one of *tension* (“Gespanntheit”) or *relaxation* (“Entspanntheit”).[81] Weinrich links these attitudes to two basic modes of communication: Relaxation characterizes all kinds of *narration* (“Erzählung”), whereas tension accompanies *discussion* (“Besprechen”). The latter is a wide concept that perhaps is most easily described simply as everything that is not narration. When counting the verbal forms that appear in narration and discussion in many languages, Weinrich finds that all verbal forms tend to be used predominantly in either the one or the other text-type. Based on these distributional patterns he divides verbal systems into two groups: *tense group one* for the forms belonging to discussion, and *tense group two* for narrative forms.[82] The division of texts into these two fundamental types forms the basis for Weinrich’s text linguistic method. When scholars such as Schneider, Talstra, Niccacci, and Baayen have applied Weinrich’s text linguistics on Biblical Hebrew, they have taken over the theory of linguistic attitudes without modifications or critical discussion.[83]

In my opinion, the essential point in Weinrich’s thesis is very plausible: Utterances are received with either an attitude of tension or relaxation, and the verbal forms have something to do with it. This is evident in the following list of sentences (plausible contexts are supplied within brackets):

The elephants *are escaping* (right now).

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[79] Hatav (1997, ch. 4) derives all the functions of the forms from *two* sets of mutually exclusive modalities: epistemic vs. deontic and possibiblity vs. necessity.
[80] Weinrich develops ideas from, among others, Benveniste 1959, (see esp. p. 70)., which he makes explicit in the first edition of his *Tempus* (1964, 40).
[81] Weinrich 1977, 33.
[82] Weinrich 1977, 18.
[83] Schneider 2001, Niccacci 1990, Talstra, 1997. Baayen 1997 elaborates on Weinrichs notion linguistic attitude (Baayen’s “focal referential concern”) without applying other parts of Weinrich’s text-linguistic apparatus.

The elephants *have escaped* (right now).

The elephants *escaped* (last year).

The elephants *were escaping* (last year).

In Weinrich's terminology, the forms in the first two utterances belong to tense group one, indicating the tense mode of communication. The third and the fourth indicate a relaxed mode by means of tenses of the second group.

But what about the following:

The elephants *escape* (every year)?

According to Weinrich, the English present belongs to tense group one. But is this utterance likely to evoke the same alarm as the two first ones? Doesn't it rather align with the third and the fourth utterance, in that it allows the listener to remain quite relaxed?

Here it is appropriate to point at some weaknesses in Weinrich's line of arguments. To begin with, he supports the claim that verbal forms do not mark tense by referring to certain special verbal usages often employed in fiction. Thus, authors may narrate a futuristic science fiction story with the past tense forms, or tell about past events by means of present tense forms, etc.[84] However, these phenomena are easily explained within ordinary tense theory as mental transpositions of the deictic centre of the utterances – the temporal relations holding between the (imagined) events and the (imagined) point of reference remain the same as in the normal usages of the tenses.

Further, Weinrich's theses about the linguistic attitudes are debatable, especially at two points. First, it seems questionable to found the claim that the verbal forms mark linguistic attitude on mere statistics – and moreover, statistics that do not substantiate the claim to a hundred percent (cf. above). Second, the same statistics tells us that not only utterances with habitual meaning like the one above, but also texts such as "das Wissenschaftliche Referat" and "der Philosophische Essay" are dominated by tense group one, which forces Weinrich to state that these genres evoke an attitude of tension by listener and speaker. It is hard to see how these kinds of written utterances, being totally detached from the here and now of the speech situation, can fit the characterization of tense communication as Weinrich formulates it:

> In Äußerungen dieser Art ist der Sprecher gespannt und seine Rede geschärft, weil es für ihn um Dinge geht, die ihn unmittelbar betreffen und die daher auch der Hörer im Modus der Betroffenheit aufnehmen soll. Sprecher und Hörer sind engagiert; sie haben zu agieren und zu reagieren.[85]

[84] Weinrich 1977, 45-47.
[85] Weinrich 1977, 36.

I believe our objections to these theses are strong enough as to justify the conclusion that there is no significant correlation between Weinrich's tense groups and the linguistic attitudes tension and relaxation. Even though there is a connection between tense group two and the relaxed attitude, the same goes for some forms belonging to tense group one, such as the English *present tense*. The pragmatic conditions of the here and now of the speech situation and the semantics of the verbal forms seem more pertinent to the phenomenon than the text-types of narration and discussion as defined by Weinrich. However, this does not invalidate the hypothesis that linguistic attitude can be directly signalled by verbal forms.

2.3. Sequentiality

The term "*waw*-conversive" that was used for the proclitic *waw* on the constructions *wayyiqtol* and *w^{e}qatalti* was largely abandoned in favour of "*waw*-consecutive" during the nineteenth century. The shift reflects an effort to explain the function of the particle in terms of interclausal relations rather than temporal semantics. The contrast was now between the idea of sequentiality, expressed by the waw-prefigated forms, and the lack thereof in connection with *qatal* and *yiqtol*. The sequential relation was recognized primarily as one of temporal succession, sometimes also implying causality. To illustrate, we borrow some examples from the grammar of Paul Joüon (quoted here in Muraoka's translation). He illustrates the idea of temporal succession with a couple of clauses from Gen. 14:5-7:

> And in the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer came [*qatal*] .. and they beat [*wayyiqtol*] the Rephaim .., and they returned [*wayyiqtol*] .. etc.[86]

As for "logical consecution", Joüon provides the following example:

> Why did you say that she was your sister, with the result that I took her [*wayyiqtol*] for my wife?[87]

However, Joüon is also aware of the great many cases where no sequential relation exists, e.g. when a *wayyiqtol* is used to recapitulate a course of events just narrated:

> Thus is it that the field passed into Abraham's possession.[88]

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[86] Joüon/Muraoka 2008, § 118.c.
[87] Gen 12:19. See Joüon/Muraoka 2008, § 118.h.
[88] Heb.: wayyāqom[*wayyiqtol*] haśśādæ l^{e}abrāhām, "The field passed to Abraham". Gen 23:20. Joüon/Muraoka 2008, § 118.i.

It is due to the abundance of examples like these that Joüon is careful not to overstate the case:

> The Waw of the wayyiqtol and the weqataltí expresses a slight idea of **succession**; it is an exaggeration to translate it always by *and then*.[89]

In the face of all the counterexamples, no one could have blamed him if he had stated his reservation against the consecutive theory even clearer. As already mentioned, the *waw* is probably only an ordinary coordinating conjunction, and as for the verbal forms, it has probably never been suggested that there is any "and then"-element inherent in their meaning. Hence, it would not be altogether incorrect to say that, if the *waw*-consecutive theory ever proved anything as regards the semantic meaning of the *waw*-consecutive construction, it would be that it is *not* sequentiality. Nevertheless, Hebraists have stuck with the label "consecutive" as a conventional defining notion, although they often tie it not only to the conjunction but also to the following verb, so that the whole construction is called a consecutive "tense" or "form".

The ideas of the *waw*-consecutive theory have recurred in various guises in several more recent studies. Hatav and Goldfajn, who both employ discourse representation theory (DRT) interpret the idea of temporal sequence in terms of the advancement of "reference time".[90] In a study by Talmy Givón concerned with the effect of *wayyiqtol* and *qatal* on what is called the "flow" of narration, the same concept feature as "continuity".[91] His description is more or less restated by Yoshinobu Endo.[92] In all of the mentioned studies except Givón's, sequentiality is described as marked by the *waw*-prefigated forms.[93] Givón treats sequentiality wholly as a text-level phenomenon and contents himself with stating that there is a strong statistical correlation with *wayyiqtol*.[94]

It should not be denied that the association of *wayyiqtol* and *w^{e}qataltí* with the concept of sequentiality can serve practical purposes, provided that the exceptions to the rule are kept in mind. But from a theoretical point of view, it is inadequate to ascribe the interclausal function of sequentiality either to the *waw*, or to the verbal form, as long as it is not proven that the conjunction in question marks temporal or causal meaning, or that verbs can signify interclausal relations. In the chapters about *continuity*, *conceptual*

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[89] Joüon/Muraoka § 117.d.
[90] Hatav 1997, 56; Goldfajn 1998, 145.
[91] Givón actually posits the opposition *continuity*:*anteriority* (1977, 198), but in his example 32 (p. 201-202) "anteriority" is evidently a too narrow concept and he resorts instead to the more general "non-continuity".
[92] Endo 1996, 28-29, 68, 321.
[93] Whereas Hatav and Goldfajn seem to ascribe the sequence function to the whole construction, Endo ties it specifically to the verbal element (Endo 1996, 67).
[94] Givón 1977, 204.

distance, and *connectivity* [not in this paper] I will make separate analyses of the meanings of the *waw* and the verbal form, and try to explain how they favour sequential clause relations.

Abbreviations

ABH	Archaic Biblical Hebrew
DO	direct object
Heb.	Hebrew
IND	indicative
INF	infinitive
LBH	Late Biblical Hebrew
PRES	present tense
PRET	preterite
SBH	Standard Biblical Hebrew
TAM	tense/aspect/modality

Modern translations of the bible

Bibel 2000	*Bibel 2000: Texterna: Gamla Testamentet, Tillägg Till Gamla Testamentet - De Apokryfa Eller Deuterokano niska Skrifterna, Nya Testamentet: Bibelkommissionens Översättning 1999*. Pocket. Stockholm: Verbum, 1999.
EÜ	*Die Bibel: Stuttgarter Bibel Der Buchmalerei: Die Einheitsübersetzung Mit Meisterwerken Mittelalterlicher Buchkunst*. Stuttgart: Belser, 1996.
KB 17	*Bibeln: Den Heliga Skrift: Gamla Och Nya Testamentets Kanoniska Böcker I Överensstämmelse Med Den Av Konungen År 1917 Gillade Och Stadfästa Översättning en*. Stockholm: Norman, 1977.
KJV	*The Bible: Authorized King James Version: [with Apoc rypha]*. The world's classics. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1997.
NRSV	*The Cambridge Annotated Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version: Notes and References*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1993.
NJB	*The New Jerusalem Bible*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1985.
TOB	*Traduction Œcuménique De La Bible: Comprenant l'Ancien Et Le Nouveau Testament: Traduits Sur Les Textes Originaux Hébreu Et Grec; Avec Introductions, Notes Essentielles Glossaire*. Nouvelle édition revue. Paris: Alliance Biblique Universelle, 1990.

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The Sennacherib episode: exegetical issues

Short paper. OTSEM II, Skálholt, September 2010
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Introduction: overview and questions for the session

Below, I will first present a sketch of my analysis of the growth of the Sennacherib episode. Then follows a slightly more thorough discussion of some of the issues.

At the session, I would appreciate if someone could comment on possible analogies to what I discuss here. I am sure there are similar cases that have been studied in other texts. I have not had room for a discussion of the 'Book of the Annals [of the Kings of Israel/Judah]', but if you have comments on the scholarly discussion of these, I am interested in hearing what you have to say, because this question has a number of consequences for my case.

1 *A sketch of the argument*
4 *Discussion of some issues*
4 *Four unexpected turns*
5 *Background: the scholarly discussion*
6 *Are source-critical solutions necessary?*
9 *The relation of A and B1*
12 *19:36f. as belonging to Account A*

A sketch of the argument

In the following, I start out from the old division of the Sennacherib episode into Account A = 2 Kings 18:13 (or 14)–16, B1 = 18:(13,) 17–19:9 (until וַיָּשָׁב), 36f., and B2 = 19:9 (from וַיִּשְׁלַח)–35; but I will after some discussion instead use a slightly different delimitation: Account A = 2 Kings 18:13–16, 19:36f.; B1 = 18:13, 17–19:9 (until וַיָּשָׁב), 36f., and B2 = 19:9 (from וַיִּשְׁלַח)–35 (with the reservation that B2 presumes B1, at least, and thus could be defined as 18:13 (14–16), 17–19:37 – if this had not been so impractical).

- 'Account A' should probably be taken to include not only 18:13–16, but also 19:36f., as shown both by parallels in Kings and by extra-biblical parallels.
- B1 is in need of 18:13 and 19:36f.
- This means that B1 was most probably inserted into (a shorter/earlier form of) A, and thus should be seen as an augmentation of A.
- 18:14–16, not present in Isaiah 36, is not needed for the following narrative. Rather, these verses create an aporia for the narrative logic of the story. But they can hardly stand alone, without 18:13 (and 19:36f.). As to genre, the verses 18:13–16, 19:36f. belong together (although they may possibly reflect different sources), and it is not impossible that they once formed part of some kind of 'annalistic' work, that may also be reflected in other places in the extant form of 1–2 Kings.
- From these observations, I draw the provisional conclusion that some form of what we now call Account A, or the source(s) that it was taken or adapted from, was used by the

author of the original form of B1. But 18:14–16 did not form part of B1 at this stage, even if the content of these verses (and more) may have been present in the source. Rather, the combination came about when B1 (including 18:13 and 19:36f.) was inserted in the growing Book of Kings and A (= 18:13–16, 19:36f.) was already present there (or when the author/redactor of Kings combined A and B1). (Of course, the form of what was to become these verses need not have been fully identical in A and B1. If 'in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah' was present at the beginning of 18:13 at this stage, it was probably not so in B1.)

- B2 creates an unexpected turn in its connection to B1, but at the same time B2 presupposes B1, and the connection at 19:9 does not create the same kind of aporia as does the connection between 18:16 and 18:17.
- There are 'Isaianic' traits in B1 (and B2), that make it necessary for us to look for an original setting for the writing of the story in Isaianic circles.
- There are a number of intertextual links between the Sennacherib episode and other passages in Kings, especially 2 Kings 17. These links are of different kinds: puns on the names of Assyrian kings; recurring geographical names in chapters 17–19 that serve to tie these chapters together; the irony implicit in the use of the name Adrammelech in 17:31 (cf. 17:4 LXX^{Luc} and VL) and 19:37; the reference to the taking away of the *bāmot* in 18:22 that echoes similar passages in Kings.
- Similar intertextual links can be found earlier in 2 Kings 18 (with no parallel in Isaiah); they add to the contrast between Hezekiah and the Samarians. For example, we hear of *bāmot* 'from watchtower to fortified city' in 17:9, and of attacks against the Philistines (associating Hezekiah with David) 'from watchtower to fortified city' in 18:8.[1] A catch-phrase link of the same kind – but linking to the Book of Isaiah – is found in the reference to 'the conduit of the Upper pool, which is on the Fuller's field road' in 2 Kgs 18:17 (=Isa 36:2) and Isa 7:3.[2] (These are only examples; for a discussion, with references, concerning Isaiah, see Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah,* 190–97.)
- There are indications that these intertextual links in part have come about during a process of textual development that has progressively anchored the text to its contexts in Isaiah and Kings. Not all links are present in all textual witnesses; some, but not all, have been brought over from Kings to Isaiah and vice versa.
- Thus there was, at the time when the text began to reach its now extant forms, present in both Isaiah and Kings, several manuscripts that differed from one another in certain respects, so that it becomes impossible for us to speak of an 'original text' in the singular. If we try to establish an original text, it will not be a biblical text, but an early precursor to the biblical texts.
- The references to Egypt and Kush in the extant form of the Sennacherib episode are ambiguous and enigmatic. I think this has to do with the process of composition, and I would suggest that the presence of a reference to the Kushite king Tirhakah in B1, and the silence about Tirhakah in B2, can be taken as clues to the date of these two augmentations. If so, B1 was probably written at a time when the Kushite pharaos were

[1] In biblical Hebrew, this idiom is found only in these two verses.
[2] Again, in biblical Hebrew, this idiom is found only in these two places.

active in Lower Egypt, while B2 was written when the Kushites no longer were a viable alternative for someone who wanted to oppose the Assyrians (or some later power). Perhaps it was the demise of the 25th dynasty that made a new ending to the narrative seem necessary, whether immediately around 656 or, more probable, at some later time when the narrative was reused.

- It has been suggested that the connection between A and B1 in 18:17 was made in the same way as the connection between B1 and B2 in 19:9: a word that originally belonged to the older text was reused and given a new sense in the new text. Similarly, in both these verses there is an unexpected turn in the story, involving the sending of messengers from Sennacherib to Hezekiah. This might tell us that a similar technique was used to introduce the augmentation in both cases.
- Different scholars have helped us see how details in the text can be perceived to anchor it to one or another specific background. But the suggestions vary. Smelik detects the presence of Isaianic traits, but does not account very well for Deuteronomistic ones.[3] The opposite is true of Ben Zvi.[4] Others do a better job in observing features that seem to echo Neo-Assyrian language,[5] or details that are perhaps best explained from the original (or later) historical circumstances.[6] My conclusion from this is that this narrative has no single background that can explain all its features. It grew through the years, and was used in several contexts, from Neo-Assyrian times down to the Masoretes.
- However, we can try to sort out the different influences, and possibly order them chronologically. This will be of interest especially when it comes to the Isaianic and Deuteronomistic thematic connections, as well as the intertextual links to Kings and Isaiah. Provisionally, I would say that the Isaianic traits are more basic than the Deuteronomistic ones (at least when we can differentiate them), and that the intertextual anchoring of the Sennacherib episode to its contexts both in Isaiah and in Kings very well may have been going on simultaneously through several generations.
- Much in the Sennacherib episode has parallels in documents displaying Assyrian royal rhetoric. This is true of formulations and ideas in both A and B1, as well as B2. In B2, however, such parallels are found either in passages that was probably based on B1, or in Isaiah's second oracle, which has been suggested to contain material from older sources.
- I suggest that Account A once formed part of an annalistic work that was used as a source for Kings; this annalistic work may have been written on the basis of archival sources. As for B1, my suggestion is that it was composed later in the seventh century, perhaps when the Kushite 25th dynasty was still strong in Egypt, or perhaps later, but possibly at a time when

[3] Smelik, 'Distortion of OT Prophecy' (in de Moor et al., *Crises and Perspectives,* OtSt 24), 74–85, with notes on pp. 89–92; and 'King Hezekiah Advocates True Prophecy' (ch. 4, pp. 93–128, in Smelik, *Converting the Past,* OtSt 28).

[4] Ben Zvi, 'Who Wrote the Speech of Rabshakeh?' (*JBL* 1990), 79–92.

[5] E. g., Cohen, 'Neo-Assyrian Elements in the First Speech of the Biblical Rab-šaqê' (*IOS* 9), 32–48 .

[6] E. g., Hardmeier, *Prophetie im Streit vor dem Untergang Judas,* (BZAW 187), who reads the Sennacherib episode against the background of events and conflicts in 588.

Egyptian or Kushite help against a foreign invader would have been pertinent.[7]

Discussion of some issues

Four unexpected turns

What is it that makes the Sennacherib episode an exciting narrative? What narrative devices, one might ask, has its author made use of, to keep the audience interested? Well, the fact is, I think, that some of the elements that contribute towards making this story interesting did come about by accident, and were not intentionally deviced by any of the people who gave it its now extant form. But still, we can try to point them out, and speculate about why they are present – and whether some of them were meant to serve the purpose they actually do: to keep the listeners captivated.

Two well-known devices to keep an audience on the hook are surprises and enigmas. Perhaps at least in part by chance, there are four unexpected turns in the Sennacherib episode of 2 Kgs 18:13–19:37 (with its parallel in Isaiah 36f.) that have one feature in common: they narrate the sending of messengers.[8] They are found in 18:14, 18:17, 19:9, and 19:35. All four turns are located close to what has been identified as probable seams between parts of the narrative belonging to different phases of the period of composition. And all four turns surprise us, introducing some new and unexpected factor that does not immediately seem to fit with what has gone before. How are these turns to be evaluated? Can they possibly give us clues to the compositional history of the text? Or do they bear witness that the episode was in fact written by a single author, who used these unexpected turns as a skilled story-teller? I will answer the second question in the negative, and be somewhat reluctant about the first. But let us begin with a look at the four turns in the narrative.

First there is Hezekiah's sending of messengers to Sennacherib in 18:14.[9] How come Hezekiah, the king who has just been characterized as being successful in everything, since Yhwh was with him (18:7), now confesses before the Assyrian king: חטאתי ('I have done wrong', or 'I have sinned')?

The second unexpected turn comes in 18:17. After having demanded a heavy tribute, and after the report of how Hezekiah handed over the demanded silver and gold, Sennacherib sends messengers to Jerusalem, accompanied by a heavy force, seemingly to demand submission. The first question put to Hezekiah by the Rabshakeh is what trust of his it is that has made him revolt against the king of Assyria. There is no sign in 18:17ff. that the Assyrians know of any previous submission of Hezekiah's.

The third of these unexpected turns is found in 19:9. Through the prophet Isaiah Yhwh has promised that Sennacherib will

[7] For a date in the middle of the seventh century, cf. Gonçalves, *L'expédition de Sennachérib en Palestine,* 440–41.

[8] The terminology in the four places differs, which means that we are not dealing here with a catch-word, but rather with a reccuring narrative turn (cf. type-scene); but it is interesting to note that while the MT has *ml'k* in 19:9 and 19:35, the Hebrew *Vorlage* of the LXX did probably have it also in 18:14. In 18:17 the messengers are instead enumerated.

[9] It seems probable that מלאכים was actually present originally in this verse. See the text-critical note at 18:14 (not in this paper).

hear a report (or rumour) and return home. The Assyrian king gets a report that king Tirhakah has marched out against him. Then the Hebrew text tells us that Sennacherib 'turned back and …' – or that is what the listener/reader first thinks, expecting Isaiah's words to find their fulfilment. But the continuation of the verse forces the audience to reconstruct the meaning of the Hebrew וַיָּשָׁב as 'and he once again …': 'And he once again sent messengers to Hezekiah …'. Sennacherib does not return home. Instead, he once again sends an intimidating message to the Judean king. The expected fulfilment of the prophetic word gets deferred.

The fourth unexpected turn in the Sennacherib episode occurs at 19:35. We have been told in 19:7 that Yhwh will make Sennacherib return home on account of a report or rumour that he will hear. In the second oracle of Isaiah, we have once more been told that Yhwh will make Sennacherib return home: 'I will put my hook in your nose and my bridle in your mouth, and bring you back on the road by which you came.' (19:28) Now, unexpectedly, and just before the expected end in 19:36f., we are told that Yhwh's מלאך 'went out and slayed, in the Assyrian camp, one hundred eighty five thousand; and they rose in the morning, and see, all of them were dead corpses.'[10]

Concerning 18:14 one could argue that it was only when the words about Hezekiah's success 'wherever he went' (18:7a – which was probably inspired by Account B[1], in combination with 18:7b–8) were added to the characterization of Hezekiah that the confession of sin in 18:14 became a real problem. Thus, this unexpected turn came about when the later characterization of Hezekiah was added. It is not impossible that this addition was in part meant to counteract the impression given by 18:14. If so, it was not wholly successful: it in fact draws the attention to the words about Hezekiah's 'sin' in 18:14, and by the contrast introduced serves to create the first of the unexpected turns in the Sennacherib episode. However, I think that even without this contrast, the audience would feel uncomfortable with the חטאתי of 18:14. It is what Bakhtin would call an 'alien word', echoing Assyrian rhetoric about rebellious foreign kings.[11] How come it has been preserved here?

I am not sure whether or not the fourth turn, the coming of Yhwh's מלאך in 19:35, needs explanation in terms of the compositional process of the Sennacherib episode, but the second and third (at 18:17 and 19:9) do. I will soon explain why I think so, but first we need some background.

Background: the scholarly discussion

We can begin from the model of the growth of the Sennacherib episode (put forth by Stade and developed by others) that divided the episode into Accounts A, B1, and B2, where A = 2 Kings 18:13 (or 14)–16, B1 = 18:(13,) 17–19:9 (until וַיָּשָׁב), 36f., and B2 = 19:9 (from וַיִּשְׁלַח)–35, and claimed that the text had come into being by the redactional combination of these originally independent sources (with later additions). Usually, it

[10] About the last two verses of Isaiah 37, Cheyne says: 'Dass diese Verse nach des Verfassers Absicht auf V. 36 (die Erzählung von der Pestilenz) folgen sollten, ist kaum zu glauben.' (*Einleitung in das Buch Jesaja,* 218.)

[11] For example, to 'sin' or 'do wrong' (*haṭû*) is very often used in connection with Assyrian treaties; see the list of passages for *haṭû* in Parpola and Watanabe, *Neo-Assyrian Treaties and Loyalty Oaths* (SAA 2), pp. 89f. This is not to say that we should necessarily look for a treaty background in this case, cf. Tadmor, 'Treaty and Oath' (in *Humanizing America's Iconic Book*) 150–51.

was thought that the growth of the episode (and the related 2 Kings 20) took place in the context of the growth of the Book of Kings. Then almost all of the text was taken over in Isaiah (chs. 36–39). These conclusions have been challenged, however, and now a number of scholars suggest that the episode, or at least B, was written by a single author, and that it was at home in Isaiah before it was imported into Kings.

Among the strongest arguments against the older view has been that there are clear connections between B1 and B2, so that they can hardly be thought of as originally independent from one another. But this observation does not force the conclusion that B1 and B2 must have belonged together from the very beginning. Another possibility is that B2 is an augmentation of B1.[12] Similarly, a number of the arguments presented in favour of the claim that the passage Isaiah 36–39 was taken over in Kings (rather than the other way around) can be given a different interpretation, viz. that the passage (or more probably an older form of it), was composed in some sort of Isaianic circles, but not necessarily for inclusion in the developing Book of Isaiah.[13]

Are source-critical solutions necessary?

How come Sennacherib threatens to attack Jerusalem after having received tribute (18:14–16)? The verses reporting the tribute are absent from Isaiah, so this is a problem peculiar to the Kings version of the story. If Hezekiah did according to the Assyrian king's demands, why did Sennacherib decide on a sharper policy? I will first discuss some attempts to answer this question without recourse to source-critical solutions.

Long, who notes that the report in 18:14–16 'follows a conventional *topos*',[14] argues that it

> is quite wrong to describe these events as Hezekiah's 'capitulation,' as is often done by scholars who see an inherent contradiction between the position taken by Hezekiah in vv. 14–16 and vv. 17–36 … Rather, the *topos* describes a strategy to relieve military pressure on Jerusalem and to preserve Judah's independence.[15]

That there is an affinity between 2 Kgs 18:13–16 and, especially, 2 Kgs 12:18–19, is clear. Not least the report that the king sends away gold from the temple and the royal treasury should encourage the audience to make a connection between these passages. However, the affinity would be much more obvious if 18:16 was followed immediately by 19:36f., as I believe originally to have been the case.[16] This would correspond to the note 'that the strategy was successful' that typically belongs to this *topos*.[17] But there is also an important difference between the action of Hezekiah and that of Joash in 2 Kings 12: Joash sent a gift to Hasael, without any negotiations having taken place, while Hezekiah had to pay the gold and silver imposed by Sennacherib after first having sent messengers to him, declaring that he had done wrong. The Assyrian king had, in this case, himself taken the initiative in imposing a specific amount of gold

[12] This view is becoming more and more widespread. Cf., e. g., Kratz, *Die Komposition der erzählenden Bücher des Alten Testaments,* 173 (ET 169).
[13] Cf. Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah,* 189–211.

[14] Cf. 2 Kgs 12:18–19 [EVV 17–18]; and the similar 1 Kgs 15:16–22; 2 Kgs 16:5–9. Also cf. the analysis in Gonçalves, *L'expédition de Sennachérib,* 368–70.
[15] *2 Kings,* 205.
[16] See below.
[17] Long, *2 Kings,* 205. In this and some other respects, 2 Kgs 15:19f. is also a parallel to take into account.

and silver to be payed. When in 18:17 the narrative continues as if Hezekiah had not in any way yielded, this comes, therefore, not only as an unexpected twist of the story line, but as an aporia, which must confuse the audience. Obviously, the Rabshakeh – Sennacherib's messenger – does not come to demand an increase in tribute or the like. What he demands is surrender. In his argumentation he takes for granted that Hezekiah has not given up his revolt against the Assyrian king. Thus, the main problem is not the attitude of Hezekiah, but that of Sennacherib. Whether Hezekiah 'capitulated' in 18:14, or simply used 'a strategy to relieve military pressure' (I cannot say that I am perfectly clear over the difference in this case), Sennacherib in 18:14–16 demands and is given a large tribute. In 18:17, however, the story starts anew as if this incident had never occurred. 18:20 ('a word of the lips') can hardly refer to Hezekiah's message in 18:14, when the context in v. 20 speaks of rebellion.

Let us have a look here at a suggestion by Gallagher. According to him, Account A 'briefly summarizes the complete invasion of Judah'.[18] He argues that because 18:14b tells about the tribute payment, which according to Assyrian sources took place after Sennacherib had set out for Nineveh, 'there should be nothing left to tell about the war in Judah' after this verse.[19] Thus, the problem mentioned above would cease to exist: the mission of the Rabshakeh in fact would precede the tribute. The problem is only that this argumentation takes for granted that the Assyrian and biblical sources tell the same story, even in details, which they obviously do not do. We need only remind ourselves that according to 2 Kgs 18:14, Hezekiah sent a message to Sennacherib at Lachish, which is unmentioned by the Assyrian sources, while Account A mentions nothing about any remote siege or similar threat against Jerusalem, which the Assyrian sources do.[20] From 2 Kgs 18:14–16 in itself, if it is not read in the light of Sennacherib's inscriptions, it is not possible to conclude that the tribute must have been sent to Nineveh after the withdrawal of Sennacherib. Nor can we definitely exclude this possibility, as long as we read 18:14–16 disconnected from what follows. However, if 19:36f. formed the original ending of Account A, as I tend to think, even that account in its original form told of Sennacherib's return home only after the paying of the tribute was reported.

Now, if Account A is taken as a summary of the complete invasion, which it surely was if it once existed separately, and Account B is also thought of as a once separate piece, telling the whole story, A and B are thereby taken to contradict one another. There could be no question of a tribute being payed to Sennacherib after the developments depicted in B. But I do not think that B (or B1) ever existed apart from some form of A. I will return to this issue below.

If Account A once had a separate existence, it now, in the extant form of the text, forms part of the larger whole of A+B, contributing to the plot not least a rather discordant introduction to the main action that is to follow. It has been made to tell another story than it once did. The tribute is no

[18] Gallagher, Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah, 147 (with further references in n. 16).
[19] Ibid.

[20] On this see, e. g., the passage on the measures against Jerusalem in the Chicago Prism, col. 3, lines 27–30 (transcription on p. 188 and translation on p. 189 in Mayer, 'Sennacherib's Campaign of 701' in *'Like a Bird in a Cage'*), and Mayer's discussion of this passage on pp. 179–181.

longer the end, but has become the starting-point for the dealings of Sennacherib with Hezekiah.

For me, as a reader schooled in the historical-critical way of approaching a text, the incongruity between the behaviour of Sennacherib in his demand for tribute, on the one hand, and in his message through the Rabshakeh, on the other, seems too sharp to be attributed to the direct intention of an ancient author or redactor. My guess is that it was rather a by-product – and as such probably to some degree foreseen – of another intention. Perhaps that of picturing Judah as free from Assyrian superiority from the time of Hezekiah onwards, or of drawing a parallel between the 701 events and the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians (both of which have been suggested more than once). Or perhaps there was, at this stage, only the intention of gathering and preserving traditions.

Anyway, an audience in antiquity, not thinking in terms of possibly contradictory sources, would, I imagine, have been lead by this aporia to look for explanations in the continuation of the story: will there be any information coming up that the author has so far withheld, and that will explain this strange behaviour of the Assyrian king? When he through the Rabshakeh accuses Hezekiah of trusting in Egypt, some will suspect that an explanation may be forthcoming. This will heighten the interest in what is said about Egypt in the continuation of the narrative, but what is said there will hardly satisfy those seeking a settlement to the aporia. Rather, the tension between the initial reaction of Sennacherib in 18:14 and what happens in 18:17ff. is never resolved. The audience therefore has to conclude that there is no explanation for Sennacherib's behaviour in terms of the kind of rationality demanded in normal political conduct: dependability and consistency. The rationality behind his actions must rather be perceived as being of a strongly self-serving and power-seeking kind.

One could speak here of a literary motif, 'The stronger part arrogantly extending his claims after the weaker part's initial submission'. This is no uncommon way of building up a disgust in the listener/reader for the stronger part in a conflict. Cf., in Kings, 1 Kgs 20:1–11. The motif has a real life counterpart, with the function of provoking an open conflict desired by the more powerful.

At the same time, there are connections between Account A and Account B that we have to account for.[21] The mention of Lachish in 18:17 and 19:8 seems to presuppose 18:14. The pleading of Hezekiah in 18:14 that Sennacherib should turn away (שוב) from him finds its counterpart in Yhwh's promise through Isaiah in 19:7, as well as in 19:8 and 9 (both at first sight reporting an Assyrian retreat, which might be taken as a beginning fulfilment of the promise, an expectation soon to be frustrated), in the renewed promise in 19:33 and in the report about Sennacherib's eventual departure in 19:36 (if this is not to be counted to A). Note also the Hiphil of שוב in 18:24 ('turn down') and 19:28 ('bring you back'). If 19:36f. is taken to belong to Account A, the words of Isaiah (in B) about Sennacherib's retreat and death find their fulfilment in A.

The mention of Lachish in both A and B may perhaps be explained as caused by a common tradition (and ultimately by the course of events in the year of Sennacherib's siege of Lachish, which was probably long remembered). That Account B is in need of another introduction than 18:17 seems clear, but 18:13 (cf. Isa 36:1) could do that job, even if it does not mention

[21] For the following, cf. Hardmeier, *Prophetie im Streit,* 154.

Lachish – the reference to Lachish immediately after 18:13 does not come more abruptly in 18:17 than it does in 18:14.

The שוב theme is of course to be expected in texts belonging to this genre.

The connection between Isaiah's promises about Sennacherib and their fulfilment, however, can hardly be denied. If 19:36f. is thought of as belonging to A (see below), there is no longer any question of B as an originally separate source. B (or B1) must have been written for insertion into A (and thus be later than A). This is of interest from many points of view. One of them is, that if B developed in Isaianic circles (although perhaps not immediately for use in the book of Isaiah – whatever that would refer to at this point of time), a position that has been gathering more and more support recently, those same circles made use of A (and therefore of whatever larger source that A formed part of).

Thus, we may have here a case of a combination of two originally separate texts that creates, in the very suture between them, a new narrative turning-point unforeseen by the authors of the two original accounts. Perhaps it was neither a main intention nor wholly unforeseen by the writer who made the combination.

The relation of A and B1

An issue that has been the object of dispute is the status of 18:14–16, present in Kings but not in Isaiah, where Isa 36:1 (=2 Kgs 18:13) is immediately followed by 36:2 (=2 Kgs 18:17). The original intuition of Stade and others was to take this passage as an interpolation (albeit from an older source). Not only was it lacking in Isaiah, it had the name of Hezekiah in a shorter form (חִזְקִיָּה), while 18:13, 17ff. used the longer form (חִזְקִיָּהוּ – this longer form is also used uniformly in the MT of Isaiah 36). This argument, however, has revealed itself as involving more complications than originally presumed. When the third edition of Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica* arrived, the name form in 18:13 turned out to be short, just as in vv. 14–16. This was because the printed Hebrew text was now based on the *Codex Leningradensis,* which has the short form, just as many other manuscripts have. In due time, the common short form in 18:13–16 came to be used as one of the arguments employed to show that Account A did really comprise vv. 13–16, and not only 14–16.[22] Later still, however, a renewed investigation of the name forms in Masoretic manuscripts has again led to a revaluation of this matter. It turns out that most of the manuscripts (especially the older ones) collated in Kennicott's edition of the *Biblia Hebraica* in fact have the long name form.[23] This being so, Norin has argued that it

> is much more probable that a writer, influenced by the short form in *vv.* 10, 14–16, wrote the short form also in *v.* 13 than that the same person made a conscious attempt to make the text wholly conform to the text of Isaiah.[24]

I think it is correct to say, with Norin, that the long form constitutes the *lectio difficilior* in 18:13, although the case is not

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[22] Thus Childs, *Isaiah and the Assyrian Crisis,* 70 n. 3. Of course, 18:13 had already before been claimed to belong to Account A by some scholars (e. g., Marti, *Jesaja,* 249), but with other arguments.

[23] In 18:13, all but one of Kennicott's manuscripts from before the year 1200 have the long form, and so have also most of the later manuscripts (Norin, *Sein Name allein ist hoch,* 115; cf. idem., 'An Important Kennicott Reading in 2 Kings xviii 13' [*VT* 1982], 337).

[24] Ibid., 337; cf. Norin, *Sein Name allein ist hoch,* 115f.

perfectly clear. But as to the textual witnesses, the situation is in fact wholly ambiguous, with several important Masoretic manuscripts on both sides of the divide.[25] The hypothesis concerning 18:13 presented below (the verse having been employed twice, both with 18:14–16 and with 18:17ff., before becoming part of the book of Kings) allows both name forms to have been 'original' in this verse. It may in fact have been the case that this ambiguity of name forms in 18:13 was present already in the very first few manuscripts of Kings, because of the ambiguity of the sources; but about this we can only speculate.

The discussion of the first verse of the Sennacherib episode, 2 Kgs 18:13/Isa 36:1, has centred on two questions: the problem of the date (Hezekiah's fourteenth year), and the relation of the verse to Account A and Account B (or B1), respectively. These have been important questions for the analysis of the process of composition of the Sennacherib episode, not least because for many scholars they are decisive for their judgement concerning priority: did the Sennacherib episode originally belong to Isaiah or Kings?

Concerning the date given in 18:13, in the present connection we need only remind ourselves of the many suggestions that there is something wrong with 'Hezekiah's fourteenth year', or that it does not really belong in its present position, to realize that it would be unwise to try to fix any hypothesis concerning the growth of the Sennacherib episode to it.[26] I will therefore be reluctant about the use of arguments anchored in the date given in 18:13 in my discussion of the historical growth of the text.

Concerning the relation of 18:13 to Accounts A and B,[27] the problem is that neither 18:14–16 nor 18:17ff. would seem to be able to stand on its own, without the introduction conveyed by 18:13. However, scholars have usually proceeded in their analysis on the presupposition that either 18:14–16 or 18:17ff., but not both, would have been originally preceded by 18:13, and thus they have tried to figure out which one that is most in need of this introduction. Often, the decision that the one or the other was originally connected with 18:13 is accompanied by arguments designed to show that the non-chosen alternative is really not in need of 18:13. But in both cases – at least to my mind – the arguments against a connection are less strong than the arguments in favour of it.

From a narrative point of view it is clear that 18:14–16 is in need of 18:13. Hezekiah cannot send messengers to the king of Assyria at Lachish without an introduction that has brought Sennacherib to Judah.

On the other hand, that the B1 narrative should have originally begun with 2 Kgs 18:17/Isa 36:2 is out of the question. The situation is the same as with 18:14: some kind of introduction that has brought Sennacherib to Judah is clearly presupposed. I conclude that both accounts are in need of an introduction like the one in 18:13. It could be noted that the same kind of problem also pertains to the end of the accounts: the passage about Sennacherib's return and death (19:36f.) seems to be necessary for both Account A and for B1 (see below).

My way of dealing with this problem will be to construe a hypothesis that presumes that 18:13 (and 19:36f.) has at an earlier

[25] On the lacking usefulness of the Versions for this question, see Norin, *Sein Name allein ist hoch,* 53.

[26] The date is often taken to have originally belonged with the narratives in 2 Kgs 20; cf., e. g., Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings,* 228.

[27] For an overview of the scholarly discussion, see Gonçalves, *L'expédition de Sennachérib en Palestine,* 356–61.

stage been employed twice; both as the introduction to 18:14–16 and (excerpted either directly from the annalistic work that contained 18:13–16, 19:36f. or from the same [archival?] sources used by the author of the annalistic work) as the introduction to 18:17ff. Since the passage about Sennacherib's return and death (19:36f.) in the same way seems necessary for both accounts – not only Account B, but also Account A is incomplete without it (cf. related passages like 2 Kgs 12:18f. [ET 17f.]) – I also hypothesize something similar about 19:36f.: these two verses were used together with 18:13 as a frame both around 18:14–16 and around 18:17ff. This shared framework also gives us one of the factors explaining why the two accounts were later combined in the book of Kings.

As stated above, this hypothesis allows both the short (חִזְקִיָּה) and the long (חִזְקִיָּהוּ) form of the name of the Judean king to have been 'original' in this verse. My supposition is that the form in the archival material was the long one. It is spelled *Ha-za-qi-a-ú* in Sennacherib's inscriptions.[28] In one ostracon and one seal impression (the latter possibly referring to king Hezekiah) the name is spelled *hzqyhw*.[29] In Hezekiah's own time, it was thus probably pronounced with the longer ending, and spelled *plene,* with יְהוּ־.[30] This form was changed when it was taken over by the author(s) of the annalistic work. But the author of B1 preserved the longer form of the name, which was also the one he used in the rest of his account. Thus, when the two accounts were combined in Kings, the writer had two forms to choose between for 18:13 – and from the textual witnesses now extant, we cannot know which one that originally took precedence. As for the book of Isaiah, however, if the same original source for Account B – rather than the book of Kings – was used by the redactor who added Isaiah 36–37 (–39?), there was only the long form present (and no extant Masoretic manuscripts of Isaiah have anything else in 36:1).[31] If the book of Kings was the direct source, however, there is still the possibility that the original B1 document was available for the redactor, and could have influenced him. Still, I believe it makes sense to think that this original document, having been composed by, or in contact with, some sort of Isaianic circles (as seems now more and more to be the consensus position among scholars, see below), was the basis for these chapters in Isaiah, and that changes emanating from the version in Kings were introduced only at a later stage (and not every change in Kings was taken over in Isaiah). The

[28] See for example the Chicago Prism, col. III, lines 18 and 37 (in Mayer, 'Sennacherib's campaign of 701' (in Grabbe, ed., *'Like a Bird in a Cage'*), 187 and 188). If the Azekah inscription is of relevance here, and contained Hezekiah's name, the spelling was different, but it ended with *-u*.

[29] Listed in Norin, *Sein Name allein ist hoch,* 30, with references. The ostracon (from Ophel) is probably later than Hezekiah's time. It was originally dated to the eighth century, but was later redated to the late pre-exilic period. There is also one ostracon from Ophel with *yhzqyhw,* which was dated to the eighth or seventh century when it was published in 1924 (ibid., p. 32 with p. 27). There are no examples of this name with the short ending (*-yh*) in the epigraphic material listed by Norin.

[30] According to Norin, in the South the short form (*-yh*) of names with a Yhwh element predominates in early texts, and is there to be taken as a *defective* spelling of an ending pronounced '-yahu'. After the introduction of *matres lectiones* the longer *plene* form (*-yhw*) becomes more and more predominant, until the short form again gains ground – but now because of a shorter pronunciation '-ya'. In postexilic times the short form is the prevailing one. See Norin, *Sein Name allein ist hoch,* 69–71.

[31] The short form in 1QIsa[a] is to be seen in light of the fact that this manuscript never has יהו- forms of this name, but only יה-. Cf. the analysis in Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll,* 103–6, 122–5.

main textual argument for this is the lack of any counterpart to 2 Kgs 18:14–16 in Isaiah, but there are also other textual differences between Kings and Isaiah that point in the same direction (cf. below).

19:36f. as belonging to Account A

וַיִּסַּע וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיָּשָׁב סַנְחֵרִיב מֶלֶךְ־אַשּׁוּר וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּנִינְוֵה׃

And Sennacherib, king of Assyria, departed, and went away, and returned home; and he lived in Nineveh. (19:36)

Text

וַיִּסַּע וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיָּשָׁב ... וַיֵּשֶׁב – this, as has often been pointed out, looks overloaded. The LXX of Isa 37:37 (with some exceptions; cf. similarly LXX^{Luc} in the present verse in Kings) only has two verbs (the order of the two verbs differ in the manuscripts), where MT has וַיִּסַּע וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיָּשָׁב. A similar sequence of verbs is found in 1QIsa^{a} 37:9 (as well as in the LXX of Isa 37:9): וישמע וישוב וישלח, obviously combining the readings of Isa 37:9 and 2 Kgs 19:9, as they are now found in MT.[32] Could it be that there is a similar background in this case, so that there were at one time two shorter texts of 2 Kgs 19:36/Isa 37:37 (one with ויסע וישב, the other with וילך וישב), which were later combined into the text we now have? Or should we think that the double reading here came about already when the A and B1 accounts were combined in the book of Kings? If B2 is seen as an augmentation of B1, and not as an originally separate source, and if furthermore 19:36 is taken as having originally belonged to Account A, one cannot attribute the long series of verbs in the Hebrew to the combination of B1 and B2, as was sometimes done by earlier commentators. But the combination of A and B1 could have resulted in the same doubleness. If the Isaiah version of the Sennacherib episode did not make use of the form of A found in Kings (as is made probable by the lack in Isaiah of any counterpart to 2 Kgs 18:14–16), there may still be a trace of this fact in the shorter form of this verse preserved in the LXX of Isaiah. And if 2 Kgs 19:36 originally contained one verb less, just as did Isa 37:37, then this reading may have originated from A (which was probably used by the author of Kings as a base for his work), while Isaiah was dependent on B1 in the first place.

Exegetical remarks

As already noted, it has been suggested that 19:36 or 19:36f. originally formed the end of Account A.[33] This would bring Account A in line with several other similar stories in Kings about the buying off of an invader with the help of the royal and temple treasuries (especially 12:18f. [ET 12:17f.]).[34] Additionally, Parker suggests that 19:36f. was possibly the original continuation of 18:13–16, since there is in both passages correlation with Assyrian sources, and both speak of

[32] Cf. Talmon, 'Aspects of the Textual Transmission' (*Textus* 4), 107f. Cf. the discussion of the probable double reading at 19:17, above (not in this paper).

[33] Lewy, 'Sanherib und Hizkia' (*OLZ* 1928), cols. 156–7, takes 18:13–15 to have been originally followed by 19:36. Parker, *Stories in Scripture and Inscriptions,* 168 n. 34 suggests 18:13–16 and 19:36f. Cf. Kratz, *Die Komposition der erzählenden Bücher des Alten Testaments,* 173: 18:13–16 + 19:36f. are 'Quellenauszügen'.

[34] Thus Lewy, ibid. Cf. Long, *2 Kings,* 205f., for a discussion of this *topos.*

Sennacherib by name, 'whereas in 18:17–19:9a the enemy is identified only and always as "the king of Assyria"'.[35]

Perhaps the thought that 19:36f. might belong to Account A did not immediately suggest itself to scholars of an earlier generation, because if the connection was made, the words of Isaiah (in Account B) about Sennacherib's retreat and death find their fulfilment in A, and, more generally, B would have no satisfactory ending of its own. Thus, B could not be seen as originally independent from A, as was long more or less taken for granted.

Many commentators see in the sequence of events narrated in vv. 36–37 a conflation of two distinct stages of history that in reality were separated by twenty years (the murder of Sennacherib occurred in 681).[36] It is not easy to say whether such a telescoping of events – if such it is – should be taken as an anachronism occasioned by the historical distance of the writer, or as a purely literary device, cutting out unnecessary information to achieve the right pace for the dramatic resolution of the story, where anything but an ellipsis would have slowed down the narrative speed at the wrong turn.

Of course, when it is acknowledged that this verse originally belonged to Account A (see above), one could argue that the terse temporal compactness simply is what we should expect from the form of excerpted archival texts. Perhaps the writer only presented what pertinent information there was to be found on Sennacherib in his sources.

But once more, there may be a lesson to learn about the theory-ladenness of observations (or, in other words, the decisive role of the reader's presuppositions) here.[37] For we should ask whether this 'conflation' is really that obvious, judged from a reading of the text in the light of linguistically similar passages, or if it has not rather been found in the text because it was expected, and useful as a further argument for a hypothesis that had already been formed. וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּנִינְוֵה ('and he lived in Nineveh') is an idiom that may well tell us that the author considered a certain period of time to have elapsed between the events of v. 36a and v. 37.[38] In many cases, a clause with וישב in the sense of 'settle down', 'live', or 'reside' either closes a sequence of events, or forms a sort of transition, allowing for an indefinite amount of time, large or small, to elapse. Then, with the next clause, the narrative embarks upon a new stage in the development of the story. In such a case, we often cannot be at all sure about how much time has passed before the events begin anew. See, for example, Gen 4:16f.; 19:30f.; Judg 8:29–32; 11:17f.; 1 Sam 12:11f.; 24:1f. (ET 23:29–24:1); 1 Kgs 12:25; Jer 37:21f.; 40:6f.; Ruth 2:23–3:1. The present passage (2 Kgs 19:36f.) arguably belongs to this group. The clause וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּנִינְוֵה can thus very well allow a considerable amount of time to elapse, so that the next clause begins a new sequence of events, several years later.

The consequence for hermeneutical theory of this example is, again, that there is a way to get beyond dogmatism and relativism. The position that I have criticised (interpreting this and the following verse as implying that the murder of

[35] Parker, *Stories in Scripture and Inscriptions,* 168 n. 34.
[36] For example, Hardmeier, *Prophetie im Streit,* 165.

[37] See chapter 1, pp. xyz–yz, for a discussion of these notions (not in this paper).
[38] Thus, e. g., Steuernagel, *Lehrbuch der Einleitung in das AT,* 366, and Kittel, *Könige,* 289: וַיֵּשֶׁב 'widerlegt die häufig zu lesende Annahme, unser Verf. denke sich den Tod Sanh.'s unmittelbar nach seiner Heimkehr.'

Sennacherib took place more or less immediately after his withdrawal from Judah) has probably been held in many cases because of a hypothesis that took these verses to be written, with a 'theological' perspective, at some distance in time from the 701 and 681 events, in contrast to Account A. My own position is likewise influenced by a hypothesis, namely that these verses belong to Account A. But this does not mean that 'everything is relative', that the two conflicting interpretations are so strongly bound up with two incommensurable hypotheses that there is no sense in comparing them. On the contrary: what I have done is to present arguments that my interpretation is the better one, arguments that can be tested and contested. If another scholar thinks otherwise, the answer is simply to present better arguments. '[B]oth relativism and dogmatism equally exclude all argumentation, all authentic dialogue, by making it either unnecessary (relativism) or impossible (dogmatism).'[39] But as long as there is anything to argue about, we inhabit the fruitful realm beyond relativism and dogmatism. It could be noted that the role of the conflicting background hypothesis (19:36f. belonging to A, not B) in this case is heuristic, rather than governing. It made me put the question, but it did not provide the analysis.

[39] Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics,* 69.

The Motif of the Egyptian Bondage: Observations on its Literary Origins and its Redactional Development in the Exodus Narrative (Exod 1-15)

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ABSTRACT

The paper is dedicated to one aspect treated in my recently finished *Habilitationsschrift* on the literary development of the Exodus narrative. While it is widely assumed that the motif of the Egyptian bondage constitutes one of the cornerstones of the Exodus tradition, a redaction critical analysis of the relevant passages in Exod 1-3; 5 shows that this assumption is unfounded. In its earliest literary form, the Exodus narrative lacks any explicit reference to the enslavement of the Israelites but rather mentions the 'misery' of a socially marginalized group. The idea that this misery is due to the Israelites' enslavement already reflects a later development which then continued in a variety of redactional additions providing further details. In this gradual process which was mainly driven by innerbiblical exegesis, the picture of the Egyptian bondage slowly took shape.

1. INTRODUCTION

Within the last decades, the paradigm of the Documentary Hypothesis has been shattered almost completely. In contrast to the once widespread belief that the Tetrateuch (Gen–Num) consists of the sources J, E and P, present scholarship finds its only remaining consensus in the distinction between priestly and non-priestly material. Furthermore, it has become increasingly clear that vast parts of the non-priestly material are in fact post-priestly which means that they presuppose (at least) the basic stratum of the Priestly Code (P^G), be it an independent source or a redactional layer. Regardless of how the latter point is decided, there can be no doubt that the author of P was at least familiar with an existing pre-priestly narrative thread. Thus, in spite of the three sources of the Documentary Hypothesis, one can nowadays assume three basic stages of literary development within the Tetrateuchal narrative: a pre-priestly, a priestly and a post-priestly.[1] In the following, this model will serve as the interpretive framework for determining the redactional horizon of the bondage motif within the Exodus narrative.

[1] See Reinhard G. Kratz, *The Composition of the Narrative Books of the Old Testament* (London/New York: T&T Clark, 2005), 225–229, 300–303.

2. The Missing of the Bondage Motif in the earliest pre-priestly stratum of the Exodus narrative

During the long reception history of the Old Testament the motif of the Egyptian bondage has gained such a prominent place that it is almost automatically taken as an authentic piece of tradition. It therefore comes as quite a surprise that there is no literary evidence to support this claim. The Exodus narrative in its earliest literary form lacks any explicit reference to the enslavement of the Israelites. The narrative began with the account of Moses' birth and his growing up under the care of Pharaoh's daughter (Exod 2:1–10*), and it continued in Exod 2:11–15* with Moses slaying an Egyptian and fleeing to Midian.[2] The only reference to the Israelites' forced labor (Exod 2:11aβ: 'and he [sc. Moses] saw their forced labor' – וירא בסבלתם) is a later addition which becomes clear from the repetition of the verb וירא ('and he saw') in Exod 2:11b.[3] Originally, Exod 2:11aαb only mentioned that Moses went out to his brothers and became witness of how one of them was hit by an Egyptian. Without Exod 2:11aβ, the usual interpretation that the verse describes an overseer hitting a slave loses its only solid piece of textual evidence. Surely, the said situation could still be implied, but this is not explicitly stated and may therefore only count as one option among others. The only thing that can be known for certain is that it was the preferred option of the author of Exod 2:11aβ who explicitly introduced the motif of the Israelites' forced labor in order to specify the narrative setting for the first encounter between Moses and his people. We will get back to Exod 2:11aβ in our discussion of Exod 1:11–12.[4]

The next passage that provides information on the situation of the Israelites is the revelation scene situated at the Burning Bush (Exod 3).[5] Only a few verses of the chapter belong to the earliest pre-priestly stratum of the exodus narrative where they followed directly upon Exod 2:15bβ$_1$ ('and he settled in the land of Midian' – וישב בארץ מדין). In its reconstructed form the basic layer of Exod 3 reads as follows:

3:1*	Now Moses was keeping the flock of the Priest of Midian. And he led the flock beyond the wilderness and came to	ומשה היה רעה את צאן כהן מדין וינהג את הצאן אחר המדבר ויבא חרבה

[2] See Christoph Levin, *Der Jahwist* (FRLANT 157; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1993), 317–325; Kratz, *The Composition of the Narrative Books*, 282.

[3] See Levin, *Der Jahwist*, 322.

[4] Cf. below, 2.2.

[5] On the following see Christoph Berner, *Die Exoduserzählung: Das literarische Werden einer Ursprungslegende Israels* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010 [forthcoming]), ch. 2, sec. 2.2.1.

	the wasteland.	
3:2b	And he looked, and behold, a bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed.	וירא והנה הסנה בער באש והסנה איננו אכל
3:3a	Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight."	ויאמר משה אסרה נא ואראה את המראה הגדל הזה
3:4a	When YHWH saw that he had turned aside to see,	וירא יהוה כי סר לראות
3:5a	he said, "Come no closer!"	ויאמר אל תקרב הלם
3:6b	Then Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at the deity.	ויסתר משה פניו כי ירא מהביט אל האלהים
3:7aα	And YHWH said, "I have surely observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt,	ויאמר יהוה ראה ראיתי את עני עמי אשר במצרים
3:8a	and I have come down to deliver them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land.	וארד להצילו מיד מצרים ולהעלתו מן הארץ ההוא אל ארץ טובה ורחבה
3:10*	Now go and bring forth my people out of Egypt."	ועתה לכה והוצא את עמי ממצרים

Again, the text is completely silent about the Israelites' forced labor. Surely Exod 3:7a mentions their 'misery' (עֳנִי), but the term is not only quite vague, it is also not at all idiomatic in the context of slavery. The Old Testament never identifies the 'miserable one' (עָנִי) with the slave, but uses the former term to denote a spectrum of phenomena related to social marginalization:

> "in [Exod] 22:24 [עָנִי] is used to designate someone who socially is an underdog; one who possesses little or no land and so lacks a ready source of income; who has no power and influence and always runs the risk of falling victim to those who belong to the top social classes; with the foreigner (Lev. 19:10) and the widow and orphan (e.g. Isa. 10:2) he belongs to those who are often without rights and the victim of social oppression (Isa. 3:14f.; 11:4; Amos 4:1; 5:12; Ps. 35:10); YHWH cares about them (22:22)."[6]

When YHWH declares in Exod 3:7a that he has observed the misery of his people in Egypt one should therefore not think of slaves, but rather of a marginalized group of Israelites in Egypt the precise social status of which remains unclear. Despite the lack of sources it is nevertheless tempting to suggest a possible connection with fugitives from the Northern Kingdom who

[6] Cornelis Houtman, *Exodus* (vol. 1; HCOT; Kampen: Kok, 1993), 243.

may have come to Egypt after the downfall of Samaria in 722 BCE. Circles of this kind do at least constitute a plausible background for the idea of the Exodus as an answer to the question how Israel may continue without state and royal dynasty.

Be this as it may, it is at least safe to conclude that Exod 3:7a provides no positive evidence in favor of an enslavement of the Israelites in Egypt. The same applies to Exod 3:8aα because YHWH's announcement to deliver (נצל Hif'il) the Israelites from the hands of the Egyptians (מיד מצרים) is again not idiomatic for the liberation of slaves. In its present context, the phrase rather has military connotations[7] and already seems to anticipate the destruction of the Egyptian forces at the Sea of Reeds (Exod 14). At least, the account of this event did originally follow almost directly upon the revelation scene at the burning bush. The Commissioning of Moses in Exod 3:10* and the beginning of the account of the miracle at the sea (Exod 14:5a) were at first only connected by a set of short notes recounting the return of Moses (Exod 4:18*, 20aβ: 'And Moses went and returned to the land of Egypt.' – וילך משה וישב ארצה מצרים) and the first two stations of the Israelites' wanderings (Exod 12:37; 13:20, 21aα*).[8] Conversely, this means that the story of the Pharaoh increasing the burden of the Israelites (Exod 5), which has often been judged as an authentic piece of tradition, was not part of the earliest Exodus narrative. It will in fact prove to be a fairly late post-priestly addition. That it cannot be original does already result from the simple observation that the burden of the Israelites has to exist before it can be increased. In other words, Exod 5 is dependent upon Exod 1:11–14 where the motif of the Israelites' forced labor is introduced and where it is further specified that one of their tasks was the making of bricks, which is then aggravated in Exod 5. Details of that kind are as alien to the earliest Exodus narrative as the motif of the Egyptian bondage itself.

3. The Literary Origins of the Bondage Motif (Exod 1:11–14)

It is one of the few undisputed facts in Pentateuchal criticism that Exod 1:13–14 do – at least in substance – belong to the original priestly narrative (P^G).[9] The two verses describe how the Egyptians made the lives of the Israelites bitter by imposing on them a hard service (עבדה קשה). The motif is taken up again by the priestly writer in Exod 2:23aβ; 6:5–9 which shows beyond doubt that the idea of the Egyptian bondage is firmly rooted within P^G. However, the decisive question is whether the priestly writer already found the motif as part of a further elaborated version of the pre-priestly Exodus narrative or whether he

[7] Cf. e.g. Josh 9:26; Judg 6:9; 8:34; 9:17; 1 Sam 7:3, 14; 10:18; 12:10–11; 14:48; 17:37; 2 Kgs 17:39; 18:29, 33–35.

[8] See Berner, *Die Exoduserzählung*, ch. 3, sec. 1.

[9] See e.g. Kratz, *The Composition of the Narrative Books*, 241.

introduced it himself. The answer depends on the literary relationship between Exod 1:13–14 and the two preceding non-priestly verses Exod 1:11–12 which mention that the Israelites were enslaved by Egyptian work masters. Needless to say, this relationship cannot be established without considering the redactional history of the entire chapter which will therefore be briefly sketched in the following.

Exod 1 serves as a literary bridge between the end of the story of Joseph (Gen 50) and the beginning of the Exodus narrative (Exod 2), and it is impossible to reconstruct a basic layer that is independent of the narrative sequence preceding in the Book of Genesis.[10] In fact, the basic layer of Exod 1 must be identical with the earliest literary hinge between the story of Joseph and the Exodus narrative. Quite recently there is a tendency to assume that this hinge was first established by P^G and can be found in Exod 1:(1–5,) 7, 13–14.[11] Consequently, the non-priestly material in Exod 1:6, 8–12, 15–22, which was classically divided among the sources J and E, would now have to be attributed to a post-priestly redactional phase. Although it is certainly true that there is little evidence for a Yahwistic source incorporating the stories of the Patriarchs and the Exodus into a coherent narrative, the possibility of a pre-priestly redaction connecting the two formerly independent stories with each other should not that easily be dismissed. On the contrary, the literary evidence shows quite clearly that such a pre-priestly connection must have existed, because the priestly thread in the Joseph story suffers from serious gaps that are only filled by the non-priestly narrative.[12] These findings strongly indicate that P^G is not a formerly independent source, but rather a redactional layer, an observation already made by Karl Heinrich GRAF in 1867,[13] shortly before the Documentary Hypothesis started its triumphal procession in the wake of Julius WELLHAUSEN.

[10] See Kratz, *The Composition of the Narrative Books*, 279–295; Berner, *Die Exoduserzählung*, ch. 2, sec. 1. Differently Jan Christian Gertz, *Tradition und Redaktion in der Exoduserzählung: Untersuchungen zur Endredaktion des Pentateuch* (FRLANT 186; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 380–388. Gertz claims that Exod 1:11–12, 15–22* did belong to the earliest version of the Exodus narrative, but he is forced to assume that its original beginning has not been preserved.

[11] See Erhard Blum, "The Literary Connection between the Books of Genesis and Exodus and the End of the Book of Joshua," in: *A Farewell to the Yahwist? The Composition of the Pentateuch in Recent European Interpretation* (ed. T.B. Dozeman et al.; SBLSymS; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), 89–106; Jan Christian Gertz, "The Transition between the Books of Genesis and Exodus," in: *A Farewell to the Yahwist?*, 73–87; Konrad Schmid, "The So-Called Yahwist and the Literary Gap between Genesis and Exodus," in: *A Farewell to the Yahwist?*, 29–50.

[12] See John van Seters, "The Report of the Yahwist's Demise Has Been Greatly Exaggerated!," in: *A Farewell to the Yahwist?*, 143–157 (here: 147–150); Berner, *Die Exoduserzählung*, ch. 2, sec. 1.1.

[13] See Karl Heinrich Graf, "Die s.g. Grundschrift des Pentateuchs," *AWEAT 1* (1867), 466–477.

The literary development of Exod 1 began with a short pre-priestly hinge in Exod 1:6*, 8–9, 10*, 22 which connected Gen 50:21 and Exod 2:1.[14] After the death of Joseph a new Pharaoh arises who sees the Egyptians threatened by the immense proliferation of the Israelites and therefore orders to throw all of their male newborn children into the Nile. This command, devised as a narrative link to the exposure of Moses (Exod 2:1–10), should later trigger the story of YHWH slaying the firstborn children of the Egyptians (Exod 12:29–33*) out of which the complex cycle of plagues would then gradually evolve.[15] It should be noted that the pre-priestly author of Exod 12:29–33* was also responsible for a number of additions to Exod 3 which prepare for Moses' first appearance before Pharaoh (Exod 5:1–2*). Among these additions, Exod 3:9 is of crucial importance for our question, because the verse states that YHWH has heard the cry (צעקה) of the Israelites[16] and has become aware of their oppression (לחץ) through the Egyptians. Like עני in Exod 3:7a, the term לחץ is also not idiomatic in the context of forced labor, but again rather designates the oppression of socially marginalized groups (cf. Exod 22:20; 23:9). Most likely, the author thought precisely of the measures taken by Pharaoh in Exod 1:22. The threatened lives of their newborn sons cause the Israelites to cry out, and this cry makes YHWH take action (cf. Exod 22:22!). Moreover, it already anticipates the loud cry uttered by the Egyptians when they become aware that YHWH has slain their firstborn children (Exod 12:30aβ).

Evidently, the author who has created the story on the death of the Egyptian firstborns depicts the situation of the Israelites still very much in the same way as it was depicted in the earliest literary stratum of the Exodus narrative. He shows no awareness of the motif of forced labor, wherefore it seems reasonable to conclude that he was not yet familiar with Exod 1:11–12. This brings us back to the place of the latter verses within the redactional history of Exod 1. In a first step, the basic layer (Exod 1:6*, 8–9, 10*, 22) was expanded with the story of the Hebrew midwives in Exod 1:15–21*. It portrays a first and unsuccessful attempt of Pharaoh to get rid of the newborn male children of the Israelites and was primarily created as a side piece to the story of the commissioning of the Hebrew nurse in Exod 2:7–10aα. In stark contrast to the kind patronage of Pharaoh's daughter who ensures the wellbeing of the foundling, her father

[14] See Berner, *Die Exoduserzählung*, ch. 2, sec. 1.2. Similarly Levin, *Der Jahwist*, 313–321; David M. Carr, "What is Required to Identify Pre-Priestly Narrative Connections Between Genesis and Exodus? Some General Reflections and Specific Cases," in: *A Farewell to the Yahwist?*, 159–180 (here: 167–175).

[15] See Berner, *Die Exoduserzählung*, ch. 3.

[16] The mention of the Israelites' cry in Exod 3:7bα* (ואת צעקתם שמעתי) is part of the same redactional layer. That the cry was caused by ‚his taskmasters' (מפני נגשיו) already reflects a later development which is clearly indicated by the change from the plural to the singular. Together with Exod 3:7bβ, the phrase was added as a reference to the events described in Exod 5. Cf. below, 2.3.

shows his malignity and folly by attempting to make the Hebrew midwives an instrument in his evil plans.[17]

Both stories are still of pre-priestly origin, and the same finally also applies to Exod 1:11–12* which were inserted between Exod 1:10* and the beginning of the story of the midwives (Exod 1:15). Like in Exod 1:15–21*, 22, the two verses focus on the proliferation of the Israelites, which the Egyptians now try to check by imposing on them forced labor (סבלות). By noting that despite these measures the Israelites continued to multiply and thus caused dread among the Egyptians (Exod 1:12) the author defined a new point of departure for the actions taken in Exod 1:15–21*, 22. The smooth transition between Exod 1:12 and 1:15 was only later interrupted by the priestly writer who added Exod 1:13–14* and thus further accentuated the motif of Israel's forced labor he had already found in Exod 1:11–12*. The ultimate evidence for this development is provided by the P^G itself: in Exod 6:6 the writer first takes up the non-priestly term סבלות from Exod 1:11 and then supplements it with the priestly term עבדה from 1:13–14*. Exod 6:6 thus precisely reproduces the sequence from Exod 1:11–14* which can only mean that the priestly writer deliberately refers to this passage on the Egyptian bondage the second part of which (Exod 1:13–14*) he had created himself. Consequently, the first part (Exod 1:11–12*) must be of pre-priestly origin.

Taking a closer look at Exod 1:11–12 one notices that the verses show clear traces of literary growth. Exod 1:11b which provides detailed information on the building activities of the Israelites interrupts the argument of the passage and has to be judged as a later addition.[18] The original pre-priestly text only comprised Exod 1:11a, 12 and read as follows:

1:11a	And they set work masters over them to oppress them with forced labor.	וישימו עליו שרי מסים למען ענתו בסבלתם
1:12	But the more they oppressed them, the more they multiplied and spread, so that they came to dread the Israelites.	וכאשר יענו אתו כן ירבה וכן יפרץ ויקצו מפני בני ישראל

The pre-priestly author of Exod 1:11a, 12 is the first one who explicitly stated that the Egyptians had enslaved the Israelites. He takes up the phrase from Exod 3:7a mentioning the misery (עני) of the Israelites and specifies it by declaring that the Egyptians oppressed them (ענה) with forced labor (סבלות). This new interpretation he then integrated into the account of Moses' first encounter with

[17] See Berner, *Die Exoduserzählung*, ch. 2, sec. 1.3.

[18] See Donald B. Redford, "Exodus I 11," *VT 13* (1963), 401–418 (here: 414–415); Levin, *Der Jahwist*, 314.

his people: Exod 2:11aβ (וירא בסבלתם) relates that Moses becomes aware of his people's forced labor, just like YHWH will declare in Exod 3:7a that he has become aware of the Israelites' misery (ראה ראיתי את עני עמי). Whether the author had any clear idea of what precisely the forced labor involved remains his secret. That the Israelites built the store cities Pithom and Rameses (Exod 1:11b) is a piece of information that was supplemented only later. It has left no further traces within the Exodus narrative and finds its most telling parallel in 1 Kgs 9:19 where the store cities of Solomon are mentioned. Most likely, 1 Kgs 9:19 is dependent on Exod 1:11b and aims to demonstrate that Solomon's slaves used to construct the same types of cities that had been erected by the Israelites enslaved in Egypt. As one consequently must exclude that 1 Kgs 9:19 influenced the statement in Exod 1:11b, the background of the latter verse remains obscure. It cannot be explained as the result of innerbiblical exegesis, but may instead reflect the situation of Jewish diaspora groups somehow connected to the places Pithom and Rameses.[19]

The dread that befalls the Egyptians when they become aware that the Israelites continue to multiply despite the measures taken (Exod 1:12) forms the point of departure for the priestly writer who describes how the burden is even intensified (Exod 1:13–14aα*):

1:13	And the Egyptians made the Israelites serve with rigor	ויעבדו מצרים את בני ישראל בפרך
1:14aα*	and they made their lives bitter with hard service.	וימררו את חייהם בעבדה קשה

Again, only these general remarks are original while the idea that the service included work in mortar and brick (Exod 1:14aα_{fin}: בחמר ובלבנים) and all kinds of field labor (Exod 1:14aβ: ובכל עבדה בשדה) is the result of later editorial work. Both specifications are only loosely connected to the preceding clause and are completely irrelevant for the remaining priestly passages in the Exodus narrative where the details of the Israelites' hard work (עבדה) are never referred to again. Moreover, it can be shown that the details provided by Exod 1:14 are completely inspired by innerbiblical exegesis. The background for the specification in Exod 1:14aα_{fin} is found in Gen 11:3 where the elsewhere unattested combination of the terms 'mortar' (חמר) and 'brick' (לבנה) occurs again. The intertextual connection was triggered by the reasoning of Pharaoh in Exod 1:10* ('Come, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply' – הבה נתחכמה לו פן ירבה) which is strongly reminiscent of the plans devised by the generation of the Tower (Gen

[19] A more detailed discussion of the issue is provided in my forthcoming article "The Egyptian Bondage and Solomon's Forced Labor: Literary Connections between Exod 1-15 and 1 Kgs 1-12," in: *Pentateuch, Hexateuch, or Enneteuch: Identifying Literary Works in Genesis through Kings* (ed. T.B. Dozeman et al.; SBLSymS; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010).

11:3aα: 'Come, let us make bricks' – הבה נלבנה לבנים; Gen 11:4: 'Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower ..., lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth' – הבה נבנה לנו עיר ומגדל ... פן נמוץ על פני כל הארץ). By specifying that the Israelites were forced to work with the building materials of the Tower the author of Exod 1:14aα$_{fin}$ tried to demonstrate that the hybris of the Egyptians was not inferior to that of the generation building the Tower.

An even later addition is found in Exod 1:14aβ where it is specified that the Israelites were also forced to do all kinds of field labor. The roots of this idea do no longer lie in the Book of Genesis, but in the Exodus narrative itself, namely in the post-priestly hail plague.[20] Exod 9:21 recounts that some of Pharaoh's officials ignored Moses' warnings and left their servants (עבדים) in the fields (בשדה). Although it was originally implied that these servants were Egyptians, the motif of the Israelites' service (עבדה) did also leave room for the interpretation that they were Israelites. Precisely this interpretation has triggered the addition of Exod 1:14aβ which explicitly includes field labor among the duties of the Israelite slaves. Exod 1:14b which binds back the list of duties to the general statement in Exod 1:13 is part of the same post-priestly layer that gave Exod 1:13–14 their final form. While the details provided by Exod 1:14aβb have found no further echo within the Exodus narrative and might therefore represent a very late addition, the older idea of the Israelites' work in mortar and brick (Exod 1:14aα$_{fin}$) has inspired the story of Pharaoh increasing their burden (Exod 5) which will be treated in the following paragraph.

4. The Increasing of the Burden: Bricks without Straw (Exod 5)

Exod 5 recounts how the first appearance of Moses and Aaron at the Egyptian court ended in a complete failure. Pharaoh is not only totally unimpressed by their demand to go a three days' journey into the desert to sacrifice to YHWH, but (rightly) suspects a pathetic excuse devised to obscure the Israelites' real plans. As a punishment, he orders that the taskmasters shall no longer give the people the straw to make bricks. Instead, the Israelites now have to gather straw for themselves although the required quantity of bricks is not reduced (Exod 5:6–9*). In its original form (Exod 5:6–13*, 22–23; 6:1), the story continued to tell how the Israelites were forced by their Egyptian taskmasters to comply with the new terms (Exod 5:10–13*) whereupon Moses turns to YHWH with heavy accusations: not only had YHWH failed to fulfill his promise to save the Israelites, their situation had become even worse (Exod 5:22–23). The story culminates with YHWH's reply in Exod 6:1 where he renews his announcement to save the Israelites. The verse prepares for the older priestly revelation scene

[20] On the post-priestly origins of the plague see Levin, *Der Jahwist*, 337; Gertz, *Tradition und Redaktion*, 132–152.

following in Exod 6:2ff. which now reads like an explication of the announcement in Exod 6:1.

The main purpose of the story on the increasing of the burden is to solve a contradiction that had emerged during the post-priestly development of the Exodus narrative. Exod 4:1–4, 6–8, 31a represent a fairly late post-priestly addition which aims at showing that Moses managed to make the people believe in his message of deliverance by working two miraculous actions. This faith of the people stands in sharp contrast to the disobedience with which they meet Moses' message in Exod 6:9 (P^G). In order to explain this sudden change of behavior of the formerly faithful people the author of Exod 5:6–13*, 22–23; 6:1 has created a new situation by increasing the burden.[21] The faith of the people is thus heavily unsettled, and it becomes understandable that they do no longer want to listen to Moses 'because of their discouraged spirit and their hard work' (Exod 6:9bβγ P^G) which in light of Exod 5:6–13* is now all the harder. An even later development is tangible in Exod 5:5, 14–21 where the tale gains the characteristic traits of the murmuring stories. In this context, the Israelite supervisors (שטרים) are introduced to negotiate with Pharaoh and to blame Moses and Aaron after these negotiations have failed (Exod 5:20–21). Like these supervisors, also the Egyptian taskmasters (נגשים) first mentioned by the author of Exod 5:6*, 10*, 13 have to be judged as scribal inventions which add to a late literary picture of the Egyptian bondage. The said taskmasters have finally also made their way to Exod 3 where a redactor claimed that they were responsible for the cry(ing) of the Israelites (Exod 3:7bα_{fin}: מפני נגשיו). He finished by stating that YHWH had also become aware of his people's pain (Exod 3:7bβ: כי ידעתי את מכאביו), a thought obviously inspired by Exod 5:14a according to which the Israelite supervisors were hit.[22]

[21] Similarly GERTZ, *Tradition und Redaktion*, 344, who is however mistaken when he claims that Exod 5:3–6:1 is a homogenious literary unit created by the final redaction of the Pentateuch. The literary development of the passage is in fact much more complex. The basic literary stratum of Exod 5 ist constituted by Exod 5:1–2*, two verses that are still pre-priestly in origin and were once directly followed by the account of YHWH slaying the Egyptian firstborns in Exod 12:29–33*. In a next step, a sequence of three pre-priestly plagues (Exod 7:14–8:28*) was inserted between Exod 5:2 and 12:29, whereupon the priestly writer added the revelation scene in Exod 6:2–7:7*: it directly connected to Exod 5:2 from where it takes up the question of YHWH's identity and established a new perspective on the three plagues following in Exod 7:14–8:28 by claming that it is in fact Aaron who is the spokesman before Pharaoh. Already in an advanced post-priestly phase of development, the first encounter between Moses and Pharaoh (Exod 5:1–2*) was supplemented with Exod 5:3–4* where the author of Exod 3:16–19a, 20; 8:4b, 21b–24a describes how Moses and the Elders started the negotiations on the alleged sacrifice in the wilderness. Only after Exod 5 had reached this state of development was the basic stratum of the story of the increasing of the burden added. See Berner, *Die Exoduserzählung*, ch. 3.

[22] The idea that the Egyptians made used to castigate their Israelite slaves is not expressed elsewhere in the Exodus narrative.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The motif of the Egyptian bondage is not a genuine part of the earliest literary strata of the Exodus narrative[23] which only mention the Israelites' misery (Exod 3:7a: עני) and their oppression through the Egyptians (Exod 3:9b: לחץ). Neither of the two terms is idiomatic in the context of forced labor, but they rather denote the ill treatment of socially marginalized groups. While the precise implications of the Israelites' misery remain obscure, their oppression is most likely to be identified with Pharaoh's order to kill all of their newborn sons (Exod 1:22). That the Israelites were enslaved by the Egyptians is a thought which is first explicitly expressed by the late pre-priestly author of Exod 1:11a, 12; 2:11aβ who introduces the term סבלות. It is taken up and reinterpreted by the priestly writer who speaks of the hard labor (Exod 1:14aα*: עבדה קשה) which makes the Israelites' life bitter.[24] Interestingly, neither Exod 1:11a, 12 nor the priestly passage in Exod 1:13–14* specify any details of the forced labor. The building of the store cities (Exod 1:11b) is a later interpolation, and the same applies to the details mentioned in Exod 1:14aα$_{fin}$βb which both point to a post-priestly background. That the Israelites' service involved all kinds of field labor (Exod 1:14aβb) is a thought inspired by the mention of the servants in the fields (Exod 9:21) while the older notion of the Israelites working in mortar in brick (Exod 1:14aα$_{fin}$) has been developed in light of Gen 11:3 where the same building materials are used to construct the Tower.

The brick motif was then further developed by the author of Exod 5:6–13*, 22–23; 6:1 who describes the increasing of the burden in order to explain why the Israelites reacted with disobedience (Exod 6:9 P^{G}) after they at first had faithfully accepted the message of deliverance (Exod 4:31). Already in its final form including the murmuring passages in Exod 5:5, 14–20 the story has then given rise to the short note in Exod 3:7bα$_{fin}$β which mentions how the people suffered from the evil treatment through their supervisors. In sum, the picture of the Egyptian bondage as it is painted by the Exodus narrative is neither original nor historically reliable. Rather, it has developed as a multi-layered literary fiction which is primarily due to the exegetical skill of learned scribes.

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[23] See already Levin, *Der Jahwist*, 314; Kratz, *The Composition of the Narrative Books*, 280.

[24] It should be noted that by introducing the term עבדה the priestly writer possibly alluded to the demand of the Israelites to go and serve (עבד) YHWH which is attested already in the pre-priestly plagues (Exod 7:16*, 26; 8:16). Again, there is no textual evidence to support the claim that prior to the addition of P^{G} the service of YHWH was meant to contrast the servitude in Egypt. Rather, the motif seems to be due to a literary connection between the Exodus und the revelation at mount Sinai which was first established in Exod 3:12aβγb. See Berner, *Die Exoduserzählung*, ch. 2, sec. 2.2.1.

The present in the book of Qohelet

Introduction

The book of Qohelet contains a, for the Hebrew Bible, strikingly explicit discourse on time. Described by Robinson as a "treatise on time",[1] the book explores an abundance of temporal themes, investigating in depth the consequences that the temporal realities have for human life. Qohelet introduces time as a central concern already in the initial poem in 1:4-11, and time remains a pervasive theme throughout the work, the subject of a tension-filled and sophisticated discussion about the temporal order's conditioning of human existence, as well as the human understanding of and response to this order.

Within the book's discourse on time *the present* stands centre-stage. The present is suggested in several passages as a potential venue to attaining meaning within an otherwise problematic human existence. This is the aspect of the present in Qohelet that scholarly readings have tended to focus on. Thus, the present moment is often interpreted in close connection with Qohelet's discussion of joy, the main question being whether or not (the joy in) the present moment can provide sufficient meaning. Is the present moment put forward in Ecclesiastes a life-embracing carpe diem?[2] Or should one conceive of the attention to the "now" of the human existence more as a memento mori so that the present and its value serve chiefly to remind Qohelet's reader about death to come?[3]

The book contains statements to support views which foreground the present as an encouraging counterpoint to Qohelet's lament about human transience, as well as views which emphasize instead the pessimistic utterances, considering the suggestions about present enjoyment a naïve notion of joy here and now. Thus, in several prominent passages Qohelet is remarkably unequivocal in his praise of the life-possibilities afforded in the present. This is especially the case when he develops his ideas about the character of the present in the book's exhortations to joy.[4] These passages focus univocally on the present, the future disappearing almost entirely from view. Yet, other passages radically draw the value of the "now" of the human existence into doubt.[5]

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[1] Robinson (1946) p. 110.

[2] As in the readings of Lee (2005) and Whybray (1982). Fredericks (1993), p. 63, argues that "… pleasure and enjoyment are good and commendable pursuits to counterbalance one's exhaustive efforts. (…) … Qohelet does nor expect to enjoy life endlessly, any more than he expects to despair of life endlessly."

[3] As is much more the case in the reading of Crenshaw (1987), see for instance p. 23 and p. 183. Zimmer (1999), p. 156, notes that "Die Antwort auf die Frage nach dem Verhältnis von carpe diem and memento mori scheint offensichtlich sehr vom Leser selbst abzuhängen. Man darf vermuten, dass diese Offenheit durchaus im Sinne Kohelets ist."

[4] Schoors (2000) notes seven: 2:24-25, 3:12-13, 3:22, 5:17-19, 8:15, 9:7-9, 11:8. Lee (2005), p. 3, counts eight, including the unusual 7:14 (2:24-26, 3:12-13, 3:22, 5:17-19, 7:14, 8:15, 9:7-10, 11:7-12:1) and states, p. 125, that "Qohelet's theology of enjoyment addresses the most basic and most urgent questions regarding human existence (…) …it is in the regular practice of joy that a person experiences the authentic and complete life intended by God for humanity."

[5] For example 2:14b-20, 4:1-3, and 7:1-4, and, more generally, the dire evaluation of human society here and now.

However, only part of Qohelet's thought about the present moment is encapsulated if one focuses exclusively on determining the hierarchy between Qohelet's affirmations of joy and his pessimistic utterances about the human condition. Rather, I suggest that the presentation of the present moment be evaluated also in relation to the book's discourse on time: this discourse severely impacts Qohelet's understanding of the present moment, including in what ways the present can or cannot be conceived of as meaningful.

Focusing on the present moment in relation to Qohelet's time-discourse may also help us avoid the overly simple dichotomy sometimes established in scholarly works between the positively regarded, at least somewhat meaningful "now" and a problematic and uncertain future whose only reliable point of reference is the inevitability of death. Rather, Qohelet's ideas about how time is structured to govern human life in the present – and how the rule of time is experienced from the human perspective – entail an understanding of the "now" full of contradiction, both affirming human activity now and drawing attention to the problematic relationship that human beings have with the temporal realities in the present.

After briefly delineating a few characteristics of Qohelet's presentation of the present, this paper will look closer at two particular features of the discourse on time: the connection between past, future and present, and humanity's cognitive relationship to the time of the present. Then Qohelet's argument in 8:1-9, which discusses human life possibilities in the present, will be examined. While not belonging to the passages usually referred to in discussions of the present moment in Qohelet, 8:1-9 demonstrates well Qohelet's composite evaluation of the present, as well as the elegant manner in which the author draws into doubt the value and meaning of life in the present. Here Qohelet discusses human activity and use of wisdom, tied closely to reflections about the divine structuring of time. This passage shows the intimate connections in Qohelet's thought-world between the present and the temporal realms of past and future, as well as between human life in the present and human cognitive abilities.

The presentation of the present in Qohelet

Qohelet discusses the present as human life-opportunities here and now. He does not speak about it as a single, snap-shot moment – as one would about the here-and-now dot on a time-line. Instead, he is interested in a present with duration. In a sense, his is an extended present; a time of activity and feeling.[6] A notion of a present which is not large enough to encompass cognitive or physical activity, which bears no relation to past or future, is absent in the book of Qohelet.

The present appears at its most engorged when Qohelet, at times, seems to view the entire current generation of humanity under the heading of a form of present. This is the case when he contrasts the present generation with the past and the future in 1:11 and in other similar reflections, such as 4:2-3 and 7:10. However, most frequently the present is

[6] Howard-Brook and Gwyther (2005) suggest that this is a basic characteristic of "biblical" conceptions of time. They further argue that the realm of the present in what they term a "present-oriented" society is given a high significance – rather than being the dividing line between past and future it is envisaged as an enduring reality.

presented as the life-opportunities afforded here and now – whether that be experiences of oppression and evil, or of joy, or as various other situations facing humankind in time.[7]

The extendedness of the present moment does not, however, render Qohelet's discussion of it concrete only, devoid of abstract reflection on this dimension of time and its relationship to a wider, temporal framework.[8] Qohelet's discussion of the present, as of other aspects of the temporal reality in this world, grapples keenly with fairly general, abstract notions of time. As seen by Machinist, Qohelet is in the process of moving towards a higher degree of abstract conceptualization, and a significant part of this development happens through his reflections on time. Noting the use of terms from the semantic fields of time and knowledge, such as חשבן, מעשׂה and עולם, to describe both a concept and reflection on that concept, Machinist states perceptively that in the book of Qohelet "…we witness the beginnings of a technical vocabulary created or adapted to deal with the problem of time in human existence."[9]

I am intrigued, also, that Qohelet's presentation of life in the present appears intimately connected with movement. Qohelet turns again and again to observe what happens in the present, as if adjusting himself continually to the present which faces him now - and now - and now…[10] The author uses an abundance of verbs of movement not only to describe human activity in the present, but also to depict continuous, repetitious movement within the temporal order which conditions the human life as it is lived here and now. Simultaneously, however, he underlines that this flux of movement which makes up the temporal framework of human existence and experience takes place within fixed world structures.[11]

The present and the past and future

Whether discussing human life-conditions under the sun more generally or reflecting specifically on the temporal realities of our life now, it is a marked tendency of Qohelet's to portray life in the present as lived within the constraints of the cosmic order. He stresses that there is a wider framework of time within which the present must be understood: its relation or none-relation to past and future very much affects the possibilities of establishing within the present a meaningful existence. Furthermore,

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[7] Qohelet's reflections are not systematized – he does not define his concepts carefully as one would in a philosophical treatise, leaving instead the notions and themes of his discourse flexible and consequently somewhat vague.

[8] Pace the view of OT time conception as something eminently concrete in, for instance, Marsh (1952) and Robinson (1946). Barr (1962), p. 98-99, refers to Ecclesiastes to show that the widespread rejection of the biblical writers' ability to conceive of abstract time is erroneous, arguing that if the Hebrew word for time should appear in a context which reflects on time, this demonstrates that it can be used about time in general. According to Barr עת is used in such a way in Qoh. 9:11, the language of which one must suppose was intelligible for the contemporary, Hebrew reader.

[9] Machinist (1995), p. 171.

[10] Christianson (1998), p. 222, helpfully lists words relating to movement in Ecclesiastes. His purpose here is to demonstrate the physical aspect of (the language) of Qohelet's narrative journey: "As if to say 'I set out, yet I return to where I began and am unable to complete my journey (…)' Qoheleth is traveling." Christianson, p. 224.

[11] Note for instance the juxtaposition of depictions of temporal movement with the word עולם in 1:4, in 3:2-8.11 vs. 3:14-15 and 12:5-7.

humanity's inability to properly understand this temporal framework, and indeed the entire temporal dimension of their existence, also shapes their engagement with their conditions of life in the present.

Several interpreters have noted Qohelet's emphasis on the inaccessibility of the past, and the bearing of this reality on the present. The reading of Frydrych offers an interesting perspective because it takes Qohelet's understanding of the cosmos seriously as an impact on the rest of his work.[12] Commenting on the poem in 1:4-11, Frydrych notes that man is here shown as unable to comprehend the supra-generational cyclicity which characterises the cosmic order. In fact, however, the things which are true of any particular generation are also true of another, so that in a certain sense the temporal movement of the generations is cyclic: "However, this cyclic temporal movement is accompanied by an additional linear element that accounts for the displacement of one generation by another, and yet a wider, supra-generational cyclicity, one which accounts for things that have the appearance of being new, but in reality are merely a repetition of something that took place outwith the reach of the present human memory."[13]

In the initial poem it is especially 1:10-11 which detail the consequences that Qohelet envisions the world order (described in 1:4-8 and summed up in 1:9) as having for human existence. These two verses challenge directly the idea of a human continuity to match that of the cosmos which was introduced in 1:4 where the chain of generations moved seamlessly through an unchanging world. In stark contrast with the images in 1:5-7 of continuity and unbroken repetition, 1:10-11 questions this initial assumption, describing the human being as unable to transcend the present in which he or she lives:

1:10-11: *If it is said: See, this is new –that which is before us existed already ages ago. There is no remembrance of the former generations and there will be no remembrance either of the coming generations who are to be by those who follow after them.*

Humanity is strikingly unable to forge links between what should be their past, present and future. This basic condition of life creates several problems for mankind. Bentzen focuses completely on Qohelet's resultant rejection of remembrance: that one will never be remembered by one's successors. According to Bentzen this essentially constitutes Qohelet's (wholly negative) answer to the question in 1:3.[14] It certainly pains Qohelet that the dead are forgotten regardless of their merits, and he returns to this problem

[12] Frydrych (2002), p. 115: "… the whole of Qoheleth's reasoning stems from the outline of the cosmos that this passage spells out." Kamano (2002), p. 105, similarly underlines the importance of the cosmology in this poem for Qohelet's further reflections.

[13] Frydrych (2002), p. 118. Unfortunately, he does not problematize this further, suggesting simply on p. 119 that because of the inaccessibility of the supra-generational cyclicity Qohelet focuses his investigation of human meaning on what can be achieved in the life-span of a single individual. This understanding does not account very well for the many statements throughout the book about the problems of past and future in relation to the present, and about the problems created by humanity's lacking intellectual prowess.

[14] Bentzen (1942), p. 14. Bentzen even translates "man husker ikke de gamle", thus underlining that in his view the issue is that of people not being remembered. See also p. 10: "Verden er et evigt Kredsløb. End ikke I mindet lever man videre. Hermed er også det Gammelisraelittiske Haab gjort til intet."

several times.[15] However, 1:10-11 also renders problematic the situation of human beings *during* the days of their lives.

Because of the way that time is set up humanity is cut off from the past and the future. On a very basic level this makes human continuity impossible. As Berger has argued, the process of forgetting, which is shown in the initial poem to be built into the fabric of time, subverts all human meaning as it erases history and gain. Since humans are historical beings the constant moving of time – with its constant production of forgetfulness - casts the meaning of their existence into doubt.[16]

The reality of time's continual repetition can thus have as consequence in human life that the present loses its value. Not only is it doomed to become past - it is doomed to disappear completely and be forgotten, as the memory of the past has disappeared in the present (1:11). Since the same type of events and occurrences recur continually there will always be a new present to replace the current one – and there will never be space to remember the time past which dies away with the individuals. Therefore, the time of the world is in direct collision with individual, human existence *and* with collective efforts to establish historical continuity. The present exists in a very uneasy relationship both with the past with which there is no continuity and which is wholly inaccessible to us in the present – and with the future: in the future it is *my own* oblivion which is at stake, an exacerbation of the problem with the past. Consequently, there is a sense in Qohelet that the past and the future are eating away at the edges of the present.

Qohelet reinforces this idea in the royal fiction's conclusion, especially in 2:16-19. Because Qohelet will be forgotten, the argument runs, neither his wise achievements, nor the joy that he has experienced constitutes a יתרון. A further consequence of the lacking remembrance is that the doer is divorced from his accomplishments, so that he can neither know nor influence whether his successor will be a wise man. This double focus on Qohelet being forgotten *and* being prevented from knowing who will follow him is strongly reminiscent of the argument in 1:9-11 which emphasized both the future generations' forgetting the present and the present ignorance about the future. And Qohelet's life opportunities in the present are implicated as well when the past and future disappear from view: *"And I hated all my toil which I have toiled with under the sun which I must leave to the man who comes after me"* laments Qohelet (2:18). Instead of simply affirming the present over against the lost past and the unknown future, Qohelet suggests that the loss of these temporal horizons results in a devaluation of the present as well: The despair over the lost past and future seems to bleed into the present.

Shorter statements later in the book maintain the impression of the present being problematically fenced in by past and future. For instance, when Qohelet cautions against

[15] For example 2:14b-16, 3:19-21, 4:16, and 6:12.

[16] Berger (2001), p. 148-149. Frydrych (2002) does not consider the limitations of memory as problematic as does Berger. However, he notes: "The individual generational cycles of human existence lack any tangible and persistent link; they are connected by human memory alone. This has only got a limited reach…" As a persistent link between the generations is lacking, all human achievement is bound to disappear from human memory at some point. Frydrych (2002), p. 119.

nostalgia: there can be no longing for a past to which man has no access and which is furthermore "the same" as the present due to the sameness in time (7:10). Each of the instances of narrative in the book concludes simply that all will be forgotten and that the past is a lost country (1:12-2:20, 4:13-16, 9:13-15).

The future of my own existence is opaque as well, as is also the present facing me now: human beings simply do not understand the set-up of the temporal world within which we move (3:11, 3:22, 6:12, 8:7 and 10:16).

The present and human cognition

The last couple of textual examples in particular imply that Qohelet does not simply wish to suggest the present as a narrower, yet fundamentally unthreatened venue for meaning.[17] The problem of human existence in time has a forceful cognitive dimension: the time-order as it actually governs human life is not the same as the human experience of time. The cognitive nature of many of the problems experienced by human beings living in time exacerbate these problems, creating an extra layer of tension between time as it orders the world at large and human life in time.

It is generally acknowledged that Qohelet depicts human beings as unable to understand the future. In Qohelet's view, there is something fundamentally wrong about the temporal set-up which makes it "crooked" (1:15, 7:14), and it can be concluded about the obscure character of the changing times and events of our lives that "God has made both one and the other so that man shall not figure out anything after him" (7:14). Everything happening after death is entirely out of view as well because of the reality of oblivion and the total annihilation in death of the individual: "… the dead know nothing and they have no reward anymore for their memory is forgotten." (9:5). Qohelet laments again and again that man does know the future and asks rhetorically whether anybody can remedy this situation. Ironically, the only one who is able to transgress and manipulate the temporal limitations of man and who might thus repair the human situation is the very divinity who has established the temporal order (3:14-15).

The issue of human non-understanding is not only raised in relation to the future or the time of the divinity, however – if this were the case Qohelet would agree with the authors of, for instance, several psalms which suggest man's inability to understand the temporal reality of God because of his different temporal conditions. Rather, man does not understand his present or his past either.

This radical claim makes sense if one keeps in mind the presentation in the framing poems of cosmic time and human time. Here Qohelet begins to unravel the seeming correspondences and similarities between human time and world time, demonstrating that the discourse on time must concern itself with several "levels" of time, in order to accommodate the diverse temporal realities of world, man and God, as well as the human cognitive relationship to these.

[17] Simultaneously, however, the problematic nature of time and our failure to understand time are among the issues that move Qohelet to joy-exhortations; see for instance 9:7-10 in relation to 9:4-6 and 11:7-10 in relation to 11:5-6 and 12:1-7.

Another key-text is the poem in chapter 3:1-8 which engages directly with the extended present of human life, questioning its value given the temporal conditions of man. While Qohelet's first poem concerned itself with the cosmic framework of human existence, the focus is here narrowed down to humanity's everyday life. Yet here as well Qohelet presents the temporal dimension of human life as characterized by repetition – and suggests that perceived differences are in reality cycles of sameness, confirming to a larger pattern. As humanity was fooled into believing that the sameness of things in human life ensures a degree of continuity (1:4-11), they also expect the ordering of "times" in their own existence to give them points of reference through which they can engage intellectually with their present. However, it is not so: rather, the human experience of alternating times prevents them from establishing any reliable patterns of expectations towards time (3:2-8, 7:13-4). This is not only problematic in relation to their future, but excludes any יתרן of their toil in the present as well (3:9).

That the insufficient cognitive prowess of humanity is at the heart of their failed relationship with time is made even more explicit in chapter three than it was in 1:10-11: man is shown to be unable to grapple with the realities of time (3:11) – this is an all-pervasive problem, encompassing very much the present as well as the wider reaches of time.

At several points during his work, Qohelet seems to suggest that the temporal set-up is somehow deceptive. It is not simply that humanity does not understand time – rather, we misconstrue the temporal conditions of our life (1:10, 7:10 and 8:17, for instance). This situation is highly problematic, because it means that the human experience of time cannot be trusted, even when it seems to us to be extremely reliable. I suggest that Qohelet is very much aware of this problematic; that he works consciously within a paradoxical discourse where every statement made from the human perspective about the time-order is unavoidably destabilized because it is also being emphasized that the human experience of time cannot be trusted. This destabilizes Qohelet's own presentation as well.

While it is not possible to investigate it in depth here, I suggest that this problematic may have contributed to the author's compositional choice to introduce stark contradictions and tensions into his presentation of the present, as well as into other aspects of the time-discourse. If so, it is an elegant strategy: Qohelet is describing the changeless structures and repetitious character of the temporal world, but he has to do so through the lens of human cognition – and seeing as the human mind is unable to properly understand the temporal realities conditioning our lives and invariably miscomprehends them, that which is in reality unchanging continually changes and moves about in Qohelet's presentation.

In this connection we may also note Qohelet's choice of a repetitious, almost cyclical mode of presentation which examines ever again the same themes. Kawin states: "Koheleth is pictured as continually rediscovering them [his observations]. He returns – from not considering, or from an unacceptable conclusion, or from the end of the last

instant of considering – and considers again."[18] The repetitious style emphasises pertinent points in Qohelet's discussion of time and cognition; although Qohelet turns again and again to face human existence in the present and its wider cosmic framework, he never fully manages to achieve the desired knowledge and understanding.[19]

Case study: Ecclesiastes 8:1-9

In several ways Ecclesiastes 8:1-9 is a problematic passage. It is seeped in contradiction and to make matters worse, it is not particularly easy to figure out what the passage is actually about: it envelops a reflection on the divine ordering of the temporal world within a discussion about earthly powers and the correct attitude before them. It is, furthermore, difficult to be entirely sure *who* Qohelet is talking about at various points of 8:1-9. This passage with its convoluted conclusions thrives on ambiguity, especially regarding the identity of the king and the potential ability of the wise to cope with the realities of power and time facing him.

While it is difficult to completely bypass the fact that Qohelet in this passage has something unexpected to say about the human relationship to time, in scholarly readings the temporal aspect of 8:1-9 often gets shoved quite far into the background. Instead, the evaluation of earthly powers is placed at the forefront. Loader's interpretation is characteristic of this kind of work, seeing the passage mainly as a meditation on human power: "… the king can do what he pleases (v. 3c) and no one can call him into account (v. 4). In this manner the Preacher stresses the political supremacy of the king and the total powerlessness of the subject."[20] Brown describes the passage as "a survivalist's guide" for conducting oneself before royal power.[21] However, as well as not giving sufficient weight to the statements on time and the temporal order in the passage, this type of reading is hard pressed to account for Qohelet's change of mind between the beginning and the end of the passage regarding earthly power: in 8:9 Qohelet is happy to state that the earthly hierarchies of power are to the detriment of human beings, while in 8:2-5 he championed a much more traditional doctrine, allowing the wise the ability to act prudently before power to avoid evil consequences.[22] These two viewpoints are separated by an explicit reflection on the divinely ordered cosmic time in 8:6-8.

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[18] Kawin (1972), p. 40. Yet Kawin would argue, p. 41, that: "These returnings never threaten to become repetitions, because each rediscovery is preceded by a conclusion that, closing the matter for us, frees us to experience each repetition as something new." Fredericks (1993), p. 118-119, has also noted the cyclical mode of presentation, arguing that Qohelet structures his argument in a repetitious, cyclical way which mirrors his belief that the unity of reality is to be found in its repetition.

[19] We have to disagree with Eliade (1954), p. 90, therefore, who argues that through eternal repetitions (as those found in Qohelet) "…time is suspended, or at least its virulence is diminished." Rather, the oppressiveness of time weighs heavy on Qohelet – and the repetitious style with its contradictions underlines this.

[20] Loader (1986), p. 96.

[21] Brown (2000), p. 87.

[22] Hatton (2008), p. 119, attempts to deal with this problem by arguing that the passage is dialogic, allowing contradictory voices to be heard: "So Qohelet 8.2 begins a passage on the subject of obedience to authority with an appeal for unconditional compliance with royal commands as both pious and right (…) Verses 8.3-8 urge further prudential reasons for loyality, namely respect for royal power in an uncertain world. So Qohelet 8.9 is unexpectedly negative…" Brown (2000), p. 87, simply acknowledges that earthly powers have a tendency to use them at others' expense, but does not go into the matter further.

My interest here is to suggest how this passage with its puzzling statements about time and power might be understood if read in close connection with the temporal discourse in the book – focusing especially on the present because the possibility of a well-considered life in the present is an important subject in 8:1-9. The emphasis will be on the two characteristics of the present picked out above, namely the connection between the present and the wider temporal framework, and humanity's problematic cognitive relationship to the present.

8:1-5: The wise knows time and judgement

The passage in 8:1-9 concerns itself with authority, both earthly and divine, discussing the possibility and the benefits of obedience, as well as meditating on the relationship between subject and ruler. After an initial praise of wisdom in 8:1, 8:2-8:4 suggest several reasons why one should obey the earthly ruler: because of the divine oath (8:2), because of the king's sovereign power (8:3),[23] and because the subject cannot question the king (8:4). Most interesting for our purpose here, however, is the baffling statement from Qohelet in 8:5 as he argues that such obedience is absolutely possible: he claims that the wise man knows "time and judgement." The man who is wise can discern what will be the proper action at the proper moment; to him time makes sense in the present:

Qohelet 8:5: *"He who keeps the commandment shall not experience evil, and the heart of the wise knows time and judgement."*

Just how unexpected this viewpoint is becomes clear if one compares it with Qohelet's other statements on the subjects of knowing the right time to act and understanding in general the temporal set-up of the world. Qohelet 8:5 seems to completely contradict earlier statements such as Qohelet 3:11:

"He has made every thing beautiful in its time; he has also placed העלם in their heart, yet so that man cannot figure out the work that God has done from the beginning to the end."

Similarly, 7:13-14 states: *"Behold the work of God, for who can make that straight which he has made crooked? In the day of prosperity be joyful, and in the day of adversity realise that God has made both one and the other so that man shall not figure out anything after him."*

While the latter of these two verses focuses on the future almost exclusively and could therefore more easily coexist peacefully with verse 8:5, verse 3:11 is orientated much more towards the present, reflecting on creation's temporal dimension in its totality. This is also the case in verse 8:17 where Qohelet unequivocally claims that:

[23] Krüger (2004), p. 152, notes about 8:2.3a that it is "an admonition that is in several respects unclear and ambiguous." For instance, is the reader asked to obey the king or to pay attention to his mood? What is meant by the oath of God? Should the Masoretic text division be kept? Does בהל mean to hurry or to be frightened? Longman (1998), p. 211, suggests a departure from the Masoretic verse division and moving "to not hasten" from 8:3 he translates: "…and do not rush into a vow to God." While this emendation does not strike me as necessary and ruins the parallelism between hasten/depart in 8:3, it does pick up on the fact that the wider passage concerns itself with divine as well as earthly authority.

"I saw the whole work of God; that man cannot figure out the work which is done under the sun. Even though a man works hard to seek it, he shall not figure it out, and even if the wise man claims to know (it), he cannot figure it out."

The encouraging view of 8:5 jars painfully against this highly emphatic statement[24] from which it is separated by only a dozen verses.

A striking feature in 8:2-5 is, however, that Qohelet has removed God and the temporal order established by him from the equation. Focusing solely on earthly affairs he is able to affirm the human ability to choose the proper moment to act. Yet, while earthly power is the sole focus in 8:2-5, the scope of the discussion expands in 8:6. Qohelet here elegantly merges the question about timely action in the worldly sphere with the problem of recognizing time in general.[25]

8:6-9: The evil of man lies heavy upon him

The particular focus in 8:6 is the proper recognition of the time to come. This encompasses both that which is appropriate or characteristic of the future and the awareness of when life will end. Humanity's faulty and limited perception of structured world-time, and therefore of the quality and content of time to come, is an issue that Qohelet has already discussed at length – especially in chapters 1 and 3. He is therefore able to indicate, through catch-phrases already known to the reader, the change of focus from worldly power to divine establishment of the temporal order and the human's place within it. Most noticeable are the phrases "every matter has its time" (cf. 3:1 and 3:17) and "the evil of man is great upon him" (cf. 1:13), and Qohelet also alludes to the previously discussed troubles of mortal man:

8:6: *"Indeed, every matter has its time and judgement, for the evil of man is great upon him."*[26]

In this subtle shift of focus, the temporal reality of man - his mortality and his understanding of the time which governs his life - comes to occupy the space held in 8:5 by the prudent time to act in relation to the earthly powers. It is this shift which allows Qohelet to turn upside-down the conclusion of 8:5 and state flat out in 8:7 that man cannot know what will be.[27] Qohelet emphasizes that in temporal matters no real power belongs to man – and certainly not within the sphere of cognition and timely actions.

Krüger suggests differently as the implication of 8:6 that the time-bound nature of all events and actions (v. 6a) is a consequence of the "evil" of human beings…[28] Thus, it is

[24] 8:17 repeats constructions with מצא + לא three times in this one verse!

[25] A similar move can be seen in 4:1 to 4:2-3 where the lament about oppression under the sun is connected to the wider (temporal) structures in the world.

[26] The main textual issue in 8:6-7 is the translation of the many occurrences of כי: I have chosen to translate the first emphatically, and the second causally.

[27] As noted by Krüger (2004), p. 156, the statement about man's evil lying heavily upon him in 8:7 does not fit well with the claim that the wise will not know any evil thing.

[28] Krüger (2004), p. 156.

improbable that the wise man can make use of the time-bound nature of all events. Krüger interprets the passage as dealing with an opportunistic type of behaviour which, given the temporal realities in 8:6ff, makes little or no sense.[29] I agree with Krüger that the discussion of time in 8:6ff impacts the scenario of 8:2-5, but I do not think that it is the general guilt of every human being which is in view here[30] – rather, the limitations placed by the temporal conditions on human existence and cognition demand that Qohelet adjust his view in 8:2-5 on the human ability to act in a well-considered manner at the appropriate moment.

The imagery of verses 8:6-9 draws on the semantic field of power, as did the previous verses, incorporating especially images from the sphere of military and authority. However, the positive assertions of 8:2-5 are completely gone.

8:8 retains the temporal focus, using again language which already has well-established connotations in Qohelet's discourse on time: the subject is holding on to the רוח; a word which has been used, firstly, about the wind exemplifying the cosmic temporal-structure that man is unable to grasp or fully participate in and, secondly, about the divinely given life-breath.[31] Probably both are in view here. As in 2:14b-16 the problem of death is in view, impacting the life-possibilities in the present. Simultaneously, I would argue, there is in the image a dimension of non-knowing, of the opaque, of that which continually slips out of our grasp when we try to hold on to it… Thus, in 8:8 both of the temporal order's problematic dimensions discussed above are in view, dealing severe damage to humanity's attempts to live meaningfully, also in the present. Life becomes a battle in which man continually attempts to gain dominion over that which is out of his reach. It is a relentless war, from which there is no respite and no discharge, save in the form of the obliteration of the individual in his death.[32]

Because Qohelet in 8:6-8 stresses man's lack of knowledge about that which is to come, one could object to the present reading that Qohelet's focus changes away from the time of the present completely when he moves his discussion from earthly matters to the implications of the cosmic design for humanity. I would argue differently that it does not.

Rather, Qohelet demonstrates it as divinely willed that man cannot figure out his temporal conditions, even to the extent of acting sensibly in his present. Qohelet's depiction of man's inability to understand the temporal reality well enough to navigate within it, including developing reasonable expectations about what is to come, springs in this passage directly out of his discussion in 8:2-5 of acting sensibly in the world here and

[29] Krüger (2004), p. 157.

[30] Regarding the word רעת I agree with Whybray (1989), p. 132, and Longman (1998), p. 214, that it is not human sin, but human ignorance which is in view here.

[31] Crenshaw (1998), p. 152, notes the ambiguity of the reference to ruah as it might deny "that anyone is strong enough to resist the powerful force of the wind" or alternatively "indicate life-force, which no one can hold at the moment of death", and he prefers the second option.

[32] Interpreters who discuss in connection with 8:8 whether one could be discharged from Israel's battles or not, looking to the law-code for support, seem to miss the point of the verse: the battle is a metaphor for life and it is unimportant whether it emulates actual warfare in this particular aspect, pace Whybray (1989) p. 215, and Ogden (1987) p. 133.

now. Verses 8:6-8 thus provide the cosmic framework within which human, present activity must be understood and judged. Furthermore, the language which Qohelet uses in 8:6ff help maintain the connection to the present life of man, for instance when Qohelet refers to the different times and events in man's present life like he did it in 3:1-8. The use in 8:6-8 of central words from 8:2-5 have the same function, especially רעה and ידע.

Finally, Qohelet returns explicitly to this passage's opening theme: earthly powers and how to act before them.[33] Thus, in 8:9, Qohelet ties together his initial observation about the reality of worldly power with his discussion of man's temporal reality. Having interlocked notions of human and divine dominion the narrator passes judgement on human rule, flat-out contradicting what was said initially.[34] The relationship between divinity and man in the realm of time (8:6-8) so affects the relationship man/man that Qohelet reverses his previous statement. Connecting the human inability to relate to time with the situation in human society he suggests, now, that every relationship of power even within the sphere of human life is problematic. Is God still lurking in the background here; the ultimate king and oppressor?[35]

The reversal in the attitude towards earthly rulers, as well as the fact that the reflections in this passage begin and end in the realm of human activity in the present underline also that the present moment is implicated in Qohelet's indictment on the human understanding of time. The deceptiveness of the temporal order has implications both for man's understanding of the future and the widest limits of his existence, and for his everyday life, in that even his seeming ability to navigate in the present is revealed as a mirage. Man cannot even comfortable judge his ability to act responsibly towards human rulers – it would *appear* that one can make the right decisions if one is wise, but Qohelet suggests that even in human matters, such appearances are deceptive: the divinely established temporal order is unknowable and man's belief that he can intellectually engage with it and navigate within it in his daily life is fundamentally a mirage.

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[33] I agree with Longman (1998), p. 215, that 8:9 makes much more sense as a conclusion to 8:1-8 than as the introduction to the next unit.

[34] One may of course understand the verse as dealing with another kind or another aspect of power entirely and thus disregard the tension with 8:2-5. Crenshaw (1998), p. 153, chooses such a solution and does not comment on the relationship between 8:2-5 and 8:9, asking instead whether those wielding power are most likely to hurt themselves or others.

[35] The entire passage is somewhat ambiguous regarding the identity of the ruler. Even in 8:2-5 where the earthly king is explicitly in focus, the author uses language that sows doubt about this king's identity. Firstly, there is the issue of "the oath of God" or the "divine oath". This could be either a subjective or an objective genitive, referring either to God's oath regarding kingship or alternatively an oath sworn in the name of God to the king. See for instance Crenshaw (1998), p. 150. Secondly, the language about the king is elsewhere also used about the divinity: in Ps. 115:3 it is God who does what he wants (חפצ עשׂה), and Qohelet's warning about the distance between subject and ruler is not a far cry from the warning in 5:1 to keep in mind that "… God is in heaven and you are on earth." As noted by Longman (1998), p 212, the warning in 9:4 that the king cannot be gainsaid is similar to a rhetorical question posed by Job to God in Job 9:12. An interesting passage for comparison is 4:1-3 which discusses the structures of power/oppression and power in the human realm while simultaneously referring to the divine responsibility for the wider order of the world.

Concluding remarks

This paper has suggested that exploring Qohelet's extensive discussion of human life in the present in connection with his discourse on time allows for a more composite and a more faithful understanding of the present moment in this book. Two venues in particular have been investigated within the discourse on time: firstly, the relationship of the present to the past and future. Here it was argued that Qohelet's despair over the loss of these temporal horizons seems to bleed into the present, destabilizing this temporal dimension as well. Secondly, humanity's cognitive ability (or inability) to engage with their temporal conditions was considered. Qohelet shows that the problem of time in human existence is to a great extent cognitive in nature as human beings are unable to properly understand and relate to the temporal realities conditioning their life. Finally, 8:1-9 was looked at in some detail. Here Qohelet weaves together advice about human life in the present with reflections on the temporal conditions of humanity and their understanding of these. In this passage Qohelet reevaluates his expectations regarding the ability of human beings to live and act well here and now after having reflected on the wider framework of the temporal realities and their impact on life in the present.

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‘Jewish Monotheism and Pre-Socratic Philosophy: Early Christian Perspectives’

Hywel Clifford

It is a commonplace view in the modern study of the Old Testament that ‘monotheism’ arose late in ancient Israelite religion. This theology, seemingly untypical in antiquity, is usually explained by various developmental factors, above all by the Babylonian Exile as the political crisis that precipitated the need for a theological response to enable the exiled Judeans to make sense of their suffering, and to provide hope for the future: one God remained supreme in spite of circumstance. This view has sometimes carried with it the suggestion that there were parallel theological developments of a similar kind among the 6th-5th Centuries BC Pre-Socratic or early Greek philosophy/ers (hereafter EGP/s) whose extant fragments also seem to attest an untypical assent to one supreme deity from within a traditionally polytheistic society. EGPs reacted, to some extent, against the older mythic poetry of Homer and Hesiod and anticipated the classical philosophy of Plato and Aristotle; they are, thus, prime examples of development.

The comparative suggestion itself has been made on the basis of a number of observations: the critical dating of the most explicitly monotheistic OT texts (above all, Deutero-Isaiah) to the 6th Century BC, when the new theologies of EGP also emerged; the presence of Greeks in Babylon (according to the Weidner tablets, ANET 308b) with whom Jews might have interacted; the shared impact of political change across the Near East, including eastern Greece (i.e. Ionia), following the meteoric rise of the Persian Cyrus, which led to fresh cultural exchanges; and hypotheses about the development of ancient thought, in particular Karl Jasper’s notion of an Axial Age as a period of intellectual ferment and progress as represented in both Greek and Jewish thought c. 500 BC.[1] Each of these observations, whose explanatory force is questionable, naturally requires separate treatment.

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[1] Lohfink 1969: 63 wrote: ‘...monotheism proper emerged in Israel not before new theoretical insights into the divine world were discovered in other parts of the ancient world. Zoroaster in Persia and the pre-Socratic philosophers of Greece are Deutero-Isaiah’s contemporaries.’ (quoted in Lang 1983: 46-47). In a more apologetic vein, Whitley 1957: 144-45 wrote: ‘...cosmological discussions were a feature of contemporary thought, that the Ionians were concerned with the search for the First Cause, and that Zoroastrianism accounted for the presence of good and evil in the world by the postulate of a Dualism of

But the main purpose here is to consider the evidence on which the supposition of monotheistic parallels is based, as found in early Christian texts whose writers were among the first to propose such parallels, even if on the basis of quite different assumptions. There are three sections: (1) EGP in early Christian texts (which will be summarised briefly during the presentation); (2) testimonia in defence of monotheism; and (3) concluding reflections.

1. *EGP in early Christian writings*

The content of EGP has not been preserved in original manuscripts but in the writings of later authors from the Classical, Hellenistic and Roman periods: in Greek (e.g. Plato, Aristotle, Aëtius, Diogenes Laertius, Plutarch) and then in Latin (e.g. Cicero, Seneca). To the extent that it can be established by the standard critical means, this textual tradition contains original quotations and arguments amidst the later evaluations and uses of its content.[2] The early Christians, who composed in these languages, not only made use of this tradition but also augmented it with material not attested elsewhere. However, their interaction with that tradition raises crucial issues about the manner of reportage by groups with alternative and often tendentious agendas.[3] But it should at least be observed that early Christian writers were perfectly capable of describing in a neutral manner the historical importance of EGPs as individuals in historical succession and as founders of

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Light and Darkness. It is probable, however, that Deutero-Isaiah was not only acquainted with such speculations, but was also aware of the difficulties inherent in them; for he solved the Ionic problem of creation by claiming that Yahweh is the sole Creator and Controller of the universe, and the Zoroastrian problem of good and evil by his representation of Yahweh as Lord also of the realms whence moral and related problems arise...'.

2 For a useful introduction to EGP sources see Mansfeld 1999.

3 The early Christians made use of the full range of the available sources (classical philosophy, commentary, successions, biography, doxography). This included serious philosophical discussion and legendary biographical materials; the latter contained tales of virtue (used as analogies in defence of Christians) and tales of vice (contrasted with ideal forms of Christian behaviour). On the former, see Irenaeus Heres. 1.25; Tatian Addr. 2-3, 19, 25; Theophilus Auto. 3.5, 7; Tertullian Marcion 1.1; Origen Cels. 2.43; 3.51; Lactantius Inst. 3.23, 25; 3.23; Epit. 38, 39; Clementia Recog. 5.18; Arnobius Heathen 2.13; Eusebius Const. 9; Jerome Ep. 66.8; 79.9; 76.2; 109.2; Jerome Vigil. 4; Gregory Eps. 3.2.1; 135.1; Cassian Conf. 5; Chrysostom 1 Tim. 1 1; Augustine City 14.20. On the latter, see Justin Apol. 1.46; 2.8; Athenagoras Plea 31; Clement Instr. 2.11, 3.9; Strom. 1.16; Tertullian Apol. 39, 46; Martyras 4; Origen Cels. 3.54; 5.41; 7.41, 63; 8.28, 30, 35; Arnobius Heathen 1.14; Lactantius Inst. 3.3; Epit. 33; Jerome Virg. 2.7, 14; Jerome Ep. 48.13; 52.15; 58.5; 60.5, 12; 79.9; Jerome Pamm. 38, 39; Jovin. 2.9, 11, 14, 33; Gregory Or. 7.10; 27.9; Ambrose Clergy 2.4; Virgins 4.17; 5.34; 12.80; 13.83; Chrysostom Widow 4; Augustine City 8.3; Trinity 13.5.8.

philosophical schools who exercised a major and long-lasting influence on Greek history and culture.[4] Indeed, some early Christian writers (e.g. Hippolytus) have provided very important sources for the modern reconstructions of EGP.

If the historical importance and influence of EGP was acknowledged by early Christian writers how then did this fit into their historical and theological perspectives, nurtured by the biblical texts as their primary sources for ancient history? This raises the question of the origins of Greek philosophy from an apologetic standpoint; in other words, how could the significance of EGP be accepted, and yet contained? Broadly speaking, early Christians, following in many respects the apologetic strategies of their Hellenistic Jewish predecessors (i.e. Ps.-Aristeas, Aristobulus, Philo and Josephus) accounted for EPG as a part of Greek philosophy in three main ways.

First, the philosophers arrived at truth because they had used the writings of Moses. They either stole his truthful ideas, or their false ideas indicated they had misunderstood, changed or rejected his teachings. The argument from historical priority had been used in Ptolemaic period claims for the priority of Egypt over Greece, putting to good effect the reports that Plato and Pythagoras had visited Egypt. Jews and Christians employed a variant of it: philosophers had read the writings of Moses in Egypt; or they had available to them pre-LXX translations of them (cf. Aristob. fr. 3). The philosophers might have had other intermediary barbarian teachers, but as a bringer of culture Moses, and before him Abraham, had greater antiquity.[5] As an inheritor of this apologetic tradition, Augustine wrote:

> In the time of our prophets, then, whose writings had already come to the knowledge of almost all nations, the philosophers of the nations had not yet arisen, - at least, not those who were called by that name, which originated with Pythagoras the Samian, who was becoming famous at the time when the Jewish captivity ended. Much more, then, are the

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[4] Justin Dial. 2; Clement Strom. 1.19; Tertullian Apol. 2; Nationes 1.4; Origen Cels. 1.43; 3.25; 5.54, 77, 89, 97; Cyprian Ep. 75; Lactantius Inst. 3.2, 6, 14, 16; 5.8; 6.24; 7.1; Theodotus Excerpts 32; Hist. 4.7; Jerome Apol. 3.29, 39, 40; Ep. 48.19; 66.11; 107.6; Pelagians 2.6; Galatians Preface; Gregory Or. 2.7; 7.20; Basil Hom. 1.10; Augustine Ep. 137.12; Conf, 3.5; 5.19; City 5.2, 5; 8.4; 9.4; 22.8; Trinity 14.2; Faustus 33.6.

[5] Justin Apol. 1.23; 54-60; Hort. 12, 14, 19; Tatian Addr. 36-41; Clement Strom. 1.14-15, 21-22; 5.8-11; 6.3, 7; Cohort. 6; Tertullian Apol. 47; Nationes 2.2; Origen Cels. 1.15; 4.51; 6.12, 13, 43; Hippolytus Ref. 9.22; 10.36-37; Lactantius Inst. 4.2; Eusebius Const. 17; Hist. 1.2; 9; 10; Jerome Ep. 53.1; Ambrose Clergy 1.10.31; Augustine City 18.24, 25, 37; CD 2.28 (although see the moderating remarks at 8.11, on the chronology of Jeremiah and Plato); Socrates Hist. 1.19; 2.24; Theodoret Hist. 3.16.

other philosophers found to be later than the prophets. For even Socrates the Athenian, the master of all who were then most famous, holding the pre-eminence in that department that is called the moral or active, is found after Esdras in the chronicles. Plato also was born not much later, who far out went the other disciples of Socrates. If, besides these, we take their predecessors, who had not yet been styled philosophers, to wit, the seven sages, and then the physicists, who succeeded Thales, and imitated his studious search into the nature of things, namely, Anaximander, Anaximenes, and Anaxagoras, and some others, before Pythagoras first professed himself a philosopher, even these did not precede the whole of our prophets in antiquity of time, since Thales, whom the others succeeded, is said to have flourished in the reign of Romulus, when the stream of prophecy burst forth from the fountains of Israel in those writings which spread over the whole world. So that only those theological poets, Orpheus, Linus, and Musæus, and, it may be, some others among the Greeks, are found earlier in date than the Hebrew prophets whose writings we hold as authoritative. But not even these preceded in time our true divine, Moses, who authentically preached the one true God, and whose writings are first in the authoritative canon; and therefore the Greeks, in whose tongue the literature of this age chiefly appears, have no ground for boasting of their wisdom, in which our religion, wherein is true wisdom, is not evidently more ancient at least, if not superior. Yet it must be confessed that before Moses there had already been, not indeed among the Greeks, but among barbarous nations, as in Egypt, some doctrine which might be called their wisdom, else it would not have been written in the holy books that Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, as he was, when, being born there, and adopted and nursed by Pharaoh's daughter, he was also liberally educated. Yet not even the wisdom of the Egyptians could be antecedent in time to the wisdom of our prophets, because even Abraham was a prophet. And what wisdom could there be in Egypt before Isis had given them letters, whom they thought fit to worship as a goddess after her death? Now Isis is declared to have been the daughter of Inachus, who first began to reign in Argos when the grandsons of Abraham are known to have been already born. (*City* 18.37)

This kind of account, by far the most frequently used, explains why in early Christian writings there are often sections devoted to the demonstration of both the chronological priority of the Jews and their wisdom, as this example from Augustine amply illustrates, and of Greek borrowings or misuses of biblical texts.

Secondly, the philosophers arrived at truth because they exercised, through contemplation and conjecture, the natural reason or universal logos within humanity created in the image of God. This argument was an adaptation, in conjunction with Genesis 1 and 2, of the Stoic and/or middle Platonic doctrine of the *logos spermatikos* as an explanation for the religious knowledge that all of humanity naturally possesses. The

naturally gifted philosophers were also a special instance of this, and even beneficiaries of divine inspiration and revelation.[6] Justin Martyr wrote:

> But lest some should, without reason, and for the perversion of what we teach, maintain that we say that Christ was born one hundred and fifty years ago under Cyrenius, and subsequently, in the time of Pontius Pilate, taught what we say He taught; and should cry out against us as though all men who were born before Him were irresponsible - let us anticipate and solve the difficulty. We have been taught that Christ is the first-born of God, and we have declared above that He is the Word of whom every race of men were partakers; and those who lived reasonably [*meta logou*] are Christians, even though they have been thought atheists; as, among the Greeks, Socrates and Heraclitus, and men like them; and among the barbarians, Abraham, and Ananias, and Azarias, and Misael, and Elias, and many others whose actions and names we now decline to recount, because we know it would be tedious. (*Apol*. 46.1-3)

This kind of account was not, however, put to extensive explanatory use, because philosophy had become diverse and contradictory: its original and pure unity had been lost - a complaint in some strands of Hellenistic philosophy, which was in turn adapted by some early Christian theologians as an analogy for the resurgence of heresies (pagan ideas in disguise) that polluted the pure fount of truth. Moreover, only some philosophers had, to varying extents, exemplified the logos in their lives and teachings. Rather, this account was an argument against the pagan charge of Christian novelty, as this example illustrates: the logos (Christ) had already been active in the history of the world.

Thirdly, the philosophers arrived at truth because fallen angels, through sexual intercourse with mortal women, had transmitted to the nations the heavenly secrets of philosophy. This account combined the episode of Genesis 6:1-4 about the 'sons of God' and its extension in the Jewish apocalyptic tradition concerning the acquisition of certain *technai* unsuited to mortals (1 En. 6-11) with Greek Academic critiques of the demonic in Greek religion.[7] Clement of Alexandria wrote:

> But philosophy, it is said, was not sent by the Lord, but came stolen, or given by a thief. It was then some power or angel that had learned something of the truth, but abode not in

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[6] Justin Apol. 1.5, 46, 63; 2.8, 10, 13; Athenagoras Plea 6, 7; Clement Strom. 1.26; 1.87, 94; 5.10, 13, 29, 87, 94; 6.17, 55; 2.100; 5.13; 6.58; Exhort. 2.25.3; 6.68; 7.74; Lactantius Inst. 2.10; 3.9, 12, 28, 30; 4.2; Minucius 19.

[7] Justin Apol. 2.5, 13; Clement Strom. 1.67, 81-87; 5.10; 6.157; 161.2-6; 7.6. It is also used by Tatian , Athenagoras, Tertullian and Minucius.

it, that inspired and taught these things, not without the Lord's knowledge, who knew before the constitution of each essence the issues of futurity, but without His prohibition. (*Strom*. 1.17)

This account was usually used by Christians to point to the demonic origin of Greek religion in general, but, as this particular example illustrates, it was also adapted to account for the divine origin of philosophy as such, which was, after all, held in high regard by some early Christian writers: philosophy was a *techne* that, in due time, had brought many benefits to humankind.

These three accounts, which gave philosophy a place in ancient Israel's traditions about its origins, might indicate that EGP could and even should have served as a major repository of truth; instances of EGP testimonia for belief in one God (discussed below) were held by early Christian writers to be a very fine case in point. But before analysing some of this evidence, it is important to mention general objections levelled by early Christian writers against EGP and its legacy, so that the mixed nature of its reception is borne in mind. There were three, broadly speaking: the philosophical, the theological, and the Christian.

EGPs proposed new cosmologies that could be classified as 'physical' theologies (distinct from the mythic theology of the poets, and civic religion), in which observable physical processes took on a prominent role in rational explanations of the cosmos and its emergence; in the quotation above Augustine calls them 'physicists'.[8] Theology was sometimes a part of these explanations: a divinised, motive element, a guiding supreme intelligence, or a world soul. The first objection against these new opinions was the sheer amount of disagreement among its philosophers: it made EGP contradictory at root (cf. Josephus Ap. 2.179-181).[9] Indeed, Greek philosophical tradition already contained critiques of specific EGPs that could be turned against them.[10] Moreover, as subsequent

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[8] For this threefold classification of religion by the Roman antiquarian M. Tarentius Varro, see Tertullian Nationes 2.2; Augustine City 6.5; cf. Clement Exhort. 4.46-64; 5.64-6.72; 7.73-76.6.

[9] Justin Hort. 3, 5; Tatian Addr. 2-3, 25; Theophilus Auto. 3.2, 7; Clement Exhort. 5; Strom. 6.17; Tertullian Apol. 47; Nationes 2.2; Tertullian Soul 2-3; Hippolytus Ref. 1.8; Arnobius [...]; Lactantius Inst. 3.17; 5.3; Clementia Recog. 8.15; Chrysostom Acts 6; John 63.3; Augustine City 18.41). Note: early Christian writers were thus able to contrast EGP with the enduring legacy of Christ. Clement Strom. 6.17; Origen Cels. 1.29; 2.3; 5.20; 7.66; 8.45; Chrysostom Corinth. 7.12; 8; Augustine Gos. 1.12; cf. Origen Cels. 5.57; 6.8)

[10] Lactantius Inst. 2.10; Augustine Ep. 102.13, 14; 118.24-26, 27-29; Conf. 10.9; City 8.2, 9.

Greek allegorical explanations of them suggested, their ideas seemed to be the doctrines of the old, mythic poets in physical dress: they were not new at all.[11]

The physical character of EGP theology also made it susceptible to the suspicion that the separation of God and matter, an axiomatic feature of Jewish and Christian views of creation, had been collapsed: EGPs were guilty of an idolatry of matter; if divinity was part of and subject to physical processes then this ruled out its worship.[12] Another aspect of this second objection was that, in the search for physical cosmologies, divine providence was often downplayed or denied (especially by the atomists), earning some of them the title 'atheist' (unlike Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, with whom philosophically minded Jews and Christians felt more at home).[13] There was also, among some early Christian writers, something of a Job-like response to speculative postulations about origins on the basis of observable phenomena in the present: the cosmological opinions extrapolated from them were incapable of demonstration. Only faith with wisdom could be the foundation of true theological knowledge.[14]

The identification of differences between Christian doctrines and EGP was the third, and most distinctive, objection. Heresies were seen to be EGP in new disguise: the theologies of the Gnostics, Marcion and the Manicheans were traced to the dualisms of Pythagoreanism and Empedocles.[15] Accordingly, Tertullian remarked: 'The philosophers are the patriarchs of the heretics' (Hermog. 100.9). The emergent 'orthodox' doctrine of the Trinity, in particular the meaning of 'nature', also had to be distinguished from these physical theologies.[16] Another concern was views of the afterlife: the Christian insistence on the resurrection of both the body and the soul did not equate to the immortality of the transmigrated soul of Pythagoreanism.[17] And finally, despite its historical importance and

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11 Justin Hort. 3; Irenaeus Heres. 2.14.2-6; (Clement Strom. 1.1.

12 Tatian Addr. 16; Athenagoras Plea 22; Clement Exhort. 5, Strom. 1.1; Tertullian Nationes 2.3-6; Marcion 1.13.

13 Origen Cels. 4.25; Lactantius Inst. 1.2; 7.3, 7; Anger 9, 10; Arnobius Heathen 1.13; Chrysostom 1 Tim. 1 12); Dionysus 2.5; Athanasius Syn. 35.

14 Theophilus Auto. 3.2; Clement Strom. 2.4; 5.1; cf. 1.15; Arnobius Heathen 2.9, 10.

15 Irenaeus Heres. 1.1; 2.14; Clement Strom. 4.22; 6.4; 6.16; 7.6, 16; Tertullian Apol. 47; Marcion 1.13; 2.28; Heretics 7; Tertullian Valent. 15; Fasting 15; Hermog. 100.9; Hippolytus Ref. 4.13, 51; 5.2, 8, 11, 15; 6.4, 6, 16, 17, 18-50; 7.17, 18-19; 8.8; 9.2-5, 9, 12; Archelaus Disput. 51; Alexander Manich. 6; Jerome Ep. 133.1, 2, 3; Jovin. 2.21; Rufinus Apol. 2.7; Augustine Ep. 118.2; Greg. Naz. 41.2.

1616 Basil Ep. 8.2.

17 Justin Dial. 6, Apol. 1.18, Resurr. 2; Tertullian Apol. 48, 50; Test. 4; Tertullian Soul 5, 9, 14, 15, 17, 28-35, 51, 54; Resurr. 1; Minnucius Octavius 34; Origen Cels. 1.32; 3.80; 8.53; Hippolytus Ref. 9.22;

influence, EGP did not, as Augustine maintained, contribute a doctrine of salvation (while that was not its purpose), even if, on the basis of the three accounts of its origins, EGP contained traces of truth with which Christian writers could and did agree.[18]

2. *Testimonia in defence of Monotheism*

Some of the Christian writings of the first three centuries or so contain the testimonia of ancient Greek poets and philosophers who are there said to have taught that God is one, a unity or first principle.[19] These testimonia were deployed for a number of reasons: to show that illustrious Greek thinkers supported Jewish and Christian monotheism against polytheism and idolatry; to rebut the charge of atheism levelled against religiously exclusive Christians by pointing out that there were famous Greek thinkers who supported their theology (and had been similarly mistreated by governmental authorities in their day); and to argue for the truth of Christianity with recourse to revered, ancient authorities, especially if their own sacred scriptures could not be admitted in debate. The quotation of philosophers was seen to be particularly useful, since their activity was concerned with the investigation of the truth and reality as such. For present purposes, three examples of this deployment are worth exploring.

2.1. Heraclitus

If attack is the best form of defence, then a good number of early Christian writings often began with critiques of the gods of popular polytheism, as a means to argue, in turn, for the superiority of monotheism. EGP witnesses were invoked to assist in two main ways. The quotations of philosophers provided analyses that, learned from Moses, enabled the charge of idolatry and ignorance; a more potent form of this criticism was that the gods

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Lactantius Inst. 3.18, 19; 7.7, 8, 12, 13, 23; Socrates Hist. 3.21; Jerome Virg. 2.6; Jerome Ep. 60.4; 124.4, 7; 126.1; Jerome Vigil. 1; Jovin. 2.6, 7; Rufinus Creed 39; Chrysostom John 2.3, 5; Augustine Ep. 165.1.

[18] Augustine Ep. 102.13, 14; 118.24-26, 27-29; Conf. 10.9; City 8.2, 9.

[19] Justin Hort. 19; Ps. Justin Gov. 2; Athenagoras Plea 6; Clement Exhort. 6; Strom. 5.14; Minucius Octavius 19; Lactantius Institutes 1.5; 2.9; Epitome 4; Anger 11.

were in fact demons.[20] Philosophers' quotations also provided analyses of the origins and development of religion as a human phenomenon that reduced its beliefs and practices to anthropomorphic superstition; moreover, the gods' all too human behaviour prompted cries of shame and subversive mockery.[21] Some of the EGPs had, as a result, turned to forms of atheism, although this was also connected to their naturalistic philosophies.[22] The first example is one of these critiques, taken from Origen's *Contra Celsus*, which preserves much of Celsus' series of attacks on Christianity, as well as Origen's counter-responses. Celsus is reported as follows:

> Heraclitus also says in one place: 'Persons who address prayers to these images act like those who speak to the walls, without knowing who the gods or the heroes are.' And what wiser lesson have they to teach us than Heraclitus? He certainly plainly enough implies that it is a foolish thing for a man to offer prayers to images, whilst he knows not who the gods and heroes are. This is the opinion of Heraclitus; but as for them, they go further, and despise without exception all images. (*Cels*. 7.62, tr. Crombie)

Celsus had already quoted Heraclitus to show that the Christian objection to images was not new at all: it was a common opinion; to which Origen responded that, like morality, certain ideas are implanted by God (1.15). In this passage Celsus takes up the topic again, reporting that Christians 'cannot tolerate temples, altars, or images', and lists those of a similar mind from history: Scythians, the nomadic tribes of Libya, the Seres, 'some other of the most barbarous and impious nations in the world', the Persians, and Heraclitus. But Celsus' actual point is that it is *only* foolish to pray to images *as if* they are the gods and heroes: viewed in this way, Heraclitus provided a rationale or account (i.e. logos) for the proper use of images. This interpretation fits with what is known of Heraclitus, who made use of observations that exemplified his philosophy of cosmic unity in opposition: the instance of the material images of the immaterial gods and heroes was most likely one of

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[20] Clement Strom. 1.15; cf. 5.1; 5.5; 5.11 (cf. DL7.33); Origen Cels. 1.5; 7.62, 65-66; cf. 6.12, 13. On demonology, see Athenagoras Plea 23-24, Clement Exhort. 10.

[21] Athenagoras Plea 23-24, 28; Clement Exhort. 2, 4, 5; Strom. 7.4; Tertullian Apol. 11, 14; Nationes 1.10; 2.2; Minnucius Octavius 21; Origen Celsus 6.42; Socrates Hist. 3.23; Arnobius Heathen 3.16; 5.29; Athanasius Heathen 18.

[22] Clement Exhort. 2; Tertullian Scorpiace 15; Minnucius Octavius 8; Origen Celsus 5.11; Dionysus Nature 5; Arnobius Heathen 4.29; Chrysostom Corinthians 4.9; Augustine Petilian 3.22-26.

these.[23] Origen was left to retort that the gods of the nations are 'demons', and that, guided by the strictures of Jewish and Christian monotheism, the worship of God just could not be combined with the use of images (7.65). It seems, then, that an EGP witness might not assist Christian apologetic; evidence had to be interpreted correctly for that to be the case.[24]

2.2. Xenophanes

The next example is taken from the *Stromateis* ('Miscellanies' or 'Patchworks') of Clement, whose purpose was to overturn the criticism of Celsus or his like, who argued that both the Jews (who, though peculiar, at least had antique customs) and especially the more recent Christians (who are hardly monotheists anyway) taught a distorted and counterfeit version of the most ancient theology of the time-honoured nations, and best represented by the Greeks.[25] Clement's *Strom*. 5.14 contains an extensive list of up to fifty named poets and philosophers, often with quotations from them (Plato most of all), that were collated to demonstrate its opposite: the Greeks had used, paraphrased or misused the older Jewish scriptures.[26] After listing them, Clement maintains that the testimonia demonstrate that God is apprehended by all; that 'equal natural righteousness

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[23] Osborne 1997: 92-93. Even though most suppose an authentic core, there are critical problems with the reconstruction of this fragment. For discussions, see Marcovich 1967, Kahn 1979, Robinson 1987 and Osborne 1997.

[24] For more blatant instances of interpretative latitude see Clement Exhort. 6; Octavius 19; Lactantius Inst. 1.5; cf. 2.9; Epitome 4; Anger 11.

[25] For salient remarks, see Origen *Cels.* 1.14-16, 21-24; 5.5, 33-34; 8.2, 12. Celsus states: 'The goatherds and shepherds who followed Moses were deluded by clumsy deceits into thinking that there was only one god, and without any rational cause they abandoned the worship of many gods. These goatherds and shepherds thought that there was one god called Most High, or Adonai, or the Heavenly One, or Sabaoth, or however they like to call this world; and they acknowledge nothing more. But it makes no difference whether one calls the supreme god by the name used among the Greeks, or by that, for example, used among the Indians, or by that among the Egyptians '(Origen *Cels*. 1.23-24 (quoted in Droge 1989: 78-79); cf. 5.14). For the philosophical background, see Ps.-Ar. *De Mundo* 398b; Max. Tyr. 39.5; cf. 2.5; Dio Chrys. 31.11; and discussions in Chadwick 1953: xix-xx, and Droge 1989: 78-80, on a pagan 'qualitative' monotheism (i.e. philosophical polytheism) rather than the 'quantitative' insistence of Jewish and Christian monotheism. For Clement's response, on the incantatory power of individual names, see *Strom*. 5.45; and an earlier response to philosophical polytheism, on the foolishness and injustice in offering to the 'meaner' what belonged to the 'superior', see Philo *Decal*. 61.

[26] Clement refers directly to the same approach of Aristobulus and Hecataeus of Abdera from whom some of the material (also used by other apologists) was derived; on which, see Inowlocki 2006.

reached all', both Jew and Greek, as the Old and New Testaments teach.[27] As for the philosophers, their knowledge was limited unless they had been 'instructed by us', and so they only knew God by a 'true periphrasis'. It is in 5.14 that the famous 'monotheistic' lines of Xenophanes are first attested:

[Xenophanes of Colophon, teaching that god is one and without body, asserts:]
One god is greatest among gods and men,
not at all like mortals in body or in thought.

[And again:]
But mortals suppose that gods are born,
wear their own clothes and have a voice and a body.

[And again:]
But if horses or oxen or lions had hands
or could draw with their hands and accomplish such works as men,
horses would draw the figures of the gods as similar to horses,
and the oxen similar to oxen,
and they would make the bodies
of the sort which each of them had. (*Strom*. 5.14; tr. Lesher)

The lines are in a list of quotations from fourteen poets and philosophers, each concerned in various ways with divine incomparability.[28] This sub-section, accordingly, begins with lines from Isaiah ('To whom have you likened me? says the LORD' 40:18, 25; 46:5), which Clement initially describes as a 'prophetic utterance' that the Socratic Antisthenes had 'paraphrased', with a quotation of his to show this to be so; and the rest are listed to bear out the same claim.

However, there are forgeries in the list: some of the obviously spurious quotations (e.g. from Sophocles, cast in the manner of an Old Testament prophet railing against idolatry at the Greek theatre) are recycled in Ps-Justin *De Monarchia*, and most likely stem from a Jewish or Christian florilegium. And the same objection has been levelled against the famous lines attributed to Xenophanes, on the basis of meter, vocabulary and

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27 Clement quotes the 'apostolic word' (Rom. 3.29) and that which was proclaimed 'prophetically' beforehand (Isa. 36:7, 8, 10; Jon. 1:6, 9, 14; Mal. 1:10, 11, 14).

28 Antisthenes, Xenophon, the Sibyl, Xenophanes, Bacchylides, Cleanthes, Sophocles (twice), Heraclitus (twice), Melanippides, Parmenides, Hesiod and Euripides.

ideas.[29] For instance, the very Jewish and Christian sounding 'one God [*heis theos*]' is otherwise unattested among ancient philosophers: the early doxographers imply that Xenophanes would have preferred the alternative neuter 'one [*hen*]'; and yet, they also ascribe to him the monotheistic argument that no god can be subjected to another, as these lines nevertheless seem to allow ('greatest among gods and men').[30] To frustrate matters further, Aristotle complained Xenophanes had not made his own sense of 'one' clear.[31] It should be emphasised that divine incomparability is not in question here, even if the evidence on the kind of oneness Xenophanes had in mind is unclear. But even if these lines do betray a later Jewish or Christian hand, they are certainly not as spurious as those of Sophocles (whose quotations have no precedents). It is also worth remembering another facet: Clement's strategy was the listing of testimonia that demonstrated a 'true periphrasis' of the knowledge of God; the alignments of Greek with OT texts, as in the case of Antisthenes and Isaiah, and Xenophanes in tow, are only ever of a general kind.[32] Otherwise, the admittedly slippery argument that the Greeks used, paraphrased or misused the Jewish scriptures could not have retained its apparent force.

2.3. Pythagoras

Quite apart from the general objections made by Christians against Pythagoreanism, whether as paganism or in its heretical guises, the frequency and significance of the number 'one' as a cosmological fundament in Pythagorean tradition made it both inviting and amenable to apologetic discourse.[33] Following Hellenistic Jewish apologetic, in this

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29 See especially Edwards 1991:223, and *passim*.

30 Ps.-Aristotle *MXG* 3, 4; Simplicius *Commentary on Aristotle's Physics* 22.22ff.; Ps.-Plutarch *Miscellanies* 4. For translations, see Lesher 1992:204-210, 212-213.

31 Ar. Meta. 1.5, 986b. Yet another characterisation, which implies the deity is a world soul, is found in the early Christian writers Hippolytus: 'And he affirms that nothing is generated or perishes, or is moved; and that the universe, being one, is beyond change. But he says that the deity is eternal, and one and altogether homogeneous and limited, and of a spherical form, and endued with perception in all parts'. (*Ref.* 1.12)

32 Clement Strom. 4.3; 5.11, 12; Instr. 2.10; Tertullian Apol. 21; Origen C. Cels. 1.15; Lactantius Inst. 4.9.

33 On the various uses of Pythagoreanism in early Christianity see Jáuregui 2010.

regard, there are numerous instances in early Christian writings.[34] The third and final example, from Ps. Justin's *Exhortation to the Greeks*, was probably composed in the 3rd Century AD.[35]

His biographers point out that Pythagoras, son of Mnesarchus, who explained his own philosophical conclusions by means of mystical symbols, seems to have harboured thoughts about the unity of God, which may have been a profitable result of his sojourn in Egypt. He allegorically teaches that there is one God when he states that unity is the first principle of all things and the cause of all good. This becomes more evident from his statement that unity and one differ greatly from each other. He claims that unity belongs to that class of beings which are perceived by the intellect, whereas one belongs to the class of numbers. Now, if you wish a more explicit proof of the monotheism [*henos theou*] of Pythagoras, listen to the following quotation:
'God is one. And He is not, as some think outside the world, but in it, for He is entirely in the whole circle looking over all generations. He is the blending agent of all ages; the executor of His own powers and deeds; the first cause of all things; the light in heaven; the Father of all; the mind and animating force of the universe; the motivating factor of all the heavenly bodies.' Such is the testimony of Pythagoras. (*Exhort.* 19; tr. Falls)

The opening lines reflect the usual apologetic motif (cf. 10, 14), on the basis of legendary Hellenistic biography, that Pythagoras had learned in Egypt (Diod. 1.96-98; Plut. *De Is.* 354e-f), and, according to Jewish and Christian writers, had made use of Moses' writings, even with the assistance of pre-LXX translations of them. It is worth observing that this author is evidently reticent about making easy equations between the opinions of Moses and Pythagoras ('seems', 'allegorically', cf. 28, 32, 34) because of what were known to be Pythagoras' 'own philosophical conclusions' (cf. Aristob. fr. 4). The lines on Pythagorean doctrine that follow thereafter similarly reflect Hellenistic Ps-Pythagorean doxography, even if some of its ideas have traces in earlier Pythagoreanism.[36]

A slightly variant form of the quotation itself had already been used by Clement (Exhort. 6; and it was later copied by Cyril of Alexandria *Adv. Julian* 17) who attributed

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[34] Ps.-Justin 2; Athenagoras Plea 7; Clement Strom. 4.3 (with Deut. 6:4; but see 'Timaeus' *Brill's New Pauly* 2009: v. 14, 678, on the inauthentic, late work of Timaeus the Locrian, quoted by Clement); 5.14 (cf. DL 1.12; Hippolytus Ref. 1.2; 6.23; Ps.-Galen Hist. 35; Epiphan. Fide 9.

[35] For the reasons see Marcovich 1990: 3-4. The work's testimonia of poetry is a valuable source for knowledge of the Jewish and Christian Greek Pseudepigrapha of the OT.

[36] For line 5 (Marcovich 1990: 49) see Aët. 1.7.18 (Ps.-Plut. Epit. 1.7; Stobaeus Ecl. 1.1). For lines 6-8 (Marcovich 1990: 49) see the near-identical 'Life of Pythagoras' §3 (Guthrie 1987: 137) preserved by the 9th Cent. Photius, which Theiler 1965:209ff. (cf. Burkert 1972: 52) traced to the circle of the Middle Platonist Eudorus of Alexandria (1st Cent. BC). Riedweg 1994:361 suspects Ps.-Justin knew Porphyry's 'Life of Pythagoras'. For the similar expressions in early Pythagoreanism see Riedweg 1994: 364.

it to the 'Pythagoreans', and used it as the final piece of evidence in a chapter on the divine inspiration of the philosophers that enabled them to discover some truth.[37] Ps.-Justin might have got the quotation from Clement, or from a common source. Its actual provenance is unclear: it lacks distinctive Jewish and Christian hallmarks (so is probably not their forgery), and is most likely from Hellenistic Ps-Pythagorea, which was usually in the Doric dialect, as is most of this example. Each of the statements in the quotation has parallels in this late tradition, and traces in early Pythagoreanism, as well as reflexes in Hellenistic Jewish texts whose writers treated Pythagoreanism.[38] This third example, then, invites the complaint of a lack of authenticity on two fronts: it was not from the hand of Justin (a less serious objection), and it hardly contains the words of Pythagoras, but largely late Pythagorean tradition.

3. *Concluding Reflections*

The early Christian use of EGP in defence of monotheism is something of a mixed bag: a fragment of Heraclitus that retains an authentic core was incorrectly interpreted by Origen; the 'monotheistic' testimonia of Xenophanes used by Clement probably preserve something authentic but were seemingly filtered through a Jewish or Christian lens; and Ps.-Justin drew upon Hellenistic Ps.-Pythagorea, late traditions whose connection with their founder was already uncertain, if not untraceable. Modern critical observations about testimonial authenticity such as these are legitimate because of what the Jewish and Christian apologists claimed that they demonstrated, and they are rightly criticised on these grounds, although this should be tempered by the recognition of the pseudepigraphical nature of some of the sources that were available to them.

But it is important to remember the use to which the testimonia were actually put: early Christian writers rarely, if ever, claimed that the parallels they were drawing were exact: the testimonia served a general purpose. The latitude of some early Christian uses of EGP make this evident: it was enough for an EGP statement that spoke of God in

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37 For the linguistic differences in the quotations see Riedweg 1994: 364-68.

38 For details see Riedweg 1994: 360-368. For the statement 'God is one' see Philolaus (5th Cent. BC) in Philo Opif. 100, but Onatas of Tarentum (5th Cent. BC?) in Lydus Mens. 2.12 (Thesleff 1965: 140); and Onetas *De Deo* in Stobaeus Anthol. 4.2.19 (Thesleff 1965: 139, 11). For the Pythagorean texts see Thesleff 1965: 105, 139, 140.

terms of one, a unity or first principle, for it to be a witness to truth. Indeed, the apologetic claim, that EGP was a dim reflection of a greater light, allowed for that latitude. And it must also be remembered that the apologetic arguments, which show a creative use of OT texts with currents in Hellenistic culture, were traded back and forth in a historical context in which greater antiquity carried immense weight, and whose use would not, therefore, have been seen as questionable in principle.

Finally, on comparisons between this and the use of EGP testimonia in modern developmental accounts of the emergence of monotheism, it is important to draw a basic lesson from the observations made here: the supposed parallels do not equate easily, even if the desire to draw them might make them do so. The main difference between early Christian and modern developmental perspectives on Jewish monotheism and EGP is that the former deployed the entire biblical tradition in its defence, whereas the historicism of the latter reduces the number of textual sources available for argument. Apart from that, they are both general accounts whose actual significance, when compared, is primarily ideological: that is their force and their appeal.

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The Power of God in the Psalter

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The idea of the power of God remains a largely unexplored field in Old Testament research. Only a few observations regarding the characterization of the power of God in particular psalms can be found in the pertinent commentaries on the Psalter, in monographs and essays. There is currently no thorough investigation comprising all psalms. Why such an essential aspect of God's being, in such a central part of the Bible, has not evoked the interest of OT scholarship cannot be easily explained. However, the dearth of prior studies enables me to begin my investigation by analysing the sources rather than by engaging a vast field of scholarly literature.

My paper will provide a general introduction to my research project. I started to work on this project eight months ago. It is appropriate to start with the source material. The texts testifying to God's power are striking. My first approach aims to classify the different aspects of divine power in the Psalter. As a result of this first step I shall present my preliminary ideas concerning how the concept of God's power in the Psalter may be preserved. Finally, a brief prospect of my further research will be given.

I

The wide range of expressions for the power of God and the high frequency of these statements suggests that 'power' is both an important aspect of God's being and an essential topic in the Psalter. Therefore, it is no surprise to discover that only three psalms do not contain a direct or at least indirect reference to the power of God. According to my investigation there are altogether 1249 references in the Psalter expressing the power of God. This number does not include expressions of divine power which do not result in a characterization of God. Dealing with such an extensive topic requires that the investigation focus on a representative selection of references. Otherwise almost every statement in the Psalter could be associated with the power of God, and an appropriate characterization of divine power would then be hindered rather than promoted. My research project will not analyse every statement from which any sort of conclusion regarding the power of God could be drawn. Only those ideas will be

considered which have attained a fairly high degree of conceptualization, so that their connection with the notion of God's power is well-established. Numerous occurrences in the Psalter comply with this criterion. Nevertheless, I have come to the conclusion that they may all be assigned to four categories:

1) Manifestations

Manifestations designate God's powerful acting, which has to be understood as a consequence of his divine character. Manifestations capture linguistically how divine power can be perceived by humans. Therefore they do not represent direct, but indirect statements of divine power. For my investigation it does not make any difference whether the manifestations can be found in a statement or in a supplication of the psalmist. In either case insights are given into the power of God in the same way, because every supplication is expressed believing that God is in a position to fullfil all of it. The only criterion for a word to be regarded as a manifestation is that it be explicitly combined with a term for power in the psalms. The manifestations have not been identified by external criteria, but rather by evidence internal to the texts. The manifestations (926 references) comprise roughly one hundred Hebrew words which can be allotted to several different theological fields. Those fields are characterized by specific theological notions, for instance help and salvation (256 references), mercy and lovingkindness (166 references), shelter and refuge (99 references), destruction (87 references), law and dominion (73 references), wrath and punishment (73 references), signs and miracles (61 references).

To convey an idea of which characterizations and acts are regarded as manifestations, the semantic field of help and salvation may serve as an example: gʾl qal. (to redeem), yšʿ hiph. (to deliver), yĕšûʿâ (salvation), yešaʿ (rescue, salvation), nṣl hiph. (to deliver), ʿzr qal. (to help, succor), ʿezer (help), pdh qal. (to ransom), plṭ pi. (to bring into security), etc. Half of the references to God's acts of deliverance in the Psalter are combined with explicit mention of his power.

2) Metaphors

The most significant substantives used in the Psalter as metaphors designating God's power are zĕrôʿa (arm), yād (hand), yāmîn (right hand) and qeren (horn). With only 78 references, they make up the smallest of the four groups.

In the case of the manifestations, a reference to divine power had to be inferred from the respective word employed; however, metaphors for power embody power in the true sense of the word. Compared with the manifestations, which open up an indirect approach to the power of God, the metaphors for power represent more direct statements of divine power. For this reason metaphors embody a more concentrated emphasis on power than do manifestations.

3) Names of God

ʾābîr Yaʿăqōb, Yhwh Ṣĕbāʾôt, ʿelyôn, Šadday and šēm are divine names which include the element of God's power. 143 references attest this usage.

The importance of divine names for the perception of God's power represents a complex field of investigation. This is above all the case with the proper name Yhwh and its representation by šēm. I can not say anything about it in detail yet, so I will only offer an obvious case as an example. The aspect of power is particularly evident in God's extended proper name Yhwh Ṣĕbāʾôt. Bearing the Hebrew text in mind, the most common translation of Yhwh Ṣĕbāʾôt in English editions of the Bible, Lord of Hosts, is not unproblematic, since in Biblical Hebrew a proper name cannot serve as the *nomen regens* of a genitive construction. Nevertheless, Ṣĕbāʾôt contains the substantive ṣābā which has been added as an epithet to the proper name Yhwh. In the course of time the metaphor ṣābā has became more and more part of God's proper name. Eventually, the extended proper name Yhwh Ṣĕbāʾôt has arisen. This case reveals beyond doubt how a notion of military power has been incorporated into a proper name. The extended proper name stresses Yhwh's royal dominion over the heavenly powers. The military aspect has been transformed into a characteristic feature of divine kingship. Though the metaphor of kingship derives from the political domain, it has to be kept in mind that divine kingship is a notion in its own right. Even the Septuagint provides evidence for this specific understanding of Yhwh Ṣĕbāʾôt. Though the Greek translation renders Yhwh Ṣĕbāʾôt sometimes by κύριος in the Book of Jeremiah, it prefers translations as κύριος τῶν δυνάμεων in the Psalter, (κύριος/θεὸς) παντοκράτωρ in the Dodeca-propheton or simply transliterates his proper name, Yhwh σαβαωθ, in the Book of Isaiah.

4) Terms for power

The most significant terms for expressing the power of God in the Psalter are ʿōz, gĕbûrâ, kōăḥ and ḥayil. Altogether 102 references can be found in the psalms. Condensing all the different aspects of God's power which are expressed in the categories mentioned above, the terms for power represent the most explicit verbalisations of divine power. The terms for power are marked by bundling together linguistically characteristics and actions that are at a powerful person's disposal. Using a term for power always implies a personal idea. Only a person can have power. If power is linked to something else (e.g. 'power of rhetoric'), it represents a metaphorical use of a term for power.

I have ordered these categories by considering the extent to which each one gives concentrated literary expression to the idea of God's power. Thus, the most literarily diffuse expressions of divine power are where the divine being and action are described. The most concentrated expressions of divine power are found in the fourth category, where a single word characterizes and focuses the expression of divine power. This last category, which will be the focus of my research, encompasses 102 references distributed among fifty psalms.

The four categories mentioned above are linked with one another, and the transitions from one category to the next are fluid. At times a single word can be assigned to two different categories, depending on how the word is used. ʿōz, for example, is by definition a term for power. But if the psalmist sings the praises to God using the words Yhwh ʿuzzî, 'The Lord is my strength', we have a metaphorical use of a term for power. Hence, both ways of using the term are interrelated. Furthermore, the four different ways of expressing divine power seem to explicate one another. The manifestations, for example, give a hint as to how the terms for power are to be understood. This is clearly the case, because in every text in which a term for power is used, at least one manifestation of divine power can be found. The coexistence and interweaving of the expressions for the power of God suggest that a great many of them were always used side by side. Accordingly, it is not possible to say that the manifestations represent the older expressions for divine power while the terms for power have been added later. However, this does not mean that one cannot observe a succession of terminology employed within the categories preferred at a certain time. For example, ʿōz is a term

already well established in pre-exilic times, whereas the term gĕbûrâ is preferred in post-exilic times.

The terms for power are not the focus of my investigation due to the remarkable number of them in the Psalter. Rather, it is their theological significance which is of the greatest interest to me. Those terms bundle up the different aspects of divine power, each of them concentrating on certain characteristic features. They are absolutely central to reflection on God's power in the Psalter, as they are either exclusively – as in the case of ʿōz – or predominantly used to designate divine power.

II

Preliminary investigations have revealed that the frequency and semantics of the terms designating God's power in the Psalter differ remarkably; yet in spite of all the differences, there is no doubt that they all belong to the semantic field of 'power', covering a wide range of notions. There is, moreover, a general pattern to the manner in which the power of God has been conceptualized in the psalms. There are three different ways in which God's power is recognized and expressed. The first, and most frequently employed, describes how God makes a human participate in his power or expresses a human request for participation in the divine power. This aspect can be found, for instance, in Psalm 29:11: Yhwh ʿōz lĕʿammô yittēn Yhwh yĕbārēk ʾet-ʿammô bašālôm, 'May the Lord give strength to his people. May the Lord bless his people with peace.' Along with this direct description of human participation in divine power, a more indirect form of participation is attested in the Psalter. This is the case when a human takes part in divine power by being under God's shelter. Psalm 27,1: Yhwh ʾôrî wĕyišʿî mimmî ʾîrāʾ Yhwh māʿôz-ḥaiay mimmî ʾepḥād, 'The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?' The second way in which God's power is expressed occurs less frequently: power is mentioned as a characteristic of God, implying a certain impact on the world and on humans. In this case, Psalm 63:3 can serve as an example: kēn baqōdeš ḥăzîtîkā lirʾôt ʿuzĕkā ûkĕbôdekā, 'So I look upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory.' Third, with almost equal frequency we find the idea expressed that divine power appears in God's acting on the world and in relation to humankind. This aspect arises, for instance, in Psalm 145:6: weʿĕzûz nôrĕʾōtêkā

yʾōmērû ûgĕdûlātĕkā ʾăsappĕrennâ, ‘They proclaim the might of your awesome deeds and I will declare your greatness.’

It is remarkable that each of the 102 references can be fitted into this taxonomy. Moreover, none of these references speaks about the power of God in an abstract way. Even if power is mentioned as a characteristic of God, divine power is related to humans.

III

Assuming that all references to God’s power in the Psalter have a relational character, my research project will try to work out how these three modes of conceptualizing and expressing divine power are interrelated. Furthermore, I will seek to investigate whether any other ideas have exerted influence on the development of these modes. I aim at reconstructing how the notion of God’s power has evolved throughout the history of theology in the Psalter. Eventually, a cursory glance will be cast on the Septuagint. The Greek translation of the terms for power offers at times a significant interpretation of the Hebrew text which has been influenced by the (new) cultural contexts of the Jewish community in the late Persian and Hellenistic periods. I will investigate whether the origins of those implications can be traced. If sufficient time is left, I will also go into the prayers of the Qumran community to identify its perspective on the idea of divine power.

<u>Discussion:</u>

- methodologicial approach
- relation of term and notion

PRO-HASMONEAN INTERPRETATION IN LXX-ZECH 9

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1 Introduction

This paper will deal with the Septuagint translation of Zech 9. I will point out some peculiarities in the translation which indicate how the translator understood the passage. It is debated how much of the translator's own interpretation it is possible to retrieve from the translation, but I believe that the translators were part of an exegetical tradition and that they had clear ideas about the texts they translated. These ideas formed the framework for the translation and influenced the rendering of the text. It is this influence I will try to recover. In this particular passage my claim is that the translator understood the text within his own relio-political environment and had pro-Hasmonean sympathies.

I will divide my paper in two parts. The first will deal with the Hebrew and the Greek texts and provide a translation of the Greek text. The second will discuss the traces we find of interpretation in the Greek translation.

2 The Texts

2.1 The structure of the Hebrew and the Greek texts

Zech 9 in the MT predicts or describes a situation where Yahweh saves his people from its enemies. Yahweh acts as a warrior and brings about peace and material abundance. The people again have a king with a kingdom extending to the ends of the world. The chapter is commonly divided into three units; verses 1-8, 9-10, and 11-17.[1] The first unit is a prophecy of doom to the land of Hadrach and Damascus, to Hamath, and coastal cities from Sidon to Gaza. In the second unit we find a prophecy of a king restored to Jerusalem, and in the third unit the future salvation of Yahweh is described. We thus have a development from judgement of the nations to the salvation of Yahweh's people.

This structure then is the basis for the Greek text and it appears that the unity of the passage is even stronger in the Greek version.

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[1] Wilhelm Rudolph, *Haggai - Sacharja 1-8 - Sacharja 9-14 - Maleachi* (Gütersloh, 1976) 166 – 189; Katrina J. A. Larkin, *The Eschatology of Second Zechariah: A Study of the Formation of a Mantological Wisdom Anthology* (Kampen, 1994) 54 – 86.

2.2 The characteristics of the translation

When we compare our Greek text with the MT, we find that they are quite similar. From this observation we may assume that the Hebrew *Vorlage* of the translator must have been close to the MT. It is possible that the *Vorlage* contained a few variant readings, but there are no longer minuses or pluses.

Furthermore we may assume that the translation of these verses is a fairly literal translation. It is literal in the sense that it follows its *Vorlage* when it comes to word order, quantitative representation of the elements in the Hebrew text, and the representation of the constituents of Hebrew words by individual Greek equivalents.[2] Therefore we may get a good overview of the Greek text in relation to its Hebrew *Vorlage*.

When it comes to literacy on the word level the picture is somewhat different. The translator seems to have been mindful of the near textual context when he chose his renderings. Furthermore, he is quite free when it comes to choosing the person and the number of the verbs and pronouns in the text. In this manner he has formed a translation which is formally close to its source text, but quite different on the semantic level.

2.3 Translation

[1] The burden of the word of the Lord, in the land of Sedrach and Damascus, his sacrifice; for the Lord looks upon men, and all the tribes of Israel. [2] And Emath, in her regions, Tyre and Sidon, because they were very clever. [3] And Tyre built fortresses for herself, and heaped up silver like dust and gold like the mud of the streets. [4] Therefore the Lord will take possession of her, and smite her power in the sea; and she shall be consumed with fire. [5] Ascalon shall see, and be afraid, Gaza too, and be greatly pained, and Accaron; for she was put to shame by her transgressions; and a king shall perish from Gaza, and Ascalon shall not be inhabited. [6] And foreigners shall dwell in Azotus, and I will bring down the pride of the foreign tribes. [7] And I will remove their blood from their mouth, and their abominations from between their teeth; and this also shall be left to our God, and they shall be like an officer of a thousand in Juda, and Accaron like the Jebusite. [8] And I will set up a garrison for my house that they may

[2] The study of literalism in the LXX-translation was greatly advanced by J. Barr, "The Typology of Literalism in ancient biblical translations," *Mitteilungen des Septuaginta-Unternehmens (MSU) XV* 11 (1979). Similar ideas was formed into a methodological framework in Emanuel Tov, *The Text Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research* (Jerusalem, 1997) 17 -29. I use the categories presented by Tov for my analysis above.

not pass through, nor turn back. And there shall not come anyone to drive them away, for now I have seen with my eyes. [9] Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion; proclaim aloud, daughter of Jerusalem; behold, your King is coming to you, he is just and saving; he is meek and riding on an ass, and a young foal. [10] And he shall destroy chariots out of Ephraim, and cavalry out of Jerusalem, and the bow of war shall be utterly destroyed; and there will be abundance and peace from the nations; and he shall rule over the waters as far as the sea, and the rivers to the ends of the earth. [11] And you have by the blood of your covenant sent forth your prisoners out of the pit that has no water. [12] You shall dwell in fortresses, you prisoners of the congregation: and for one day of your exile I will repay you double. [13] For I have bent you, Judah, for myself as a bow, I have filled Ephraim; and I will raise up your sons, Zion, against the sons of the Greeks, and I will handle you as the sword of a warrior. [14] And the Lord shall be over them, and go forth like a lightning arrow: and the Lord Almighty shall blow with the trumpet; and shall come forth with a wave of his menace. [15] The Lord Almighty shall protect them, and they shall consume them, and overwhelm them with sling-stones; and they shall swallow them down as wine, and fill the altar like saucers. [16] And the Lord shall save them on that day, his people like sheep; for holy stones are rolled upon his land. [17] For if he has anything good, and if he has anything fair, there will be grain for the young men, and fragrant wine to the virgins.

2.4 Textual notes

1 "His sacrifice": In the MT we find מְנֻחָתוֹ "his rest". The Greek equivalent θυσία αὐτοῦ "his sacrifice" appears to stem from a different vocalization, namely מִנְחָתוֹ "his offering".
"the Lord looks…": MT has כִּי לַיהוָה עֵין אָדָם " for the eyes of man are directed to Yahweh".
2 "in her regions": MT has תִּגְבָּל־בָּהּ "borders to it (the land in v 1)". The Greek ἐν τοῖς ὁρίοις αὐτῆς may reflect a different *Vorlage* בגבלתה, but more likely is it the translator who renders his interpretation of the somewhat difficult Hebrew line. Also the Vulgate renders a line similar to the Greek.
"they were very clever": MT has the verb in the feminine singular referring back to Hamath. The Greek plural includes not only Emath, but also Tyre and Sidon.
4 "Therefore": The Greek διὰ τοῦτο "because of this" has the equivalent הִנֵּה "look" in the MT. This is unusual and it appears that the translator intended to underline the connection to the previous clauses making the actions of Yahweh the result of the heaping up of gold and silver.
5 "by her transgressions": MT has מֻבְטָהּ "from her expectations". It is conceivable that the Greek translator read מבטה as the root בטה / בטא, which means "to speak rashly, thoughtlessly", but that does not explain why he chose "transgression" as his translation. The three occurrences of the root בטה / בטא are translated by διαστέλλειν (Lev 5:4; Ps 106 (105):33) and λέγειν (Prov 12:18).
6 "Foreigners": MT has מַמְזֵר "bastard". See page 8 for a discussion of the Greek equivalent ἀλλογενεῖς.
8 "Garrison": MT has מִצָּבָא "from an army".
"anyone to drive them away": MT has נֹגֵשׂ "oppress". We find the Greek ἐξελαύνων for נֹגֵשׂ also in Zech 10:4 which indicates that the translator regarded it as an adequate translation.

9 "Proclaim aloud": MT has הָרִיעִי (to shout). The translation of the hiphil of this root by κηρύσσειν is only found in LXX-MP (Hos 5:8; Joel 2:1; Zeph 3:14).
"saving": MT has the niphal form נוֹשָׁע (being saved/ having salvation KJV) while the Greek renders it by an active participle σῴζων (he who is saving). Brenton translates this participle by "a Savior", while SD has "ein Retter". See 11 for further discussion.
10 "he shall destroy": MT has 1 sg with Yahweh as the subject.
"abundance and peace from the nations": The Greek may rely on a different *Vorlage*, ורב ושלום מגוים, which may be secondary and a response to the MT being too positive towards the nations (see Rudolph *Haggai* 1976 178). But the Greek text may also stem from the translator and reflect his exegesis of the text (van der Kooij *"Septuagint of Zechariah"* 2003 59-60).
"waters as far as the sea": The translator read מַיִם עַד־יָם and not מִיָּם עַד־יָם as the Masoretes. H.-J. Fabry sees more than a simple mistake in this reading, and connects it to Nah 1:12 where the LXX has τάδε λέγει κύριος κατάρχων ὑδάτων πολλῶν, (MT: כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה אִם־שְׁלֵמִים וְכֵן רַבִּים) and claims that the translations may reflect the old Canaanite "*Chaoskampf-Motiv*" (Fabry "The Lord over Mighty Waters" 2008 156). This explanation suits well for Nahum where Yahweh is the ruler, but in the LXX-version of Zech 9:10 the ruler is the king and it is not likely that the translator would ascribe such an attribute to him.
12 "Congregation": The Greek may reflect המקוה "gathering" (see Lev 11:36) rather than MT's הַתְּקוָה or it is as Joseph Ziegler suggests possible that the translator simply had the root קוה with the meaning "to gather together" in mind while he chose his rendering (Ziegler *"Einheit"* 1971 41).
13 "I will handle you": The peculiar equivalents καὶ ψηλαφήσω σε "touch, feel" for וְשַׁתְּתִיךְ "put, place" may be explained by a metathesis in the transmission of the *Vorlage*. The Hebrew root משׁשׁ is a common equivalent for ψηλαφᾶν found not only in the Minor Prophets but also in Job and the Psalms. In Zech 3:9 ψηλαφήσω renders מְמַשְּׁתִּי, and it is likely that this was also the form in the *Vorlage*.
14 "shall be over them": MT has וַיהוָה עֲלֵיהֶם יֵרָאֶה "Yahweh will be seen over them". Perhaps the *Vorlage* was ויהוה עליהם יהיה (Rudolph *Haggai* 1976 184).

3 Interpretation

3.1 The different Greek text

The Greek text follows the structure of the Hebrew, but differs on quite a number of smaller instances. If we look at these deviations some of them reveal a pattern which may represent how the translator interpreted the text. It does not require much effort to read it as a text relating to events in the second century, and that is, as I will argue, what the translator did. Several issues make this likely. First, the setting of the text easily accommodate a contemporary interpretation. Secondly, the adversaries and their offences are given a harsher description. Thirdly, the punishment they receive is also harsher, and finally the salvation of Jerusalem is more mundane and the king in verse 9 has a more central role.

3.3.1 The Setting.

The adversaries in the Greek text are close to those we find in the MT. It is not certain what the translator had in mind by "the land of Sedrak" but the rest of the places must have been

known to him.[3] Damascus, Hamath, Tyre, Sidon, Ashkelon, Ashdod and Gaza were all important cities in the second century. The coastal cities mentioned were under the shifting influence of the Ptolemaic and the Seleucid kingdoms although with a certain amount of independence.[4] They are described as hostile to the Jews and the Maccabees in 1 and 2 Maccabees, and in Josephus. Perhaps the most telling statement about the continuous alienation between the Judean hill country and the coastal plains is found in Jos. *Ant.* 13.89-90 where Appolonius, the governor of Coelesyria, is reported to have said to Jonathan: "Do not, therefore, deceive yourself," he added, "sitting in the mountains and thinking that zou are strong; but if you have confidence in zour force, come down to the plain and measure zour force against mz armz, and the final victorz will show which is the braver of the two."

A passage in 1 Macc 11:59-62 reports that Simon is made the *strategos* of the area from Tyre to Gaza. These cities reacted differently to coming under the Maccabean control, and while the people of Gaza responded with an uprising, which was brutally put down, Ashkelon, on the other hand, received the new *strategos* with humble submission. The cities were never allied of the Maccabees but were treated as an area that continuously needed to be controlled.[5]

In addition to these cities we find mentioning of another adversary, Zech 9:13 directs an attack on the Greeks. The form in the MT is יָוָן which our translator rendered by ἕλλην. Such a Greek rendering is found in the LXX-prophets [6] while LXX-Genesis and LXX-Paralipomenon I (1 Chronicles) transliterate into Ιωυαν. The term ἕλλην, originally referring to the people from Thessaly, a city founded by Hellen,[7] was quite early used as a term designating all Greeks, and in the second century it was used of the Greeks of both the Seleucic and the Ptolemaic kingdoms.[8]

3.1.2 The Offences of the Adversaries.

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[3] For the Greek "Sedrach" MT has the equivalent חַדְרָךְ. The Hebrew "Hadrach" may be referring to the capital city of a state called by the same name. The name was also used to designate the Assyrian province in the area between Hamath and Aleppo (E Zolli, "'Eyn 'Adam (Zaxh. IX 1)," *Vetus Testamentum* 5 (1955) 90). For the Greek "Sedrach", it has been suggested that this is a personal referring back to Daniel's friend (Dan 1:7) (Larkin, *The Eschatology of Second Zechariah: A Study of the Formation of a Mantological Wisdom Anthology* 55, and Rudolph, *Haggai* 168). On the other hand, Eusebius does not indicate such a connection in his "Onomasticon" but reads "Sedrach" as a toponym (as does Jerome in his Latin version) (Erich Klostermann, ed., *Eusebius Werke: Das Onomasticon der biblische Ortsnamen* (Leipzig, 1904). 162-163) Jerome does, however, claim that this was a misreading in his commentary on the Minor Prophets (See DP).

[4] XXXXXXXX

[5] 1 Macc 12:24-34

[6] Isa 66:19; Ezek 27:13; Dan 8:21; 10:20; 11:2

[7] See the entrances ἑλλάς and ἕλλην in LS.

[8] See for instance 1 Macc 1:10; 2 Macc 4:36; 3 Macc 3:8.

Zech 9:1-2 in the Hebrew text are somewhat obscure and the connections between the different sentences are not easily accessible. The text left the translator with difficulties how to translate them.

1 מַשָּׂא דְּבַר־יְהוָה בְּאֶרֶץ חַדְרָךְ וְדַמֶּשֶׂק מְנֻחָתוֹ כִּי לַיהוָה עֵין אָדָם וְכֹל שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל׃	1 Λῆμμα λόγου κυρίου· ἐν γῇ Σεδραχ καὶ Δαμασκοῦ θυσία αὐτοῦ, διότι κύριος ἐφορᾷ ἀνθρώπους καὶ πάσας φυλὰς τοῦ Ισραηλ.
2 וְגַם־חֲמָת תִּגְבָּל־בָּהּ צֹר וְצִידוֹן כִּי חָכְמָה מְאֹד׃	2 καὶ Εμαθ ἐν τοῖς ὁρίοις αὐτῆς, Τύρος καὶ Σιδών, διότι ἐφρόνησαν σφόδρα.
[1] The burden of the word of the LORD. In the land of Hadrach, and in Damascus shall be His resting-place; for the LORD'S is the eye of man and all the tribes of Israel. [2] And Hamath also shall border thereon; Tyre and Zidon, for she is very wise. [9]	[1] The oracle of the word of the Lord, in the land of Sedrach and Damascus, his sacrifice; for the Lord looks upon men, and all the tribes of Israel. [2] And Emath, in her regions, Tyre and Sidon, because they were very clever.

I shall not discuss all the elements in the Greek text, for further comments the reader may confer the notes to the translation above,[10] but rather focus on how the translator made these verses intelligible to the ancient reader.

The line לַיהוָה עֵין אָדָם has been an issue in scholarly debate and textual emendations have been suggested in order to make better sense of it.[11] In my opinion there is no reason to assume that the *Vorlage* of the Greek translation differed from the text we find in the MT. We should rather regard the Greek text as an attempt from the translator to make the text understandable. The Greek does, however, make *Kyrios* the subject of the clause, and instead of the noun "eye" in the Hebrew, it has the verb "see". The Greek text then arrives at: "because the Lord sees man and all the tribes of Israel", which serves well as an introduction to an oracle of doom.

The offences of the adversaries and their consequences are described in a similar manner in the two texts. But, a few changes the translator made, seems to underline the graveness of the offences.

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[9] JPS 1917

[10] The textual criticism of these verses is discussed by many scholars, see for instances Larkin, *The Eschatology of Second Zechariah: A Study of the Formation of a Mantological Wisdom Anthology* 54-56; Magne Sæbø, *Sacharja 9-14: Untersuchungen von Text und Form* (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1969) 45-47

[11] BHS suggests that the MT is corrupt and the form עֵין אָדָם should be emended to עָוֹן אֲרָם "Aram sinned". Mitchell Dahood contends that the text as it stand is ok, but that its meaning is similar to עֵין הָאָרֶץ "the face of the earth" (f.ex. Exod 10:5). This suggestion emphasizes the close relationship between אדם and אדמה (Mitchell Dahood, "Zacharia 9,1 'ên 'adam," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 25 (1963) 123-124). E. Zolli argues that אדם is the name of a town *Ed-Damieh*. Zolli also list a number of other suggestions (Zolli, "'Eyn 'Adam (Zaxh. IX 1)," 91-92).

At the end of verse 2 we find an interesting line in the Greek text. MT's "for she is very wise" is rendered by "because they were very clever". In the Hebrew text we find the verb in the feminine singular probably referring back to Hamath, while the Greek text renders the verb in plural which leaves no room for doubt that it includes Tyre and Sidon in the subject.[12] The Greek text thus includes all these cities as offenders.

The usage of φρονεῖν to render the root חכם is an adequate translation. It was, however, not the only option available to the translator. The fact that he elsewhere rendered the same Hebrew word by the adjectives σοφὸς "wise" (Hos 14:10; Oba 1:8) and φρόνιμος "prudent, wise" (Hos 13:13) puts the choice of φρονεῖν into perspective. Φρονεῖν is the less commonly used translation among these renderings and interestingly enough, it can be used with a negative sense, namely "to be arrogant / to think arrogantly".[13] In this context it is perhaps more likely that it means "clever" but the usage of φρονεῖν shows that this cleverness is a despiteful attitude.[14]

We should also note a difference in verse 5.

תֵּרֶא אַשְׁקְלוֹן וְתִירָא וְעַזָּה וְתָחִיל מְאֹד וְעֶקְרוֹן כִּי־הֹבִישׁ מִבְטָחָהּ וְאָבַד מֶלֶךְ מֵעַזָּה וְאַשְׁקְלוֹן לֹא תֵשֵׁב׃

ὄψεται Ἀσκαλὼν καὶ φοβηθήσεται, καὶ Γάζα καὶ ὀδυνηθήσεται σφόδρα, **καὶ Ακκαρων, ὅτι ἠσχύνθη ἐπὶ τῷ παραπτώματι αὐτῆς**· καὶ ἀπολεῖται βασιλεὺς ἐκ Γάζης, καὶ Ἀσκαλὼν οὐ μὴ κατοικηθῇ.

Ashkelon shall see *it* and fear; Gaza also shall be very sorrowful; **And Ekron, for He dried up her expectation.** The king shall perish from Gaza, And Ashkelon shall not be inhabited.[15]

Ascalon shall see, and be afraid, Gaza too, and be greatly pained, **and Accaron; for she was put to shame by her transgressions**; and a king shall perish from Gaza, and Ascalon shall not be inhabited.

The verb ἠσχύνθη is in the passive voice, while the equivalent verb in the Hebrew text is active. In the Greek text Akkaron then becomes the grammatical subject. Moreower, we see that the translator chose the word παράπτωμα "transgression".[16] This is an unusual

[12] The plural form is supported by the Washington ms III cent. A singular form, ἐφρόνησε(ν), is found in Codex Venetus ἐφρόνησε(ν) VIII cent., a ms 68 XV cent., from the catenae group, a ms 770 XII cent., from the Alexandrinian group, and some of the mss attesting the work of Theodoretus.

[13] Esther 8:12.

[14] Interestingly we find that all three of the revisions have εσοφισαν.

[15] NKJV.

[16] This reading is supported by the Washington ms (III cent.), a marginal note in the Syro Hexaplaric translation, with minor deviations in Codex Sinaiticus (IV cent) (>τῷ), and Codex Venetus (VIII cent.) (accusative instead of dative). A number of mss from the Alexandrinian group, the text in the Syro Hexaplaric translation, Cyrillus Alexandrinus, Basilius Neopatrensis, and Jerome have απο της ελπιδος αυτης. But this reading is likely to be a correction towards the Hebrew.

equivalent for מבט "expectation". It is conceivable that the Greek translator read מבטה as מַבְטָא, which means "rash utterance",[17] although such a change would not account for the rendering of the pronominal suffix by αὐτῆς. But, whether or not he read מַבְטָא, the use of "transgression" still seems peculiar. Παράπτωμα was used with various meanings, but the most common amongst the Septuagint translators is "transgression, trespass".[18] In this manner the text explains why this city had reason to fear, and it furthermore serves to justify the image of it as a rightful enemy.[19]

3.1.3 Punishment.

A similar tendency is found in the following verses of the translation where the punishment is measured out. Verse 6 has:

וְיָשַׁב מַמְזֵר בְּאַשְׁדּוֹד וְהִכְרַתִּי גְּאוֹן פְּלִשְׁתִּים׃	**καὶ κατοικήσουσιν ἀλλογενεῖς** ἐν Ἀζώτῳ, καὶ καθελῶ ὕβριν ἀλλοφύλων
And a bastard will dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.	**And foreigners shall dwell** in Azotus, and I will bring down the pride of the foreign tribes.

Here we find that the Hebrew מַמְזֵר "bastard" has the Greek equivalent ἀλλογενεῖς "foreigners". The word מַמְזֵר is only used here and in Deut 23:3 in the Hebrew Bible. The Greek translation of Deut 23:3 used ἐκ πόρνης "of a harlot" which is closer to the Hebrew than ἀλλογενεῖς in Zechariah. In Zech 9:6 the translator was probably influenced by the use of ἀλλόφυλος in the last hemistich of the verse and found a parallel expression.[20] Thus, the choice the translator made was not without base in the Hebrew text, but the plural form of both this noun and the preceding verb indicates that the translation is carefully chosen. The

[17] See Num 30:7-8.

[18] Cf Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, and Henry Stuart Jones, *A Greek-English lexicon* (Oxford, 1968) 1322.

[19] It may also be contended that the passive voice here is a so called divine passive, which means that the acting agent is implied to be Yahweh.

[20] Is it possible that the translator here did not fully understand the Hebrew word? This seems to be the case in Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion who all transliterated into μαμζηρ. If so it may be contended that the translator made his choice on the base of the last two consonants in the Hebrew word ז and ר. זְר is a common equivalent for ἀλλογενής. Such a kind of exegesis is found elsewhere in the Septuagint translations, see Barr, "The Typology of Literalism in ancient biblical translations," 321 - 322 and Tov, *The Text Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research* 172 - 180. Against this solution, it may be argued that if the translator aimed at a strictly literal translation why would he choose a plural form? I believe that the best explanation is that the translator arrived at ἀλλογενής due to the parallel with ἀλλόφυλος, and that he regarded this as a suitable rendering in the context.

word ἀλλογενής carries with it a negative judgement of those referred to.[21] In the translation of the Minor Prophets the word is used as a parallel to "all who act unlawfully" (πάντες οἱ ποιοῦντες ἄνομα),[22] as a designation of foes entering Jerusalem and casting lots on her,[23] and as a designation for those who are not to allowed to enter in the eschatological Jerusalem.[24]

In the following verse in the Greek text, Zech 9:7, these ἀλλογενεῖς are further described by the line "and I will remove their blood from their mouth, and their abominations from between their teeth". In the Hebrew text we find the pronominal suffixes all in the singular, thus "his blood", "his mouth" etc. The Greek equivalents are rendered in the plural leaving no doubt that the ones having blood and abominations in their mouths are the ἀλλογενεῖς of the preceding verse.

3.1.4 The salvation.

From these adversaries Yahweh will bring salvation. He appears as the instigator of the events which are described in the passage, but he does not act alone. He has his human agents, who are presented in verses 9, 10, and 13. Let us look at verses 9 and 10 first.

9 גִּילִי מְאֹד בַּת־צִיּוֹן הָרִיעִי בַּת יְרוּשָׁלָ͏ִם הִנֵּה מַלְכֵּךְ
יָבוֹא לָךְ צַדִּיק וְנוֹשָׁע הוּא עָנִי וְרֹכֵב עַל־חֲמוֹר
וְעַל־עַיִר בֶּן־אֲתֹנוֹת׃

10 וְהִכְרַתִּי־רֶכֶב מֵאֶפְרַיִם וְסוּס מִירוּשָׁלָ͏ִם וְנִכְרְתָה
קֶשֶׁת מִלְחָמָה וְדִבֶּר שָׁלוֹם לַגּוֹיִם וּמָשְׁלוֹ מַיִם עַד־יָם
וּמִנָּהָר עַד־אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ׃

9 Χαῖρε σφόδρα, θύγατερ Σιων· κήρυσσε,
θύγατερ Ιερουσαλημ· ἰδοὺ ὁ βασιλεύς σου
ἔρχεταί σοι, δίκαιος καὶ **σῴζων** αὐτός, **πραΰς**
καὶ ἐπιβεβηκὼς ἐπὶ ὑποζύγιον καὶ πῶλον νέον.
10 **καὶ ἐξολεθρεύσει** ἅρματα ἐξ Εφραιμ καὶ
ἵππον ἐξ Ιερουσαλημ, καὶ ἐξολεθρευθήσεται
τόξον πολεμικόν, καὶ πλῆθος καὶ εἰρήνη ἐξ
ἐθνῶν· καὶ κατάρξει ὑδάτων ἕως θαλάσσης καὶ
ποταμῶν διεκβολὰς γῆς.

[9] Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion! Shout, daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and **saved**, **lowly** and riding on an ass, A colt, the foal of a ass.
[10] **I will cut off** the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; The battle bow shall be cut off. He shall speak peace to the nations; His dominion will be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.

[9] Rejoice greatly, daughter of Sion; proclaim aloud, daughter of Jerusalem; behold, your King is coming to you, just, and a **savior**; he is **meek** and riding on an ass, and a young foal. [10] **And he shall destroy** chariots out of Ephraim, and cavalry out of Jerusalem, and the bow of war shall be utterly destroyed; and there will be abundance and peace from the nations; and he shall rule over the waters as far as the sea, and the rivers to the ends of the earth.

[21] Takamitsu Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint: Chiefly of the Pentateuch and the Twelve Prophets* (Louvain, 2002)19-20.
[22] Mal 3:19
[23] Obad 1:11
[24] Joel 4:17

It has been noted that the Hebrew text of these two verses refers to other biblical texts. The most obvious are Gen 49 and Psalm 72, though the textual context of the passage is possibly even more complex.[25]

In Gen 49 we find Jakob's farewell blessing of his sons. The blessing of Judah which promises eternal kingship for his descendants, is believed to have served a political purpose as a pro-Judean, pro-Davidic propaganda.[26] In Zech this blessing is turned into prophecy with eschatological overtones of an ideal king. The most direct reference is in the description of the humble king riding on an ass (וְעַל־עַיִר בֶּן־אֲתֹנוֹת) using the same language as in Gen 49:11. But also the line "...I have sent forth your prisoners (אֲסִירַיִךְ) out of a pit that has no water (מְבוֹר אֵין מַיִם בּוֹ)" in verse 11 plays on the patriarchal story of Joseph and his brothers.[27] Joseph was thrown into a pit without water (Gen 37:24 וְהַבּוֹר רֵק אֵין בּוֹ מָיִם) and was later a prisoner in Egypt (Gen 39:20).

Verses 9-10 in Zech 9 combines Jakob's blessing with Psalm 72. This Psalm speaks about a king who will be a righteous judge and a saviour to the poor and the meek of the people. The line in Zech 9:10 "his dominion will be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth" is close to a quote of Ps 72:8 "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." But also verse 7 in the Psalm is probably reflected in Zech 9. In 72:7 we find the line יִפְרַח־בְּיָמָיו צַדִּיק וְרֹב שָׁלוֹם עַד־בְּלִי יָרֵחַ "in his days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace, till the moon is no more" to which Zechariah's צַדִּיק וְנוֹשָׁע הוּא and וְדִבֶּר שָׁלוֹם לַגּוֹיִם may be referring to.

As we note the textual interplay between these texts we should pay attention to the way the texts are combined in order to construct the passage in Zech 9. The peace which is spoken of in the Psalm is a peace where the enemies are destroyed and must lick the dust. The

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[25] See Terry Collins, "The Literary Contexts of Zechariah 9:9," in *The Book of Zechariah and its Influence*, ed. Christoffer Tuckett (Aldershot, 2003), and Adrian M. Leske, "Context and Meaning of Zechariah 9:9," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 62 (2000)

[26] See Michael Fishbane, *Biblical interpretation in ancient Israel* (Oxford, 1985) 501, and Rex Mason, "Why is Second Zechariah so Full of Quotations?," in *The Book of Zechariah and its Influence*, ed. Christoffer Tuckett (Aldershot, 2003) 25.

[27] Gen 37:24; 39:20-22, see Fishbane, *Biblical interpretation in ancient Israel* 502.

peace in Zech 9:10 seems to be of a different kind where the king will speak peace to the nations.[28]

We should note that the pro-Davidic links of Gen 49 are not included in these verses in Zechariah. Judah is mentioned in verse 13, but there as a reference to the Judean army alongside with the army of Ephraim.[29] The playing down of the Davidides' claim to royalty seems to be in line with Zech 12:7 where we find a more direct critique of the House of David "The LORD also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem be not magnified above Judah".[30]

The prophecy in Zech 9:9-10 is then combining different images of the ideal king in order to create its own image of a non-Davidic, humble and peace seeking king.[31] This image is taken over by the Greek text, although with some alterations.

In the Greek text the role of the king is more prominent than in the Hebrew text. In the Hebrew text the king is described as being saved by Yahweh, and in verse 10 it is Yahweh who will cut off the chariots from Ephraim and the horses from Jerusalem. In the Greek text the role of the human agent is enhanced in several ways. It has been noted by several scholars that the niphal participle נוֹשָׁע is rendered by the active participle σῴζων in the Greek.[32] Thus the king is no longer one who "has been delivered" but rather one who "delivers". A similar enhancement of the role of the king is found in the first verb in verse 10. In the Hebrew text Yahweh act as the subject of the verb, while in the Greek the king is the subject.[33] This verb spells out the saving acts, now ascribed to the king. He will act as a warrior clearing out the enemies.

In the description of the king we should also note that the translator used the word πραΰς "humble, meek". The Hebrew word it translates, עני, can take several meanings and the translator accordingly had a few options how to translate it. עני occurs also other places in the MP and it appears that the Greek translator rendered it mindfully. He was careful to

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[28] It has been argued that שלום in Zech 9:10 should be understood not only as external peace but also an inner peace, see Walter Eisenbeis, *Die Wurzel שׁלם im Alten Testament* (Berlin, 1969) 215-221.

[29] Zech 9:11-17 portray Yahweh as a divine warrior, is distinguished from other divine warrior texts by the fact that Yahweh will use human agents, the armies of Judah and Ephraim. See Collins, "The Literary Contexts of Zechariah 9:9," 31.

[30] Mason, "Why is Second Zechariah so Full of Quotations?," 25.

[31] It has been discussed who this king may be referring to. Adrian Leske suggests that the king is the faithful people of Judah (Leske, "Context and Meaning of Zechariah 9:9,").

[32] Similar renderings are found also in the Peshitta, the Targum and the Vulgate.

[33] The reading of this verb as indicative future active 3 sg is attested in the majority of the mss. Washington* has subjunctive aorist active 3 sg., and Sinaiticus* has indicative future active 2 pl. There is one mss, 544 XI cent. belonging to the Alexandrinian group, which has an infinitive form, and only in one of the church fathers (Theodorus Mopsuestensis) do we find a form corresponding to the 1 sg of the MT.

choose the positive πραΰς whenever the context required so,[34] while he used πένης "poor, needy" and πτωχός "poor" when he perceived עני with a negative reference.[35] Πραΰς was thus not accidentally chosen in our passage.[36]

The ideal of a humble leader goes all the way back to the description of Moses in Num 12:3 as the most humble man on earth. In the Greek version of this verse we find the use of πραΰς. Another text which uses πραΰς in a similar manner is 2 Macc 15:12 where we find it in Judah Maccabee's dream vision of Onias III. It seems therefore that πραΰς was considered an honourable designation for a leader.

The changes in the Greek text described above, are likely to stem from the messianic nature of the text; the question is whether it is probable that the translator had a specific person in mind while he translated. Scholars have come up with several suggestions as to who this person might have been. Arie van der Kooij has, based on the focus on the peaceful kingdom towards the end of verse 10, suggested that the king described in the Greek text was Simon.[37] Thomas Pola who works on the last verses of Zech 14, sees connections from that text to Zech 9:9-10 and suggests that the king is Judah Maccabee.[38] We should note that both scholars are suggesting that the translator had one of the Maccabees in mind.[39] Even though these were heroic figures in the second century BCE, their role as high priests and political leaders of Judea was not accepted by all factions in the Jewish society. How do we know that the translation was carried out by one who sympathized with the Maccabees and perhaps also the Hasmoneans?

As with most studies done on Septuagint text, we have to collect indications. If we find several indications leading in the same direction we may be on the trail of the translators. What other indications do we find in this passage? Let us turn to the next three verses of the text.

גַּם־אַתְּ בְּדַם־בְּרִיתֵךְ שִׁלַּחְתִּי אֲסִירַיִךְ מִבּוֹר אֵין 11 11 καὶ σὺ ἐν αἵματι διαθήκης ἐξαπέστειλας

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[34] Zeph 3:12.
[35] Amos 8:4; Hab 3:14; Zech 7:10.
[36] That this form was perceived to be special is confirmed by the fact that both Symmachus and Quinta instead have πτωχος while Theodotion has επακουων.
[37] Arie van der Kooij, "The Septuagint of Zechariah as Witness to an Early Interpretation of the Book," in *The Book of Zechariah and its Influence*, ed. Christoffer Tuckett (Aldershot, 2003)
[38] Thomas Pola, "Von Juda zu Judas: Das theologische Proprium von Sach 14, 21-21 LXX," in *Die Septuaginta - Texte, Kontexte, Lebenswelten*, ed. M. Karrer, Kraus, W., Meiser, M. (Tübingen, 2008) See also the note to Zech 14:14 Wolfgang and Martin Karrer Kraus, *Septuaginta Deutsch: Das griachische Alte Testament in deutscher Übersetzung* (Stuttgart, 2009) 1225.
[39] It has also been suggested that the late Hasmonean ruler Judas Aristobulus I's epithet "Philhellene" was in fact playing on Zech 9:10 as a fulfilment of the prophecy Joachim Schaper, "Eschatology in the Greek Psalter" (Mohr, 1995). 143. See also Goldstein "Hasmonean revolt..."

מַיִם בּוֹ׃

12 שׁוּבוּ לְבִצָּרוֹן אֲסִירֵי הַתִּקְוָה גַּם־הַיּוֹם מַגִּיד מִשְׁנֶה
אָשִׁיב לָךְ׃

13 כִּי־דָרַכְתִּי לִּי יְהוּדָה קֶשֶׁת מִלֵּאתִי אֶפְרַיִם
וְעוֹרַרְתִּי בָנַיִךְ צִיּוֹן עַל־בָּנַיִךְ יָוָן וְשַׂמְתִּיךְ כְּחֶרֶב גִּבּוֹר׃

δεσμίους σου ἐκ λάκκου οὐκ ἔχοντος ὕδωρ.
12 καθήσεσθε ἐν ὀχυρώματι, δέσμιοι τῆς
συναγωγῆς, καὶ ἀντὶ μιᾶς ἡμέρας παροικεσίας
σου διπλᾶ ἀνταποδώσω σοι·
13 **διότι ἐνέτεινά σε, Ιουδα, ἐμαυτῷ τόξον,**
ἔπλησα τὸν Εφραιμ καὶ ἐπεγερῶ τὰ τέκνα σου,
Σιων, ἐπὶ τὰ τέκνα τῶν Ἑλλήνων **καὶ**
ψηλαφήσω σε ὡς ῥομφαίαν μαχητοῦ·

[11] **As for you also**, because of the blood of your covenant, **I will set your prisoners free** from the waterless pit.[12] Return to the stronghold, you prisoners of hope. Even today I declare that I will restore double to you. [13] **For I have bent Judah, for me as a bow** and filled it with Ephraim, and raised up your sons, Zion, against your sons, Greece, **and put you like the sword of a mighty man.**

[11] **And you have** by the blood of your covenant **sent forth your prisoners** out of the pit that has no water. [12] You shall dwell in fortresses, you prisoners of the congregation: and for one day of your exile I will repay you double. [13] **For I have bent you, Judah, for myself as a bow**, I have filled Ephraim; and I will raise up your sons, Sion, against the sons of the Greeks, **and I will handle you as the sword of a warrior.**

In verse 11 the addressee of the text shifts from third person to second person. In the Hebrew text we find the personal pronoun in the feminine which refers back to the parallel expressions "daughter of Zion" and "daughter of Jerusalem" in verse 9. Verse 11 of the Hebrew text describes how Yahweh will deliver the captives of Zion/Jerusalem. In the Greek text we also find a personal pronoun in the second person, but as Greek does not have gender forms in the second singular, the translator had more room for his own interpretation of who the addressee was.

Verse 11 in the Greek text has, in difference from the Hebrew, the verb in second singular. This means that it is the addressee rather than Yahweh who will deliver the captives. We saw how the king in verses 9-10 was given a more active role in the Greek text than in the Hebrew. It appears that verse 11 continues this tendency and we may assume that the reference of the pronoun is the king.

The pronoun in second singular reoccurs in verse 13. In the Hebrew text the reference is again Zion; "I will raise up your sons, Zion". In the Greek text the reference of the pronoun once more proves to be different. The Greek translator adds the pronoun to the first sentence and thus arrives at the text: "For I have bent you, Judah, for myself as a bow". In the last clause the same pronoun is again used and now the Greek text has: "and I will handle you as the sword of a warrior". If we then follow the line from verses 9-10 through 11 to this line in verse 13, it appears that Judah is the king referred to. Of course the Judah of the Hebrew text refers to the tribe of Judah, but it seems like there is something else going on in the Greek

text. Is it possible that the translator had Judah Maccabee in mind while he translated these verses?

The reading of the tribal name of Judah as the personal name of Judah Maccabee lies close at hand in such a text. And this kind of identification is in fact known from other antique sources. The author of 1 Maccabees used such an interpretation in his praise of Judah. 1 Macc 3:1-9 draws, as Zech 9, upon Jakob's blessing of his son, Judah, especially where Judah Maccabee is described in the image of a lion.

> **1 Maccabees 3:1**[40] Then his son Judas, who was called Maccabeus, took command in his place. [2] All his brothers and all who had joined his father helped him; they gladly fought for Israel. [3] He extended the glory of his people. Like a giant he put on his breastplate; he bound on his armor of war and waged battles, protecting the camp by his sword. [4] **He was like a lion in his deeds, like a lion's cub roaring for prey.** [5] He searched out and pursued those who broke the law; he burned those who troubled his people. [6] Lawbreakers shrank back for fear of him; all the evildoers were confounded; and deliverance prospered by his hand. [7] He embittered many kings, but he made Jacob glad by his deeds, and his memory is blessed forever. [8] He went through the cities of Judah; he destroyed the ungodly out of the land; thus he turned away wrath from Israel. [9] He was renowned to the ends of the earth; he gathered in those who were perishing.

> **Genesis 49:8-12**[41] [8] Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons shall bow down before you. [9] **Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He crouches down, he stretches out like a lion, like a lioness-- who dares rouse him up?** [10] The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and the obedience of the peoples is his. [11] Binding his foal to the vine and his donkey's colt to the choice vine, he washes his garments in wine and his robe in the blood of grapes; [12] his eyes are darker than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk.

1 Macc 3:1- 4 use several elements from Gen 49. The mentioning of Judah's position among his brothers and his battle against Israel's enemies both have parallels in Gen 49. The most obvious link is, however, the usage of the imagery of Judah as a lion.[42] The peculiar thing about this kind of interpretation is the identification of the name Judah. In 1 Macc it is no longer the tribe of Judah that is to be like a lion's whelp, but rather Judah Maccabee.

The author in 1 Maccabees does not utilize the whole range of elements found in Gen 49, but rather goes on to describe the heroic acts of Judah. He fought the wicked and the ungodly as well as kings. He received "those who were ready to perish" and, verse 7 and 9 has "...and his memory is blessed forever", and "he was renowned to the ends of the earth". This description brings Psalm 72 to mind where the saving acts of the king are described.

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[40] NRSV
[41] NRSV
[42] Cf. also Isa 31:4 and Ps 104 (103): 20-22. Jonathan Goldstein suggests that the author in 1 Macc 3:3-4 compares Judah to David, cf. 1 Sam 17:34-39 (Jonathan A. Goldstein, *I Maccabees*, The Anchor Bible (New York, 1976) 244).

Especially in Ps 72:9-17 we find enemies and kings bowing to the king as he saves the meek and poor people. In verse 17 the Psalm ends the royal hymn by the words "May his name endure for ever, may his name be continued as long as the sun, may men bless themselves by him, may all nations call him blessed".

Whether the author of 1 Maccabees also used Zech 9 is difficult to assert, but it is remarkable that he collocates the same two scriptural passages. The reinterpretation of these passages to fit Judah Maccabee is an interesting piece of exegetical work and the combination of these two texts does provide us with a parallel to how Zech 9 may have been understood.

That references to Judah, the tribe, were interpreted to be concerned with Judah Maccabee has been suggested for other passages in the Septuagint translations. In Zechariah 14:14 Thomas Pola argues that the translator had Judah Maccabee in mind as he formed the translation: "and Judah shall fight in Jerusalem and gather the strength of all the peoples round about, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance." I will discuss this passage in XXX, but this may be another instance of this kind of interpretation. In his study on the Greek Psalter Joachim Schaper claims that the translation Ιουδας βασιλεύς μου "Judas, my king" for יהודה מחקקי, "Judah, my scepter" according to Schaper, in Pss 59 (60):9 and 107 (108):9 represents a messianic interpretation.[43] Schaper calls this change a "personalization" of the phrase, and suggests that such a rendering was influenced by the same kind of hermeneutical decision found in the Greek translation of Gen 49:10.[44] Schaper then places these Greek Psalms within a Hasmonean context and finds reason to believe that they show signs of pro-Hasmonean exegesis.[45]

4 Summary and Conclusions

The setting and the plot described in this chapter lends itself well to be read and interpreted in the second century BCE. The cities and the people mentioned are still there and they are still regarded as enemies. The coastal cities were several times in conflict with the Maccabees and their troops and control over them was only achieved through confrontation. The text in Zech 9 may quite easily have been appropriated to this political environment.

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[43] Schaper, "Eschatology in the Greek Psalter". 42-43.
[44] Compare "The scepter (שבט) shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff (מחקק) from between his feet" with "A ruler (ἄρχων) shall not fail from Judah, nor a prince (ἡγούμενος) from his loins". Ibid. 83-84.
[45] Ibid. 44-45.

The signs we find of interpretative elements in the translation are first that the adversaries are depicted in a negative light. Although the Hebrew text in the first place gives a rather gloomy description of their past deeds and their future, this is in a few instances even stronger in the Greek text. But while these cities will be punished Yahweh will save Jerusalem and the temple. A new king will come to reign there. In the Greek text the king is ascribed a more active role in this salvation. This goes all the way through to verse 13 where he acts as Yahweh's agent, Yahweh's bow and sword. This saviour is addressed as Judah and there is reason to believe that the translator read Judah in the Hebrew text to refer to Judah Maccabee of his own time.

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René Enzenauer,

The Day of the King. Sabbath and kingship of God in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice and in Qumran.

Found in the Qumran caves and in Masada the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice form a group of liturgical songs for thirteen Sabbaths of the year. They describe angels celebrating the Sabbath liturgy with hymns, prayers and blessings in the heavenly realms.

One of their most remarkable features is their strong emphasis on the kingship of God. The text describes God as מלך and his reign as מלכות, quite in contrast to the ממשלה and מלכה of the angels. In doing so מלך and מלכות are much more frequently used in the Songs than in any other ancient text.

One aim of my research project is to enlighten the correlation between the kingship of God and the explicit dedication of the Songs to the Sabbath, a connection which in this form is not known from the Old Testament.

However, the O.T. builds in various ways the background of the theological concept of the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, not only in matters of the kingship of God, but also with its texts concerning the sanctuary. As I will argue, the purpose of the Sabbath Songs is to describe the erection of a sanctuary for the heavenly king. This sanctuary is constructed by the hymns and praises of the angels and thus refers to texts like Ex 24-40, the revelation of the sanctuary at the 7th day and its erection.

Moreover, terminological references and similarities in content point to relations to other texts from Qumran, especially to 1QM and to 4Q174. 4Q174 describes the erection of a "sanctuary of man" for JHWH, the king, after the victory over the enemies. Similarly, some columns of 1QM also deal with the topic of the kingship of God, which will be constituted after the victorious battle of the sons of light against Belial and his sons of darkness.

In my opinion the calculation of time in Ex 24-40 as well as in 1QM allows a theological thinking which connects the kingship of God to the Sabbath and which is explicated in a much more poetical way in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice as well. It is this connection that makes the Sabbath become the day of the "holy reign" (Jub), respectively the day of the king and his sanctuary.

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A comment on the presentation

Dear OTSEM-participants,

The material I will present at the 2010 meeting consists of an early version of some introductory material from my ongoing dissertation. As can be seen from the form, this is a work-in-progress, meaning there are still many gaps to fill. Some parts have been left out from this presentation for want of space. In other places I have indicated a not yet written section with a headline in order to give a clearer idea of the planned structure. The exact place of all this material in the final dissertation will be "somewhere in the beginning".

I am very much looking forward to our discussion. Some of the things I hope will come up are:

- A general discussion on the structure of the text. I would be very happy for your input on the disposition plan which is still to be considered a rough sketch, as it is constantly changing. This presentation contains *Part I: Introduction* in its present, very modest form.
- The different explanations for the strong impurity and stigma of the disease which I discuss (and, for the most part, reject), starting on p 6. Can some parts of these themes be accepted as answers to my main question, why **צרעת** is the only disease to be strictly regulated by law?

I'm also hoping to hear some new things from you that I had no idea I should have thought of. See you all in September!

Best regards,

Linnéa

Disposition

Part I: Introduction

1. Outlining the problem
2. The recent discussion on the purity laws
3. Method, hypothesis, terminology
4. Skin diseases in the ancient Near East, a contextual background to Leviticus 13-14

Part II: Analysis

1. Text analysis: Lev 11-15
2. Text analysis: Other texts on **צרעת** in the OT.
3. Text analysis: Other OT-texts on ritual, purity, divine punishment and other relevant themes
4. Text analysis: Extrabiblical texts of interest for Lev 13-14
5. Reflections on the social function of the law
6. Isolation, stigmatization and fear of disease
7. Clean and unclean and its relation to being cured

Part III: Conclusions

The Law on צרעת in Lev 13-14

August 13, 2010

Linnéa Gradén

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1 Outlining the problem

The regulations on צרעת in Leviticus 13-14 is a long and dense legal section. It is also a very odd one. It revolves around one particular disease, which one we do not know for sure. Early on, tradition identified צרעת with leprosy. This identification has now been discarded by most researchers, and many modern Bible translations choose expressions like "scale disease" or even the very general "skin affliction" for this unknown illness. Still, the stigma remains. Commentators and everyday readers alike still seem prone to think "leprosy" when these chapters are mentioned. Doing so, one also often thinks "sin", "punishment", "disgust" and so on. Why is it so? Why is this disease so special?

Already in the first half on the twentieth century, a number of studies on the exact meaning of the word צרעת saw the light, and it has been shown over and over again that the illness we think of as *leprosy*, or with its modern name *Hansen's disease*, does hardly match the disease described in Leviticus 13-14.[1] Still, somehow, it's as if this conclusion never really made it into the minds of many readers. Even knowing about the issues of translation and identification (or at least, having seen the terminological studies), many present-day readers and commentators have not been able to rid their minds of the idea that the Bible talks about leprosy, leprosy being that dreadful, disfiguring, terminal and highly contagious disease that we know of from schoolbooks on mediaeval European history and from the colourful seventies movies. Ironically, a simple glance at the biblical texts themselves would have immediately shown that this is not what the Old Testament has in mind. There is also a widely spread idea that skin diseases were a major concern for legislators all around in the ancient Near East. We will see that this too is a misconception.

In modern day research, Leviticus has hardly been the most popular part of the Hebrew Bible. There are stunningly few detailed works to be found on this book. Rather, one seems to prefer to skip the boring lists of clean and unclean, and the pedantic priestly instructions on sacrifice. But in my view, this book holds the key to one of the great mysteries of our medical and cultural tradition: Where does our aversion towards leprosy come from? Most probably, the Bible is part of the reason. But - does even the Bible really have this strong antipathy? Does the biblical text in itself present the disease as dreadful, life-threatening, disfiguring or as a result of sin or punishment? How has that view of צרעת marked research on the Biblical purity system?

Research often tends to find certain areas of special interest within each book, resulting in some chapters being more extensively commented upon than others. Leviticus 13 and 14 are not among those popular chapters. Most of the attention has been given to the task of identifying the disease. As the terminological discussion (p 15) will show, I am personally doubtful that such an identification is possible, or even meaningful. Our further analysis will soon make it clear that the problematic singling out of צרעת does *not* depend on its precise medical identification. The biblical text nowhere presents a good reason for why there is so much talk of this disease and not others, and this would hardly be made clearer even if we could identify the disease.

Apart from the quest for terminological exactness, some work has also been done on the subject of ritual and law in the later years, but this research has tended to over-

[1]

look the peculiar place occupied by Leviticus 13-14, the law(s) on צרעת. Studies on Leviticus have been focusing on what or how, paying little attention to why. It is for this reason that the present study will focus not only on traditional exegesis with classical methods, but also more explicitly on social and anthropological concerns.

1.1 The material

2 The recent discussion on the purity laws

On several occasions, exegetes have maintained that **צרעת** holds a particularly strong place in the Israelite system of pollution.[2] If this is true, that would surely explain why so much text is devoted to the disease. One could, however, ask what is the chicken and what is the egg. Was **צרעת** so unclean that it required a law, or did an excessive amount of legal material change how the disease was regarded?

We now approach the one of the central questions of this study: Why does **צרעת** pollute? Why do some things pollute and not others, why some more than others? Is there a general rule to control the entire system or do we have to look for individual explanations for each piece of the big purity puzzle?

The more common explanations to what gives something the power to pollute all focus on the association of those things with danger and illness, foreign cults and idolatry, demonic or other supernatural forces, boundary functions and death. For our interest, the two latter themes are the most relevant. The subject of epidemic illness will be rejected as an explanation of the prominent position of **צרעת**. A connection with apostasy is hardly in question. Thoughts of demonic forces and divine punishment will also be considered as this thought is still going strong in modern exegesis. Let us examine the proposed explanations for the allegedly extreme impurity of **צרעת**.

2.1 Contagion and duration

One common misconception is that **צרעת** is a lethal and highly contagious disease. Though we may not be able to identify the disease with absolute certainty, we can be very certain that contagion or permanent illness is hardly the main concern of the Old Testament texts. Harrison's suggestion that the lack of description of the disease in its more advanced form is due to the text's interest being to isolate the infected person as early as possible for the protection of the community is neither plausible nor necessary.[3] This suggestion stems from the outdated conviction that **צרעת** is to be identified with leprosy, or at least with a contagious disease. This is the view I argue cannot be supported by Leviticus itself.

While an argument of silence may not, if standing on its own, be very convincing, it sure is odd that a medical instruction as thorough and detailed as Lev 13 should fail to mention the dangers of contagion had that been considered a risk. The mere presence of an elaborate rite of cleansing, clearly said to take place after the disease is gone (Lev 14:3b) tells us that obviously a complete recovery was possible, and probably even expected. Similarly, the statement in 13:46 that "He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease" (כָּל־יְמֵ֨י אֲשֶׁר־הַנֶּ֥גַע בּוֹ) seems rather to expect the patient to be cured.

The fact that the unit Lev 13-14 mentions neither this risk of contagion nor the risk of an epidemic spread, makes no claims the disease could be terminal, and presents no symptoms even remotely life threatening, all point in the same direction: **צרעת** is not regarded as a health hazard, neither to the public nor to the individual. It is also clear that, even with nothing said of the durance of the disease, a complete healing is definitely possible and probably also expected.

[2]

[3] Harrison 1980, 153

The same conviction is indubitably expressed in the story of the Aramean commander Naaman in 2 Kgs 5. Even though he suffers from **צרעת**, Naaman still holds a high office in the Aramean army. When he learns that someone in Israel might cure him, he goes to the Aramean king to discuss the matter. Next, he pays a visit to the Israelite king to ask for help. If Naaman's disease was thought to be contagious, it is hardly possible he would have been able to keep his high position in the army. It is even less probable that he would have been allowed personal meetings with not just one, but two kings.

The *conclusion* must be that the Hebrew Bible does not fear an epidemic outbreak of **צרעת**. This is further reinforced by Lev 13:12-17, which deals with a case of passing and returning **צרעת**. As soon as the **צרעת** whitens and covers the entire body of the patient, that person is to be declared clean. But if "raw flesh"(**בְּאֶשֶׁר חַי**) has appeared, he is unclean. If then the raw flesh turns white again, the patient is again clean.

Since this purity is the condition for the person to be allowed to return to the camp, the fear of contagion can once again be rejected. It simply makes no sense, if there is a common fear of an epidemic outbreak, to allow a person carrying the disease to wander in and out of the camp if the diseasewas expected to break out again.

Likewise, a suspected case of **צרעת** in a person or a house is not a source of uncleanness until it has been so pronounced by the priest. This can be seen several times in Lev 13, i.e. verses 3, 8 and 22. It is even clearer in 14:36, which treats the case of a suspectedly infected house: "The priest shall command that they empty the house before the priest goes to examine the disease, or all that is in the house will become unclean; and afterward the priest shall go in to inspect the house." In other words, the impurity status depends on a formal proclamation, which also doesn't support the idea of any big fear for an epidemic. The rules of quarantine simply are not strict enough to prevent the spread of an epidemic disease.

2.2 The levels of impurity

Many attempts have been made to sort out and organise a hierarchy of biblical impurities. The most elaborate is probably the one presented by Jacob Milgrom.[4] Based on several factors, such as the duration of the state of impurity, the purification procedures required, the communicability of the impurity and its effect on the common and sacred domains, he concludes that there is a clear hierarchy of the severity of the impurities, with **צרעת** topping the list as the most unclean. His list sorts uncleannesses of human impurity bearers, thus not including unclean objects and animals, producing this hierarchy:

1. The person with **צרעת** (Lev 14)
2. The parturient (Lev 12)
3. A person with genital discharges (Lev 15:3-15, 15:28-30)
4. Corpse-contaminated priest (Ezek 44:26-27)
5. Corpse-contaminated lay Nazirite (Num 6:9-12)
6. Person with accidentally prolonged impurity (Lev 5:1-13)

[4] Milgrom 2000, 986-991

7. Corpse-contaminated lay-person (Num 5:2-4, Num 19)
8. Menstruant (Lev 15:19-24)
9. Handler of red cow, scapegoat or burnt **חטאת** (Num 19:7-10, Lev 16:27-28)
10. A man who emits semen (Lev 15:16-18)
11. A carcass-contaminated person (Lev 11:24-40, Lev 22:5)
12. A secondarily contaminated person (Lev 15, Lev 22:4b-7, Num 19)

This thorough work of classification that has been carried out has given many good and new insights, as well as providing a fine illustration of a system of rank and value that was surely present in the general conception of impurity. Still, the systematization proposed is not infallible. It suffers from several weaknesses and fails to answer many questions, the most importantwhy the hierarchy should look like this, including some conditions and ignoring others. It also cannot explain why the impurities should be ranked this way. Philip Peter Jenson, referring to an earlier study by Goody, hits the nail on the head with the words "... lists, tables and written structures are a feature of literary, rather than less developed cultures, and there is a temptation to fill in all the blanks in a system that is not fully worked out in a culture."[5]

Another obvious problem is that the biblical sources themselves are not in accordance with each other. One example of this is that while Numbers requires the removal from the camp of the persons with **צרעת** as well as **זב** (Num 5:1-3), Leviticus commands this only for the person with skin disease (Lev 13:45-46), and not for the otherwise very thoroughly considered **זב** (Lev 15). Milgrom partly acknowledges this in ascribing the different views to differing redactional strata, though still drawing his conclusions based on the cumulative effect of all the restrictions found in the separate strata together.[6] In my view, it is important to distinguish between the diverging Pentateuchal traditions and admit that the system of purity is not totally coherent.

As Jenson rightly points out, some inconsistencies may be due to a complex theology rather than to conflicting source material.[7] Still, given the obvious fact that different biblical books show different views on **צרעת**, we have no reason to exclude the presence of diverging views *not* resulting from a complexity of theological thought, but rather from the existence of traditions from separate backgrounds even within the Pentateuch. Such contradicting elements within the laws are actually not uncommon.

Consider for example Lev 15:24 and 20:18, both of which treat the subject of a man who has sexual intercourse with a woman during her menstruation. While 15:24 states that the man, like a menstruating woman, will be unclean for seven days, 20:18 commands that both the man and the woman be cut off from their people. Since it doesn't make much sense to combine the two, it is more logical to consider this an example of two diverging views on the severity of a given impurity. We should thus not be surprised to find several opinions on the subject of **צרעת** as well. In other words, we may in the case of regulations on intercourse during menstruation, as well as in the case of the skin disease, have an instance of originally conflicting source material, which later grew into being a complex theology.

[5] Jenson 1992, 68
[6] Milgrom 2000, 984-991
[7] Jenson 1992, 23

Either way: the lack of clarity already in the Hebrew Bible on how impurities are to be treated should make it clear enough to us that not all questions can be answered by arranging the impurities into a diagram. If the concept of purity is not totally clear in the Old Testament, we should not set our hopes to sorting it out merely by a hierarchical arrangement.

The most important *conclusion*, thus, is that the ritual system can give us some clues as to the varying degrees of impurity within the system. Our text analysis in Part II will consider this more in depth. For now, suffice it to say that this hierarchy of impurities sure is interesting, but not convincing enough to explain why this is the only disease to be regulated by law.

2.3 Boundaries

It is a fact well known to anthropologists that human cultures show a special interest in borderline phenomena. This is easily recognised when we consider the large number of rites de passage present in any human culture: rites related to time, age, change of social status or group membership, weddings, births, deaths, festivals celebrating calendric changes and so on.

In the view of anthropologist Mary Douglas, the border theme is clearly present in the Old Testament as well, and is one of the keys to understanding its purity scheme. She suggests that all major sources of impurity stem from their unclear status between different categories. To be counted as clean, an animal must fit fully within one of the fixed classes.[8] Developing this thought some further, this would mean that the impurity of some of the unclean animals can be explained by observing that they are often notoriously hard to classify. Shellfish and eel, for example, live in the sea but still do not have all the common traits of a fish. This would make them hard to categorise and therefore unclean.

Likewise, the impurity of the parturient (Lev 12) could be explained by the birth of a child being part of a transitional process, that is, an opening between two categories. The זב and זבה of chapter 15 are explained in the same way, as well as the menstruant (to these latter could possibly also be added the theme of association with death, see 2.4 below). But the question remains: Can this theory explain the particular position of the law on צרעת?

According to Douglas, and with support from Milgrom, the explanation for the "extreme" level of impurity of the disease is its focus on the failure of the skin to fill the function of a boundary.[9]

The skin is viewed as the most outer border of the body, with the double task of keeping the body closed inside and strange elements kept outside the body. A damaged skin may not be able to do this. Broken skin allows blood and other liquids to leak out and exposes open flesh. Open wounds let dirt and strange particles enter the body. The boundary between inner and outer, between a person and the world around is thereby not clear. This is proposed as an explanation of the importance of boundaries, which is then claimed as the reason behind the purity system.

[8] Douglas 1991, 55
[9] Douglas 1991, 121

There are several objections to be made here, both to the idea of holding this as the overarching rationale for the purity system and as an explanation for **צרעת** in particular.

To explain the system as a whole, the observation of boundaries can surely be one important part. Festivals that break up the year into sections and passage rites that mark divisions between one part of a person's life and another are just as central to Israelite religion as to any other culture. It is not very likely though that this theory could explain all that there is to Israelite sense of purity. Why animals that do have cloven hooves and chew cud should be less of a border crossing phenomenon than animals with just one of these traits is hardly clear, and Douglas's own explanation is not very convincing.[10]

In the discussion of the animals, one must also ask whether the system seems to presuppose a limited number of categories, and then ask whether that thought is realistic. Unless one wants to propose the existence of a number of fixed "natural" categories, remembering Douglas's own crisp clear formulation of how anthropologists will always insist that "nature is culturally defined"[11], it is hard to see why categories of purity should not be able to include certain animals. Likewise, one must observe that some things that could be very clearly classified – such as a clean dead animal – are still impure. As for the effect on **צרעת**, there are several problems with the idea of a boundary theme as the explanation.

Firstly, it is not explicit from the text in Lev 13 that **צרעת** does necessarily result in a leaking and broken skin. Though it must be admitted that there are a number of hapax legomena in chapters 13-14, and that all terms for swellings and blisters are not clear to us, the text still never explicitly talks of open wounds or leakage of bodily fluids.

Quite to the contrary, it is made perfectly clear that even a spot of a change of colour can be enough to call it an unclean **צרעת**. Lev 13:4 instructs that "But if the spot is white in the skin of his body, and appears no deeper than the skin, and the hair in it has not turned white, the priest shall confine the diseased person for seven days." and 13:8 then concludes: "The priest shall make an examination, and if the eruption has spread in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him unclean; it is a leprous disease."

Secondly, this theory cannot explain why only **צרעת** is treated by the Old Testament. If the skin's failure to fulfil its barrier duties were enough, one would expect to see a much larger number of symptoms and diseases listed. One would expect comments on all the boils and blisters of other biblical texts. One would expect references to open cracks and wounds. One would certainly not, however, expect to find, as one does in Lev 13:12-13 and 13:34, that there are skin afflictions, even **צרעת** variants, that are clearly clean.

Thirdly, it is hard to explain why this "border theme" did not create a never-ending list of other diseases to be regulated by law. Why are there no references to other kinds of skin disease? Or to illnesses causing running eyes and noses? Eye diseases are believed to have been among the most common medical issues in the ancient Near East, much due to the large number of parasites and infectious diseases present in this climate, combined with poor hygiene and lack of water.[12] This is further buttressed by the earlier discussed medical parts of the Code of Hammurabi, where eye operations

[10] Douglas 1991, 55
[11] Douglas 1999, 144
[12] Miles and Driver 1952, 417

make a prominent part of the legislation on medical practice.[13] As shown on page **??**[14] , blindness is commonly mentioned also in the Hebrew Bible. Simply, the diseases that cause symptoms approaching that fine line between the inside and the outside of the human body should be quite numerous.

The *conclusion* of this discussion on boundaries must be that this theme alone cannot really answer many questions. It fails to make clear why and how categories should be fixed, and more importantly fails to explain why **צרעת** should be the only disease seen as one threatening the borders of the human body. The human fear and fascination for borderline phenomena probably has some important input to provide into the discussion on **צרעת**, but is not enough as an answer.

2.4 The association with death

"Do not let her be like one stillborn, whose flesh is half consumed when it comes out of its mother's womb." Aaron's words in Num 12 as God strikes Miriam with **צרעת** has probably played a fundamental role in establishing the association with death as something particular for this disease.

Douglas and Milgrom share the view that the purity system must be understood, in Douglas's words, in the perspective of "the God of life as opposed to all things related to death".[15] This association is held to be made on two levels: the symbolical and the visual. On the symbolical level, Douglas and Milgrom argue, everything that represents death, or loss of life, must be considered unclean.[16] This is not necessarily the same as saying that everything that is unclean is so because it symbolises death (we will return to that question in Part II), but focuses on the diametral opposition between the God of Israel and the realm of death.

With this way of thinking, it is self-evident why dead bodies of both humans and animals should be considered unclean, as well as graves. As for the theme of death and loss of life in relation to **צרעת**, the connection is less clear. The impurities of the **זבה** and the menstruant are in this scheme of things explained by the loss of blood being understood as a sign that the woman is not pregnant – therefore the loss of a potential life.[17] The same goes for the **זב**, where the flow also does not lead to a pregnancy but again, a loss of potential life.

As for **צרעת**, Aaron's words in Num 12 have been used to show that the disease was supposed to make the ill person look like dead. Aaron's words sure are strong. But does it really show that **צרעת** has a stronger connection with death than other diseases? Milgrom's claim that the source of the impurity is not the disease in itself but its appearance is interesting but not entirely fitting.[18] Obviously, ages before the knowledge of bacteria, a diagnosis must be made on the basis of the looks of the skin condition. But as we have seen earlier, a fully visible **צרעת**, covering the patient from top to toe in white does not necessarily make the person unclean (Lev 13:12-13). We

[13] Roth, Hoffner, and Michalowski 1995, 123 § 215-220

[14] Not included in this paper, thereby the lacking page reference

[15] Douglas 1993, 24

[16]

[17] Douglas 1999, 178

[18] Milgrom 2001, 817

have also found that even a smaller spot of צרעת can render a person unclean.[19] The size of the affected area is not what is decisive for the diagnosis.

It is also worth repeating that Leviticus does not describe the physical symptoms in very severe terms, and surely not as severe as Aaron does. It is hard to see how this remark could create a clear and obvious difference between צרעת and all other diseases, so that צרעת requires treatment in its own law. It is simply hard to understand why other diseases should not attract the same kind of impurity if looks are all that matters. What does "death" look like anyway? Is it plausible to assume that צרעת is the only disease able to provoke this thought? What about its visual appearance would be the cause of an extreme impurity?

Indeed, many conditions could bring about the association with death – let's just start by considering what chronic starvation does to the human body. Fevers and lung diseases sure take their toll, as well as many other diseases with symptoms on the skin that are not covered under the term צרעת. Measles, chickenpox and plagues can all be lethal, not to mention how open sores and wounds, contracted in battle, hunt or in the dangerous heavy agricultural work must have reaped innumerable deaths from fevers and infections. The impurity status of צרעת , then, cannot be explained simply in terms of visibility.

Milgrom also states that צרעתwas hardly considered a disease, since furniture which was removed from an infected house before the house was declared unclean did not become impure.[20]This, in my view, supports the suggestion that a visible affliction is not enough to cause impurity - even נֶגַע צָרַעַת is not unclear until the priest has declared it officially טמא.

If the visibility of the disease were the reason, and the priest's declaration were only a confirmation of what was already suspected, namely that the house's affliction really is נֶגַע צָרַעַת, one would wonder why this has no retroactive effect on the removed furniture. The view generally held in Leviticus is rather that impurity is a non-conditional state, totally unrelated to the human agent's conscious or deliberate contact with the source. In Lev 11, a dead animal is impure no matter what the circumstances. The same goes for a grave. The command in Lev 5:17-19 that a person who inadvertently commits a sin and realises it only later must bring forward a sacrifice for this sin shows that sin cannot be ignored only because it was committed unknowingly. From this we can suppose that the priest's role in declaring the impurity of the infected house is *not* to confirm the house owner's suspicion.

In view of this, is it really sensible to claim that צרעת is extremely and particularly connected with death? I do not think so, and more importantly: neither do the purity laws of Leviticus.

In the Pentateuch, some of the short texts that speak of the skin disease mention purity as the reason for removing people with צרעת and זב from the camp. Lev 13-14 too has the view of צרעת as something potentially unclean, and devotes the entire chapter 14 to the purification rite. It does not, however, explain why the disease is

[19]Lev 13:24-25: "Or, when the body has a burn on the skin and the raw flesh of the burn becomes a spot, reddish-white or white, the priest shall examine it. If the hair in the spot has turned white and it appears deeper than the skin, it is a leprous disease; it has broken out in the burn, and the priest shall pronounce him unclean. This is a leprous disease."

[20]Milgrom 2001, 819

special or where the purity stems from. More important yet in this case: the text in Leviticus, as we have seen, never mentions any extreme symptoms, which makes the explanation of a connection with death rather dubitable. Why, if that connection is so important, is this not expressed in the legal text?

The possible, but not very clear, traces of the thought of death, are to be found in Lev 13:46-47 and in chapter 14. 13:46-47 prescribes a behaviour associated with mourning rites be observed by the diseased person. In chapter 14, the ritual of purification for a person that is now rid of the disease has some elements in common with the ritual for purification after corpse-contamination in Num 19. Whether these traits are common for rituals dealing with impurity associated with death, or with any purity, or if they are actually just common elements for any kind of ritual will be investigated further below in Part II..

As for the comparison of death and **צרעת** made by Aaron, it will be a task for our later detailed exegesis of all the pericopes on **צרעת** to elucidate the relation between the different Pentateuchal opinions on the disease. Given the fact that some of the pericopes differ in time and place of origin it is hardly self-evident that all texts do share Aaron's opinion. The aesthetic and narrative function of the disease in Num 12 will also be considered.

The *conclusion* of this discussion is that the idea of connecting **צרעת** with death is expressed somewhat clearly in only one Old Testament pericope. Yet, even in that pericope the function and use of that particular disease must be discussed. Our full exegesis of this text in Part II will look further into the role of the disease.

The legal text of Lev 13-14 has nothing explicit to say of the **צרעת**-death connection and neither do the other texts. And the crucial question remains: commentators have not been able to explain why **צרעת** should be more closely connected with death than any other disease, and no explanation can be easily derived from the biblical texts as to why **צרעת** should be so special.ss

2.5 Demons and divine punishment

2.6 The disease as a polluter of sancta

2.7 Conclusions

3 Method and disposition

The above outline of the problem will hopefully have made clear that the aim of this study is to fill the gap that has been left open between the textual and anthropological sides of the study of the purity laws. I'd like to make the presupposition that the growth of a legal text is the result on one hand a textual process, involving scrolls and temple archives and redactions, and on the other hand a social process where popular customs, likes and dislikes have a chance of influencing the legislators' ways of viewing the world. Therefore, I am convinced that the most accurate way of reading any legal composition is with an eye open also to the wider social context, the scope being not only to understand the text, but to understand the text's place in its own society, and, equally important, realizing the effect of society on the composition of the text.

After making these initial observations on the problems still remaining considering Leviticus 13-14, the question, method and working hypothesis follow almost naturally. The basic question underlying this study can be easily condensed into one simple phrase: Why is there a law on צרעת in Leviticus? My starting hypothesis suggests that the law on צרעת in Lev 13-14 has undergone significant alteration since its first formulation. I would like to propose the existence of an original core consisting of a few of the verses in Lev 13-14, mainly verses containing ritual instructions, which makes the law on צרעת appear more consistent with chapters 12 and 15 both in form and content.

I suggest that these three ritual texts in chapters 12-15 share a common origin which differs from that of Lev 11 and the rest of Leviticus. Considering that the physical conditions dealt with in 12-15 can be supposed to have been very common, I suggest that they were all considered rather undramatic and normal. The extreme views on צרעת as a very threatening and very sinful disease might rather be a result of its odd place in the biblical canon.

The task of applying social and anthropological methods and considerations to the study of a particular biblical law is for the one purpose of answering the question: Why does the Hebrew Bible include a law on צרעת and not on other diseases? In doing this, it remains my hope not to fall into the common trap of producing a result that consists of nothing but observations. The explanation I would like to propose to the dissertation's main question is a two-faced one, assuming the answer is best found combining a thorough study of the text with a sociocentric investigation of the function of purity law.

While the Biblical text itself may have a long and complicated composition history, this history is not unrelated to society's view of a certain disease or of the purity system altogether. The use of anthropological material for comparison is of course not an unknown way of exploring biblical texts, and is especially common when discussing matters of purity and ritual. In many cases, striking parallels can be shown between the biblical material and its contemporary Near Eastern neighbouring cultures.

It is for this reason that I will take advantage of some anthropological material. While textual issues and canon questions are more specific to the history of the text in question – that is, the Hebrew Bible – some other questions can be helped by being compared with similar occurrences outside the Israelite context. Thus, some knowledge from outside will be brought in to enhance this investigation. A number of studies on different aspects of human behaviour will be relevant, for example some classic

analyses of the presence of body-house symbolism within societies, or on the function of laws that consolidate social stratification.

Anthropologists have also been able to identify many important aspects of biblical views shared also by present-day peoples all over the world. In other words, taking on a view that puts the human nature on centre-stage should tell us a lot about why purity laws are of interest to a certain society. At the same time, it is obvious why the focus of a study like this must be the biblical text itself and that classical methods are able to produce a lot of information about the text's growth. I therefore believe this combination of methods will prove most fruitful.

Respecting this presupposition, the introductory chapter will conclude with an overview of the ancient Near Eastern context in which Leviticus must be placed. After that follows the main part of this study, namely the analysis of the texts in question, starting with the purity laws in Lev 11-15 and then broadening the perspective to include other relevant texts from the Hebrew Bible and a few extrabiblical texts as well.Some sections will follow dedicated to understanding some social aspects of disease and of cultic law, after which we will sum up the discussions in the section of conclusions.

3.1 Terminology

This section has not been written yet. When written, it will include:

1. An overview in the change of understanding of the term **צרעת**. This word has a complicated translation history. Antique uses and translations show clearly that the term originally intended no precise diagnosis, but should be understood as a rather general and vague term for a skin disease or a group of diseases. A simple look at the symptoms described in Lev 13-14 also make it clear that **צרעת** should not be identified with leprosy. Since the disease(s) cannot be identified, and since Leviticus does not really describe a disease, but a number of more or less related symptoms, I have chosen to keep the term **צרעת**.

2. A discussion on my use of terms such as "patient" and "disease", which might at first glance seem to be too medical for the discussion of an essentially cultic text.

3. Some comments on the word **זב**, which I am not sure that I will translate. A good translation could be "discharge" or "genital flux". Some commentators use "gonhorreic flux", but I am anxious not to use an unnecessarily precise medical term, since I believe that striving for medical exactness in this case is missing the point.

4. Some comment on **טהר** and **טמא**.

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A little something to remember me by:

The relation between ritual and remembrance in the Pentateuch

In a vast amount of Semitic dedicatory inscriptions from the Persian and Hellenistic period the votary asks for "good remembrance" from the deity in return for the dedicated object. But what does it mean to be remembered favorably by a deity? The act of remembering on behalf of a goddess or god is not merely a cognitive exercise of recalling a past event, but an act that is expected to have a tangible beneficial effect for the one remembered; Yahweh remembers Noah in the ark in Genesis 8:1 and makes the waters withdraw and Yahweh remembers the childless Rachel in Genesis 30:22 and opens her womb. To be remembered by Yahweh is to be taken care of.

In this paper I wish to explore the relation between ritual acts and God's remembrance in the Pentateuch in order to shed light on the relationship between votive practice (giving gifts to the gods) and blessing in the Hebrew Bible and its surrounding world.

In this paper I wish to explore the relationship between Yahweh's remembrance of his worshippers and ritual acts and objects in the Pentateuch. This relationship may add an extra dimension to our understanding of the well-known terminology of good remembrance in dedicatory inscriptions.

The phrase "for good remembrance" (*ldkrwn ṭb*) and the more common "may he be remembered for good" (*dkyr lṭb*) and variations of these appear frequently in Aramaic in both inscriptions and graffiti from Nabataea, Palmyra, Dura Europos, Hatra and Palestine.[1] With the discovery of a Persian to Hellenistic period sanctuary dedicated to Yahweh on Mount Gerizim and of the dedicatory inscriptions from Gerizim, this well-attested Aramaic formula of dedication has now recently appeared in a context of Yahwistic worship as well.[2]

[1] A majority of these can be found in CIS Vol II. For a good presentation to some of the inscriptions carrying the be remembered for good/for good remembrance formula see John F. Healey, "'May he be Remembered for Good': An Aramaic Formula", *Targumic and Cognate Studies: Essays in Honour of Martin McNamara*, Ed. by Kevin J. Cathcart and Michael Maher, Sheffield Academic Press, 1996, pp. 177-186 (with references). See also Mark Lidzbarski, *Handbuch der Nordsemitischen Epigraphik nebst Ausgewählten Inschriften*, I. Text, Weimar, Verlag von Emil Felber, 1898, pp. 165-169 and Schottroff, *'Gedenken' im Alten Orient und im Alten Testament*, 1967, pp. 58-89. Many of the inscriptions from Hatra are published by Fuad Safar in "Inscriptions of Hatra", *Sumer*, Vol. IX, No. 1, 1953, pp. 7-20 and the synagogue inscriptions are catalogued in Joseph Naveh, *On Stone and Mosaic: The Aramaic and Hebrew Inscriptions from Ancient Synagogues*, Carta, Jerusalem, 1978 (Hebrew), see index p. 150.

[2] Yitzhak Magen, Haggai Misgav and Levana Tsfania, *Mount Gerizim Excavations, Volume I, The Aramaic Hebrew and Samaritan Inscriptions*, Staff Officer of Archaeology – Civil Administration of Judea and Samaria, Israel Antiquities Authorities, Jerusalem, 2004; Yitzhak Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations, Volume II, A Temple City*, Staff Officer of Archaeology – Civil Administration of Judea and Samaria, Israel Antiquities Authorities, Jerusalem, 2008; Yitzhak Magen, "The Dating of the First Phase of the Samaritan Temple on Mount Gerizim in Light of the Archaeological Evidence", *Judah and the Judeans in the Fourth Century B.C.E.*, edited by Oded Lipschits, Gary N. Knoppers and Rainer Albertz, Eisenbrauns, Winona Lake, Indiana, 2007, pp. 157-211.

Roughly speaking, the inscriptions with a version of the remembrance formula appear in three different contexts: 1) funerary, 2) as graffiti and 3) in a sanctuary setting, inscribed on temple walls or pavement or on statues and altars.

As an example of the first category I may mention this Palmyrene inscription in a chamber tomb founded in 98 CE and belonging to Abdastor:

> "May Moqaimu son of Belshuri be remembered (*dkyr*) for good (*bṭb*)."[3]

Another example is this funerary stele, found in Oumm el-Amed, south of Tyre. This inscription is one of the comparatively rare occurrences of remembrance terminology in Phoenician and Punic:

> "This is the memorial (*skr*) stele of Ba'alyaton, son of Ba'alyaton, [head of] the olivepress."[4]

These two examples help to illustrate the difficulties with inscriptions found in a funerary context; their function may be purely commemorative, as is probably the case with the stele from Oumm el-Amed, and they may be intended as either commemorations, invocations or dedications. In the case of the inscription from the tomb of Abdastor it is impossible to know whether Moqaimu is deceased or alive and whether this has any effect on the meaning of "remembrance". It is very possible, perhaps even likely, that inscriptions with remembrance formulae found in funerary contexts serve functions that are directly parallel with similar inscriptions found in sanctuary contexts, but for the moment I will leave funerary inscriptions out of the discussion.

The most numerous examples by far of the remembrance formula are graffiti, particularly Nabataean graffiti carved on large rocks and boulders along the major trade routes and roads in the Sinai Peninsula and in the regions around Petra and Hegra.[5]

The Nabataean graffiti generally begin with "remembered be" (*dkyr*), "peace to" (*šlm*) or "blessed be" (*bryk*), or a combination of two or all of these expressions, followed by a name and very often the expression "for good" (*bṭb*) is added.[6]

Among the Nabataean graffiti from Wadi Haggag in central northeastern Sinai we find examples of all three expressions:

> "Rembered be (*dkyr*) Hantalu son of 'Amru for good (*bṭb*)".[7]

> "Blessed be (*bryk*) Honai'u son of 'Abd'alba'ali for good".[8]

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[3]Harald Ingholt, "Inscriptions and Sculptures from Palmyra II", *Berytus*, vol. 5, 1938, pp. 93-140, p. 137; Klaas Dijkstra, *Life and Loyalty: A Study in the Socio-Religious Culture of Syria and Mesopotamia in the Graeco-Roman Period Based on Epigraphical Evidence*, Brill, 1995, p. 91.

[4] Maurice Dunand et Raymond Duru, *Oumm El-'Amed: Une ville de l'époque hellénistique aux échelles de Tyr, Texte*, Paris, 1962, p. 187.

[5] Avraham Negev stated in 1979 that about 3000 Nabatean graffiti had been found ("Graffiti and Dedications", BASOR no. 235, 1979, pp. 27-30). A majority of these can be found in CIS vol II.

[6] Negev, "Graffiti and Dedications", p. 27.

[7] Avraham Negev, *The Inscriptions of Wadi Haggag, Sinai*, Qedem vol 6, Jerusalem, 1977, No. 210, p. 54.

"Remembered be for good and peace (*šlm*) to 'Owaimu son of Wa'ilu for good".[9]

Sometimes the same formulae occur in Greek inscriptions and graffiti as well, the Greek synonym for remembered being "mnaesthae" (μνησθη).[10]

The difficulty with these graffiti is how we should interpret them; are they mere graffiti in the modern sense of the word, belonging to the "Kilroy was here"-type, or are they in fact invocations to a deity?

Avraham Negev argues, that the Nabataean graffiti should all be interpreted as invocations or prayers and that even the ones containing only a name should be read as abbreviated versions of the formula "remembered be/peace to/blessed be PN for good before the deity".[11] I am inclined to agree with Negev that these graffiti are expressions of more than travelers wanting to eternalize themselves 'just because', but unfortunately the context of these mini-texts is so uncertain that we can only speculate about their origin and function.

The third context is a sanctuary setting where the remembrance formula appears on parts of the sanctuary building itself, such as walls or pavement, or on cultic paraphernalia, such as altars and statues. Because the broader context in these cases is clearly cultic and because names of divinities are often mentioned in the inscriptions it is reasonable to assume that these inscriptions are either dedications or invocations.

For the present paper I have picked as examples the previously mentioned Yahweh sanctuary on Mount Gerizim, near present day Nablus, and a Nabataean Allat sanctuary from Ramm, also known as wadi Rumm.[12] I shall commence with the sanctuary on Mount Gerizim:

During the Mount Gerizim Excavations which were carried out between 1983 and 2006 under the direction of Yitzhak Magen a Yahwistic sanctuary and a Hellenistic city were uncovered at the site

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[8] Negev, *The Inscriptions of Wadi Haggag, Sinai*, 1977, No. 226, p. 57.
[9] Negev, *The Inscriptions of Wadi Haggag, Sinai*, 1977, No. 222, p. 57.
[10] Negev, *The Inscriptions of Wadi Haggag, Sinai*, 1977, Nos. 3, 47, 105, 127, 130, 137, 163, 172 and 177.
[11] Negev, "Graffiti and Dedications", 1979, p. 27; Negev, Nabatean Archaeology Today, New York University Press, 1986, p. 116.
[12] In the dissertation I have selected a handful of examples of 'good remembrance inscriptions' from a sanctuary setting, but due to limitations of space in this paper I have decided to focus on the Mount Gerizim inscriptions and only one comparative example. So far my case-studies include the dedicatory inscriptions from the Asur-Sheruah temple in post-Assyrian Assur (Walter Andrae, *Das wiedererstandene Assur*, J.C. Hinrichs Verlag, 1938; Walter Andrae und Heinz Lenzen, *Die Partherstadt Assur*, Otto Zeller, 1967; Basile Aggoula, *Inscriptions et graffites araméens d'Assour*, Napoli, 1985; Andrae, Walter and P. Jensen: „Aramäische Inschriften aus Assur und Hatra aus der Partherzeit", *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft*, Nr. 60, juli 1920, pp. 1-51), the Nabataean inscriptions from Jebel Moneijah (Negev, Avraham: "A Nabatean Sanctuary at Jebel Moneijah, Southern Sinai", *Israel Exploration Journal*, volume 27, number 4, 1977, pp. 219-231; Negev, Avraham: "Nabatean Inscriptions in Southern Sinai", *The Biblical Archaeologist*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (winter 1982), pp. 21-25), The Hatrene inscriptions from building E or the so called "Hellenistic Temple" in Hatra (Vattioni, Francesco. Le Iscrizioni di Hatra. Supplemento n. 28 agli ANNALI, vol. 41 (1981), fasc. 3, Napoli: Istituto Orientale di Napoli, 1981; Yasuyoshi Okada, "Pseudoperipteral temples in late-antiquity Mesopotamia: A note on the last stage of the Babylonian tradition in architecture", Al-Rafidan, vol. 18, 1997, pp. 281-285) and the Syriac inscriptions from Sumatar Harabesi (Drijvers and Healey: *The Old Syriac Inscriptions of Edessa and Osrrhoene*, 1999; H.J.W. Drijvers: "New Syriac Inscriptions and Archaeological finds from Edessa and Sumatar Harabesi", *BSOAS*, vol 36:1, 1973, pp. 1-14).

of Mount Gerizim.[13] The sanctuary shows signs of two main building phases: The first face is the construction of the Persian-period sacred precinct in the mid-fifth century B.C.E.[14] This structure occupies the highest spot on the mount and was the first structure to be built on Mount Gerizim. The Persian-period temple was active for approximately 250 years until the second building phase which dates to the early second century B.C.E., during the reign of Antiochus III, when a new temple and precinct was build on top of the Persian-period structure. There are no signs of abandonment or discontinuity between the Persian and Hellenistic periods. The Hellenistic city was founded around the sacred precinct in the late fourth century B.C.E. and reached its maximal size of about 400 dunams, which is 800 m. long and some 500 m. wide, in the second century B.C.E. Both city and temple were destroyed by John Hyrcanus I in 111-110 B.C.E.[15]

The sacred precinct at Mount Gerizim appears to conform to regulations for the cult known from the Pentateuch both with regard to a ban on pictures, purification rules for priests and the assemblage of sacrificial bones found on the mountain.[16] Although Mount Gerizim in later tradition became, and remains to this day, the centre for the Samaritan religion there is nothing distinctly Samaritan about the Persian and Hellenistic period sanctuary at Gerizim. What we find at Gerizim is rather an example of a proto-Jewish, or proto-Samaritan if you will, cult comparable to the contemporary Yahwistic cults in Jerusalem and Elephantine.[17]

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[13] One inscription written in Paleo-Hebrew contains the name YHWH and thus clearly identifies the sanctuary as Yahwistic, see Yitzhak Magen, *A Temple City*, 2008, p. 155. For an excellent overview of the excavations see Yitzhak Magen, "The Dating of the First Phase of the Samaritan Temple on Mount Gerizim", 2007. A Late-Roman-period citadel and a Byzantine church precinct dedicated to Mary Theotokos was also uncovered (see below) and the Roman Temple to Zeus Hypsistos on the northern hill north of the city was reexcavated.

[14] Magen sums up the evidence on dating as follows: "To conclude this section on the dating of the first phase of the sacred precinct at the site, we may state, on the basis of pottery, coins, and C-14 testing – and with a great degree of certainty – that the first phase of the precinct was built in the fifth century B.C.E." (Magen, "The Dating of the First Phase of the Samaritan Temple", 2007, p. 180). This evidence conclusively disproves a construction date in the fourth century as it is described by Josephus in Ant. 11.302-12, 321-25, see Magen, "The Dating of the First Phase of the Samaritan Temple", 2007, pp. 190-91.

[15] After the destruction the city remained uninhabited. In the early fourth century CE during the Byzantine period parts of the sacred precinct were reconstructed by the Samaritans and in the late fifth century the area was badly damaged when the emperor Zenon demolished the precinct in order to make way for the construction of a church dedicated to Mary "Mother of God".Yitzhak Magen, "The Dating of the First Phase of the Samaritan Temple", 2007; Yitzhak Magen, Haggai Misgav and Levana Tsfania, *Mount Gerizim Excavations, Volume I, The Aramaic Hebrew and Samaritan Inscriptions*, Staff Officer of Archaeology – Civil Administration of Judea and Samaria, Israel Antiquities Authorities, Jerusalem, 2004.

[16] Yitzhak Magen, *A Temple City*, 2008, pp. 141-164. A contentious issue is whether the cult at Mount Gerizim shared the xenophobia voiced in the traditions of Ezra and Nehemiah. Bob Becking argues that if the Persian name Bagohi is reconstructed correctly in inscription no. 27, then the sanctuary seems to have been open to people with a Persian background: "Earliest Samaritan Inscriptions: A Parting of the Ways?", 2007, in *Judah and the Judeans in the Fourth Century B.C.E.*, edited by Lipschits, Knoppers and Albertz, Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2007, pp. 213-222, pp. 218-219. Against this, although not addressing Becking's point directly, is Magen's observation that there were no imported ceramics to be found on Gerizim. To Magen this indicates strict observance of the laws of Gentile impurity: *A Temple City*, 2008, p. 160.

[17] Bob Becking, "Earliest Samaritan Inscriptions: A Parting of the Ways?", 2007, p. 216 and 220. The excavators follow the tradition voiced by Josephus that the temple at Gerizim was modeled after the temple in Jerusalem and they do not point to any distinctly Samaritan or non-jerusalemite features in the sacred precinct, Yitzhak Magen, *A Temple City*, 2008, pp. 98 and 141-164.

During the excavations some four hundred inscriptions were found in and around the temple precinct.[18] The majority of these are written in Aramaic using either lapidary Aramaic or Proto-Jewish script. The remaining inscriptions are written in Paleo-Hebrew ("Neo-Hebrew") and Samaritan.[19] The Aramaic, Hebrew and Samaritan inscriptions were published by the excavators in 2004.[20] The few inscriptions written in Samaritan script belong to the medieval period. The Aramaic and Hebrew inscriptions date to the Hellenistic period but some of them may belong to the earliest building phase of the sanctuary in the Persian period. In the following I will focus on the Aramaic and Hebrew Inscriptions. The vast majority of the Mt. Gerizim inscriptions are dedicatory or votive inscriptions and they follow either a long or short version of a dedicatory formula. The short formula is 'That which offered PN son of PN (from GN) for himself, his wife and his sons'. The long formula begins in the same way but adds the ending 'for good remembrance before God in this place'.[21]

An example of an unusually well preserved and practically intact inscription is no. 147: "That which offered Delayah son of Shimon for himself and for his sons [this] stone for good remembrance before God in this place."[22] This inscription is a good example of the dedicatory formula in its full length but it is also a rarity because it explicitly states the nature of the offering referred to by the relative particle, namely "this stone".[23] I will return to the question of what is offered below.

The Aramaic and Hebrew inscriptions are carved on building and paving stones and regrettably with only one exception none of the inscriptions were found in situ due to the destruction and rebuilding of the site. The excavators estimate that the hundreds of inscriptions found so far may only be a small part of what could have originally been thousands. Since none of the inscriptions were found in situ they can not be dated using stratigraphic data and their original location can not be determined with certainty. However, the quality and working of the building stones does seem to give an indication of where the inscriptions were situated in the sacred precinct; it is possible that the inscriptions are all carved on stones that were part of an inner wall, separating the inner precinct

[18] The presentation of the inscriptions in the following is based on Magen, Misgav and Tsfania, *Mount Gerizim Excavations*, 2004, pp. 1-41.

[19] Neo-Hebrew is the term used in the publication of the Gerizim inscriptions to describe what is generally referred to as Paleo-Hebrew, see Magen, Misgav and Tsfania, *Mount Gerizim Excavations*, 2004, p. 30 and Joseph Naveh, "Scripts and Inscriptions in Ancient Samaria", *IEJ* 48, pp. 91-100, 1998.

[20] 36 of the inscriptions were published prior to this in Joseph Naveh and Yitzhak Magen, "Aramaic and Hebrew Inscriptions of the Second-Century BCE at Mount Gerizim", *Atiqot* XXXII, 1997, pp. 9*-17*. A body of Greek inscriptions, some from the Hellenistic period but most belonging to the Byzantine period, were uncovered as well, but are not yet published, Magen, Misgav and Tsfania, *Mount Gerizim Excavations*, 2004, p. 13.

[21] Sometimes the dedicators are women. In some rare cases a woman's name is listed alongside her husband's so that she appears a co-dedicator and not merely as beneficiary. In other cases a woman is mentioned as sole dedicator with no mention of a husband perhaps because the woman was divorced, widowed or financially independent. See Magen, Misgav and Tsfania, *Mount Gerizim Excavations*, 2004, p. 20ff.

[22] My translation. In the publication the word order is changed, "Delayah son of Shimon offered [this] stone for himself and his sons for good remembrance before God in this place" (Magen, Misgav and Tsfania, *Mount Gerizim Excavations*, 2004, p. 137), I have chosen to preserve the Semitic word order in order to emphasize the formulaic dedicatory language.

[23] Only one other inscription, no. 148, mentions "this stone" as the offering, see Magen, Misgav and Tsfania, *Mount Gerizim Excavations*, 2004, pp. 138-9.

only accessible to priests from the external precinct. The general impression is that the stones were not originally prepared for an inscription, but that the inscriptions were added only after the stones were set in place in the wall.[24] All of the inscriptions show a fairly high level of workmanship and have very few spelling errors. This along with the fact that most of the inscriptions follow variations of a set formula and that only one inscription can be found on any one stone indicate that the inscriptions were carried out by skilled craftsmen, perhaps even by temple officials. It is inconceivable that the inscriptions were carved without the consent of the temple.[25]

Now let us return to the question of what the relative particle refers to in the dedicatory formula "that which offered". In only two of the inscriptions is the nature of the offering made explicit with a reference to "this stone".[26] It is possible that the actual stone carrying the inscription is meant in every single instance, but rather than the building stones them selves the dedicatory formula probably refers to a gift of sacrifices or money, or the equivalent of money, dedicated to the deity and eternalized with an inscription.[27] In light of the tradition in the Hebrew Bible for describing contributions of valuables and sacrifices to the deity in terms of either construction or restoration of the tabernacle/temple as in Exodus 25 or II Kings 12 and II Chronicles 24 it is a possibility that the gifts to the deity presented at Gerizim were interpreted along these lines as well.[28] Thus, an offering although not of the stone itself could be understood to equal the value of a stone or be interpreted as a contribution to the general maintenance of the temple and thereby give the donor and his beneficiaries the "right of dedication" to a certain stone and the right to have an inscription made on this stone, commemorating the gift.[29]

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[24] Joseph Naveh and Yitzhak Magen, "Aramaic and Hebrew Inscriptions of the Second-Century BCE at Mount Gerizim", 1997, p. 10*; Magen, Misgav and Tsfania, *Mount Gerizim Excavations*, 2004, p. 14.

[25] Three types of building stone were found in the Mt. Gerizim sanctuary. The outer walls were built of hewn quarry stones covered with three layers of plaster. Very little of the plaster remains, so it is impossible to determine whether these stones once carried inscriptions. The inscribed stones were all ashlars with marginal drafting or with fine comb dressing. This indicates that the inscribed ashlars were incorporated in walls built of dressed, unplastered stones, possibly an inner wall, separating the external precinct of the temple from the internal precinct, which was only accessible to priests. The external side of the inner wall would have been accessible to visitors to the temple and it would have been possible for them to engrave inscriptions on this side. The Aramaic inscriptions are all carved on ashlars with either marginal drafting or comb dressing and could have been incorporated in the external side of the inner wall around the temple. The Neo-Hebrew inscriptions were all carved on stones with very fine comb dressing and could have been incorporated in the internal side of the inner wall. The excavators assume that there is a connection between the priestly class in the temple and the use of the Neo-Hebrew script. Most of the inscriptions written in Neo-Hebrew are not dedicatory and have clear priestly connotations such as priestly titles and names and could thus have belonged to the temple itself; see Magen, Misgav and Tsfania, *Mount Gerizim Excavations*, 2004, pp. 13-16, 34-35.

[26] No. 147 and 148. These two inscriptions that do make explicit reference to "this stone" are both carved on huge lintels, one of which is 146 cm long and the other a little more than two meters. The exceptional size and value of these stones could be the reason for why they are mentioned explicitly. See Magen, Misgav and Tsfania, *Mount Gerizim Excavations*, 2004, pp. 137-9.

[27] In favour of the former explanation, see Joseph Naveh and Yitzhak Magen, "Aramaic and Hebrew Inscriptions of the Second Century B.C.E. at Mount Gerizim", *'Atiqot* 32, 1997, pp. 9-17, p. 11. Magen, Misgav and Tsfania, *Mount Gerizim Excavations*, 2004, pp. 17-18.

[28] Magen, Misgav and Tsfania, *Mount Gerizim Excavations*, 2004, pp. 17-18, Michael L. Satlow, "Giving for a Return", 1996, pp. 96-97; Sara Japhet, *I & II Chronicles: A Commentary*, Westminster/John Knox Press, Louisville Kentucky, 1993, p. 505ff.

[29] Such a practice would to some extent mirror the practice of redemption in Lev 27, where dedications of land and sacrifices are given an 'exchange value'.

Now let us turn to the second example: The natural rock sanctuary of Jebel Ramm was recorded by Savignac and Horsfield in the early 1930'ies. The sanctuary is centered on the spring Ayin es-Shallaleh and consisted of a walled pool and hydraulic system as well as a number of betyls and inscriptions. The rock sanctuary is not to be confused with the Allat temple in the wadi North of Ayin es-Shallaleh.[30]

A dedicatory inscription mentioning "the king Rabel, king of the Nabataeans" indicates a date for the construction of the sanctuary probably during the reign of King Rabel II in the late first century CE.[31] And an inscription to the left of a betyl depicting a human figure, standing in front of a crescent, identifies the deity of the Sanctuary as "Allat of Bosra".[32] A total of 25 Nabataean and two Greek inscriptions have been discovered at the site. Of these 12 Nabataean and 1 Greek contain a remembrance formula. The majority of the Nabataean inscriptions follow a formula with a third person feminine perfect form of the verb with an optative meaning:

> "May Allat remember (dkrt) Waber, the mason, son of Gadan and Taymu and Gadan, his brothers, for good (bṭb)."[33]

Two inscriptions have a different formula with a passive form of the verb: "remembered be".[34]

Generally, the inscriptions from Jebel Ramm are well executed, probably by skilled craftsmen using special tools. Some of them are even surrounded by a cartouche.[35]

If we compare these two cases there are several similarities and a couple of notable differences: all the inscriptions come from a sanctuary setting and they all contain a version of a remembrance formula, where a deity is asked to remember the worshipper and her family "for good".

The inscriptions have been placed in central and visible places in the sanctuaries, primarily on walls, and the quality and uniformity of the inscriptions is so high that it is likely that they were executed by a small number of experts using special tools. It follows that the inscriptions could not have been put up without at least the accept, and possibly the assistance, of the administrators of the sanctuaries.

The most conspicuous difference is the lack of explicit dedicatory terminology in the example from Jebel Ramm. The Mount Gerizim inscriptions consistently refer to something "offered", using a

[30] Savignac, "Notes de Voyage – Le Sanctuaire d'Allat a Iram", *Revue Biblique*, vol. 41, 1932, pp. 581-597; Savignac, "Le Sanctuaire d'Allat a Iram", *Revue Biblique*, vol. 42, 1933, pp. 405-422, Savignac, "Chronique: Le Sanctuaire d'Allat a Iram (suite)", *Revue Biblique*, 43, 1934, pp. 572-589; Savignac and Horsfield, "Le Temple de Ramm", Revue Biblique vol 44, 1935, pp. 245-278; John F. Healey, *The Religion of the Nabataeans*, Brill 2001, pp. 56-59; Laurent Tholbecq. "The Nabateo-Roman Site of Wadi Ramm (Iram): A new appraisal" pages 241-254 in *Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan*, vol 42 (1998).

[31] Savignac, *RB* 41, 1932, p. 587; Savignac *RB* 42, 1933, pp. 407-11; Healey, *The Religion of the Nabataeans*, 2001, p. 110.

[32] Inscription No. 2, Savignac, *RB* 42, 1933, pp. 411-412; Savignac *RB* 43, 1934, pp. 582-585.

[33] Inscription No. 13, Savignac, *RB* 42, 1933, p. 420. For the grammar see Hoftijzer and Jongeling, Dictionary of the North-west Semitic Inscriptions, Brill, 1995, p. 323 and Savignac, *RB* 42, 1933, p. 413. The other inscriptions with the same formula are nos. 3, 5, 7-11, 13-15 and 21-22.

[34] Nos. 5 and 22.

[35] Savignac, *RB* 42, 1933, p. 422.

hiphil form of the verb *qarav*. This indicates that the "good rembrance" is desired in return for whatever has been given. In comparison, the other inscriptions mention no gift, only a request to be remembered for good. We cannot know, however, if the Jebel Ramm inscriptions were also accompanied by a gift. Perhaps the act of making the inscription itself or having it commissioned could be seen as a service, an act of worship, which would be as pleasing to the deity as a separate gift?

By giving a gift, votive object, one leaves an eternal memento of the act of worship and giving, and creates a special link to the deity. The votive object and in particular the inscribed votive object insure that the votary and his act of worship will be *remembered* by the deity and thus the durable votive object creates a visible, tangible and constant link between god and man. As Mary Beard puts it in her study of the written word in Roman Religion, "Inscribed votive texts enacted that crucial conversion of an *occasional* sacrifice into a *permanent* relationship."[36]

The archaeologist Andrew Jones uses the sign theory developed by C.S. Peirce to describe this relationship between material objects and memory; rather than mere external banks or deposits of memory material objects function as what Peirce called "indexical signs" of past actions or events.[37] The index "is a sign which refers to the object it denotes by being really affected by that object".[38] Thus, a rash is an indexical sign or index of measles, a weathervane is an index of the wind's direction and smoke is an index of fire.[39] The index does not equal what it signifies, but it points to it. The material object serves as an index of the past and therefore it helps to invoke memory: "As material indices objects have the capacity to elicit remembrance. Remembrance is a process distributed between people and objects, and the process of evocation indexed by objects allows people to remember."[40]

In relation to inscriptions containing the remembrance formula, one could say that the inscription and its physical presence in the temple, in the place where the deity is thought to be, bring about the remembrance asked for in the text. This is true for both examples mentioned above. They serve as 'reminders' to the deity, placed in the sanctuary to ensure that the worshippers are given the deity's special attention. By virtue of the material presence of the inscription in the sanctuary, "before the god", the worshipper is perpetually brought to the deity's attention and consequently remembered, not forgotten, by the deity.

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[36] Mary Beard, "Writing and Religion: Ancient Literacy and the function of the written word in Roman Religion", Pages 35-58 in *Literacy in the Roman World*, Edited by J. H. Humphrey. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 1991, p. 48.

[37] Andrew Jones, *Memory and Material Culture*, Cambridge University Press, 2007, pp. 22ff.; Charles S. Peirce, *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, edited by C. Hartshorne and P. Weiss, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960.

[38] Justus Buchler, *The Philosophical Writings of Peirce*, New York: Dover, 1955, p. 102.

[39] Roy A. Rappaport, Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp. 54-55; Andrew Jones, *Memory and Material Culture*, 2007, p. 23.

[40] Andrew Jones, *Memory and Material Culture*, 2007, pp. 24-26, quote p. 26.

This relationship between material objects and memory is both recognized and utilized in the Hebrew Bible.[41] To name but one example in Num 15:37-40 Yahweh commands the Israelites to put fringes on the corners of their garments: "You have the fringe so that, when you see it, you will remember (*zkr*) all the commandments of Yahweh and do them" (39a). In this passage, the fringe on the garment is meant to index Yahweh's commandments to the Israelites. However, the people of Israel are not the only ones thought to be in need of memory aid in the Hebrew Bible; in Genesis 9 Yahweh places his bow in the sky as a sign to remind him of his covenant with Noah: "When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember (*lzkr*) the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth" (9:16).

Generally, in the Hebrew Bible, Yahweh's remembrance entails more than a mental exercise to recall past events – with or without aid from material objects. As Brevard S. Childs puts it, "God's remembering has not only a psychological effect, but an ontological as well."[42] To be remembered by Yahweh is thought to have a tangible beneficial effect for the one remembered; Yahweh remembers Noah in the ark in Genesis 8:1 and makes the waters withdraw and Yahweh remembers the childless Rachel in Genesis 30:22 and opens her womb. Yahweh's good remembrance can also function by means of intermediaries: In Genesis 19:29 Yahweh remembers Abraham and rescues Lot from the destruction of the cities of the plain and in Exodus 32:12 Moses intercedes for the Israelites by asking Yahweh to remember Abraham, Isaac and Israel (cf Deut 9:27).[43]

The consequences of good remembrance equal blessing and to some extent the two are the same, but the emphasis on remembrance seems to indicate something more, something personalized – to be remembered by the deity is to have the deity's special attention.

In the Pentateuch we find several passages where material objects in the shape of ritual artifacts are intended to aid Yahweh's memory and remind him of the Israelites. According to Gerhard von Rad the gist of the Israelite cult was to bring the people of Israel to Yahweh's remembrance: "Sucht man in der atl Kultsprache nach einer entsprechend allgemeinen Formel für die Bedeutung der Kultus für Israel hatte, so könnte man sagen, dass er Israel bei Jahweh ins Gedächtnis bringt."[44]

The ritual objects intended to assist Yahweh's memory are called "mementoes" or "reminders" (*zikkarôn*) and they appear predominantly in the priestly materials in the Pentateuch.[45] For instance in Numbers 10:10 towards the end of the passage giving the instructions for the manufacture of the

[41] Although not exactly 'under-studied' the topic of remembrance and memory in the Hebrew Bible has not received a great deal of attention and as far as attention has been given the emphasis has been on the Israelites remembering rather than Yahweh. See Schottroff, *'Gedenken' im Alten Orient und im Alten Testament*, 1967; Brevard S. Childs, *Memory and Tradition in Israel*, London: SCM Press Ltd, 1962; Charles Louis Kesler, "The Memory Motif in the God-Man Relationship of the Old Testament", unpublished dissertation, Nortwestern University, 1956; Adriane Leveen, *Memory and Tradition in the Book of Numbers*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
[42] Brevard S. Childs, *Memory and Tradition in Israel*, 1962, p. 33.
[43] See also Exodus 2:24 and 6:5.
[44] Gerhard von Rad, *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, Band 1; Die Theologie der geschichtlichen Überlieferungen Israels, München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1957, p. 241.
[45] Generally Yahweh's remembrance is seen solely as a benefit, but in Numbers 5:15.18 it may have negative or retributive connotations, when the grain offering of the wife suspected of adultery is called "a grain offering of remembrance" (*minḥat hazikkārôn*), Brevard S. Childs, *Memory and Tradition in Israel*, 1962, p. 67.

two silver trumpets: "Also on your days of rejoicing, at your appointed festivals, and at the beginnings of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over your sacrifices of well-being; they shall serve as a reminder (*zikkarôn*) before your God: I am Yahweh." In the previous verse the same trumpets are to be sounded when the Israelites go to war, "so that you may be remembered (*nizkartem*) before Yahweh your God and be saved from your enemies."

While stressing the importance of the aspect of memory to the theology of the priestly authors Adriane B. Leeven writes, "The trumpets remind God of Israel while the sacrifices that accompany the blowing of the trumpets express the people's gratitude for the constancy of that divine presence, sealing their relationship."[46]

Another example of a *zikkarôn* intended to preserve and maintain the relationship between Yahweh and Israel are the gemstones on Aaron's breastplate and the two stones on the Ephod in Exodus 28.[47] The stones on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, engraved with the names of the sons of Israel, are "stones of remembrance" (*'abnêy zikkārôn*) and "Aaron shall bear their names before Yahweh on his two shoulders for remembrance (*zikkārôn*)" (28:12, see also 39:7). Similarly the twelve stones on the breastplate are each engraved with one of the names of the sons of Israel and they are to be "a continual (*tāmîd*) remembrance (*zikkārôn*) before Yahweh" (28:29). The engraved stones underline the high priest's cultic role as the representative of the entire people and as the only person able to enter the Holy of Holies he brings the people of Israel to Yahweh's attention by physically bringing a reminder of their existence into Yahweh's presence.[48]

The remaining two occurrences of *zikkārôn* occur in two passages that share a number of themes; the ordinance about the half-shekel to the sanctuary in Exodus 30:11-16 and the narrative passage about the spoils of war taken from the Midianites and given to the Tabernacle in Numbers 31:48-54. Both passages concern a census, which apparently is a great sin against Yahweh, and therefore it is necessary to ransom (*kpr*) the lives of the people afterwards.[49] In both cases a sum of money is given to the sanctuary and the money is described as a reminder (*zikkārôn)* before Yahweh.[50]

In Exodus 30:16a it is explicated that the money are to be used for the service (*'ăbōdat*) in the Tent of Meeting, perhaps in accordance with Exodus 25:1-9, also mentioned above, where Yahweh

[46] Adriane B. Leeven, "Variations on a Theme: Differing Conceptions of Memory in the Book of Numbers", *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, vol 27:2, 2002, pp. 201-221, p. 211.
[47] The exact character of the *ḥošen*, breastplate or breastpouch, is debated. See Othmar Keel, "Die Brusttasche des Hohenpriesters als Element priesterschriftlicher Theologie", *Das Manna Fällt auch heute Noch: Beiträge zur Geschichte und Theologie des Alten, Ersten Testament. Festschrift für Erich Zenger*, edited by Frank-Lothar Hossfeld und Ludger Schwienhorst-Schönberger, Freiburg: Herder, 2004, pp. 379-391, pp. 381-382. See also Jacob Milgrom, Leviticus 1-16, The Anchor Bible, New York: Doubleday, 1991, pp. 501ff. on the priestly vestments.
[48] Othmar Keel, "Brusttasche", 2004, p. 384. See also Frank H. Gorman, *The Ideology of Ritual: space, time and status in the priestly world view*, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990.
[49] For the translation of *kpr*, see Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, 1991, p. 708; Baruch A. Levine, *Numbers 21-36*, The Anchor Bible, New York: Doubleday, 2000, p. 462.
[50] Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, 1991, pp. 707- 708; Michael Fishbane, „Cencus and Intercession in a Priestly Text (Exodus 30:11-16) and in its Midrashic Transformation", *Pomegranates and Golden Bells*, Edited by Wright, Freeman and Hurvitz, USA, Eisenbrauns, 1995, pp. 103-112; E. A. Speiser, "Cencus and Ritual Expiation in Mari and Israel", *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, No 149, 1958, pp. 17-25.

commands the Israelites to donate valuables for the construction of the sanctuary.[51] In Numbers 31:54 the gold is simply brought in to the Tent of Meeting – perhaps to be put on display there.

To sum up, in the Pentateuch we find several examples of cultic actions or objects said to serve as reminders before Yahweh. In some cases these are symbolic representations of persons that are literally brought to the deity's attention by being brought in to the deity's presence as is the case with the onyx stones on the Ephod and the gem stones on the breastplate in Exodus 28. In other cases the reminders are prescribed ritual acts as the sounding of the trumpets in Numbers 10:9-10 and finally we see gifts of money or treasure donated to the sanctuary described as reminders before Yahweh in Exodus 30:16 and Numbers 31:54.

So if we look at both the textual material from the Pentateuch and the inscriptions containing a good remembrance formula we find very similar ways of thinking of the remembrance of the deity. To be remembered by the deity is desirable, equal to blessing, and expected to be beneficent both for the person remembered and hers or his dependents and relatives.

Of course there is a possibility that the formulaic language of remembrance in our inscriptions has been formalized to a degree where it has become 'frozen' and therefore 'meaningless' in Fritz Staal's sense of the word.[52] However, if we dare to assume that this is not the case, our material shows an extraordinary similarity in the ways of thinking about blessing, materiality and giving gifts to the gods and in the practices that are a reflection of these ideas. We find this closeness of ideas and practices not only between the inscriptions from Mount Gerizim and the Pentateuch, which perhaps comes as less of a surprise, but also from contemporary religious systems in the Levant.

In both text and inscriptions there is a recognition of the close link between material objects and memory and the desired good remembrance may be obtained by placing a material representation, an index, in the sanctuary which is the place where the deity is supposed to be.

[51] In relation to this, it is interesting to note that Othmar Keel interprets the names of the Israelites inscribed on the stones in Ex 28 as a donor or foundation inscription (Stifterinschrift): "Zikkaron bezeichnet hier wie auch in Sach 6,14 die Funktion einer Stifterinschrift. Der Kult wird nach den Vorstellung der Priesterschrift ja nicht wie in der monarchischen Zeit vom König, sondern vom Zwölfstämme-Volk „gestiftet" d.h. finanziert (vgl. Ex 25,1-7).", „Brusttasche", 2004, pp. 385-386.

[52] Frits Staal, "The Meaninglessness of Ritual", *Numen*, Vol 26:1, 1979, pp. 2-22.

The Mystery of the Marriages between the 'Sons of God' and the 'Daughters of Men'. An Analysis of Genesis 6:1–4.

BY CAMILLA VON HEIJNE

1. Introduction and Analysis of the Text

The cryptic passage in Gen 6:1–4 concerning the matrimonial unions of the 'sons of God' with the 'daughters of men' has always fascinated me. Each time I have read the text it has puzzled me, and this is the reason for the choice of this pericope as the focus of my paper. I wish to explore the meaning of this enigmatic text.[1] The aim of the present study is to investigate how the pericope is understood and interpreted, mainly in early Jewish exegesis. From considerations of space, I have chosen to concentrate on the Pseudepigrapha[2] and the targums.[3] This paper is of course not a complete examination of all the materials and interpretations related to the pericope.[4] My paper is mainly focused on the theological message of Gen 6:1–4. Thus, text critical questions, source-criticism, etc., are not the primary focus in this paper.

A common way of interpreting the Bible in Jewish exegesis is to put questions to the texts,[5] and this is the method applied in the present study. As

[1] Besides the myths based on this text and the vast material dedicated to these four ambiguous verses in Genesis 6 throughout the history of biblical interpretation, it may be added that the mystery of this narrative and the legends surrounding it has recently inspired a new thriller entitled *Angelology* written by Danielle Trussoni, 2010.

[2] The expansion in *Jubilees* on the Genesis text is very similar to the one found in *1 Enoch*, because of this fact, and the general acknowledgement of the priority of the Enoch version, I do not here discuss *Jubilees* in detail. See chapter 2 and e.g., Sullivan 2004, 213.

[3] As is well know, the targums are difficult to date, since they contain layers of material from different periods. This is in particularly true in regard to targum *Pseudo-Jonathan*, which generally is considered to contain material dating from the Islamic period, although it certainly also contains older traditions, see, e.g., York 1974, 49, Alexander 1992, 320-331, Maher 1992, 11-12, and von Heijne, 2008, 258-261.

[4] For example, I have refrained from discussing the Apocrypha, the Qumran Documents, Philo's and Josephus' writings and the early Rabbinic Midrashim (e.g., *Genesis Rabbah*). For a survey of the Qumran evidence and Josephus and Philo's writings on the subject, see e.g., Sullivan 2004, 207-219. However, this material will be included in my planned article.

[5] Holtz, 1984, 180 and 189.

a background, I will briefly discuss how the text is interpreted in a sample of modern commentaries.

Finally, after the investigation of the divergent kinds of material, I will try to make a comparison between the various interpretations. Which main models of interpretation can be found? Let us begin with an analysis of the pericope and a brief look upon the scholarly discussion of the Biblical text as such. The pericope reads as follows:

> [Gen 6:1] When people began to multiply on the face of the ground, and daughters were born to them, [2] the sons of God [בני האלהים] saw that they were fair; and they took wives for themselves of all that they chose. [3] Then the LORD said, "My spirit shall not abide in the mortals forever, for they are flesh; [ויאמר יהוה לא ידון רוחי באדם לעלם בשגם הוא בשר] their days shall be one hundred twenty years." [4] The Nephilim [הנפלים] were on the earth in those days–and also afterward–when the sons of God [בני האלהים] went in to the daughters of humans, who bore children to them. These were the heroes [הגברים] that were of old, warriors of renown.[6]

During my work with the passage, I have discovered many exegetical problems, one of the most obvious mysteries being the identity of the 'sons of God' in vv. 2 and 4. Important to note is the fact that they are called the sons of אלהים and not יהוה. On the other hand, in verse 3 it is stated that "The Lord/יהוה said ..." This verse contains some philological problems: What is the meaning of the Hebrew verb ידון and the term בשגם? Also, it is not quite clear how to interpret the significance of the 120 years in this verse, and how are we to understand the reference to "רוחי/my (God's) Spirit"?

A key-problem is how to identify the נפלים and the גבורים in verse 4, a problem related to the question of the identity of the 'sons of God' (vv. 2 and 4). Does the designation נפלים signify the same beings as the גבורים, or does the first mentioned term refer to the 'sons of God'? An alternative Septuagint rendering of Gen 6:2 translates בני האלהים as ἄγγελοι, i.e., angels[7], although a literal translation of the term, i.e., οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ 'the sons of God' is better attested and this is also the main variant found in verse 4.[8]

A more general question is how the pericope relates to its textual context; is there any connection to the deluge or to previous events in the Bible? What is the main message of Gen 6:1–4?

The oldest suggestion is that the 'sons of God' are angels.[9] As will be shown below, this is the interpretation found in, e.g., *1 Enoch* and this theory

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[6] Unless otherwise stated, whenever a Bible text is quoted in English translation, the New Revised Standard Version is used.

[7] Codex A. See Septuaginta vol. 1, note to Gen 6:2, ed. Wevers, 1974.

[8] The rendering 'sons of God' is most probably the original reading in the LXX Gen 6:2, 4. See also Sullivan 2004, 205-207 and Alexander 1972, 63-64. However, the designation 'sons of God' is often translated in the LXX by the term ἄγγελοι, see e.g., Newsom 1992, 248-249 and Köckert 2007, 53.

[9] Cassuto, 1972, 292 and Westermann, 1990, 365.

has supporters also among modern exegetes.[10] Claus Westermann, however, does not agree and points out the "scandal" that angels could be spoken of in the Bible as mingling in the flesh with human women and the fact that this idea contradicts what the rest of the Old Testament says about angels.[11]

The usual designations for angels in the Bible are not used in the pericope; מלאכי אלהים/מלאכי יהוה. However, it is noteworthy that the designation 'sons of God' in Gen 6:2 is used in distinction to the 'daughters of men', an indication for that 'sons of God' cannot belong to humanity.[12] Umberto Cassuto points out that wherever the terms 'sons of God' or 'sons of the mighty' (אלים) occur in the Bible, the reference is to angels.[13] Some scholars, who prefer this interpretation, also refer to Isa 14:12 and Job 4:18-19 as support for the corruptibility of angels. The 'sons of God' in Genesis 6 are fallen angels, acting in rebellion against God. The angels are perceived as independent creatures, who are free to obey or disobey God. In this context, the term 'sons' is not to be understood to imply that the angels genealogically are sons of God, but the term signifies that they belong to the divine realm.[14]

The second proposed solution of the mystery of the nature of the 'sons of God' is the interpretation that they were in fact human beings, in Christian exegesis identified as descendants of Seth.[15] Finally, there is the interpretation that the designation 'sons of God' in Gen 6:2 and 4 neither refers to humans nor to angels but to divine beings, gods.[16]

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[10] See *1 Enoch* 6–11 and Cassuto, 1972, 292, von Rad, 1985, 114, Skinner, 1930, 141, and Sarna, 1989, 45

[11] Westermann, 1990, 365 and 371-372. See also Matt 22:30, Alexander, 1972, 67-68, and von Heijne, 2008, 31.

[12] See e.g., Cassuto, 1972, 291-292, von Rad, 1985, 114, and Harland 1996, 23-24.

[13] Cassuto, 1972, 292. See also Sarna, 1989, 45 and Skinner, 1930, 141. See e.g., Ps 29:1; 89:7; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7. As stated above on page 2, the designation 'sons of God' is in the LXX often translated by the term ἄγγελοι.

[14] Sarna, 1989, 45. See also von Rad, 1985, 114 and von Heijne, 2008, 31. In this context, Cassuto's (1972, 293) claim of a connection between the biblical angels and the Canaanite deities is noteworthy. According to this theory, the angels of the Israelite religion overtook the functions and status of the Canaanite deities. All of the functions and forces that the pagan peoples used to attribute to their gods became concentrated in either JHWH himself or in his messengers/angels. The identification of JHWH's divine council, the 'sons of God', as angels, is most probably a demythologization of the concept in accordance with Israel's monotheistic faith. Gen 6:1-4 constitutes the only passage where the 'sons of God' are described to act totally independent of JHWH, something that cannot even be said about Satan in the book of Job. See also Parker, 1999, 794-800, and Hendel 2004, 17-20. For a detailed discussion of the concept 'the sons of (the) God(s), in the Bible in general, see Cooke, 1964, 22-47.

[15] Today, this view has almost totally been abandoned, one of the few who still maintains this interpretation is the Jewish scholar Benno Jacob (1974, 45). The 'Sethite-explanation' in Christian circles was most probably a result of the "scandal" of the 'angel-theory'. See Westermann's (1990, 365 and 371) survey of the history of interpretation on this matter. See also von Rad, 1985, 114, Coxon, 1999, 619 and Alexander, 1972, 60-67.

[16] According to Westermann, (1990, 372) this is the only valid explanation, the Hebrew designation in Genesis 6 cannot be understood as referring to humans and the "scandal" of the 'angel-explanation' rules it out of the question. as a support for this theory, he also refers to

I find it likely that the 'sons of God' in Gen 6:2, 4 are angels, in spite of the difficulties related to this interpretation. The fact that the designation does not refer to human beings seems rather obvious. As Gerhard von Rad writes, it is clear that these beings in verse 2 are set in contrast to the 'daughters of men'. The latter designation is to be understood in a general meaning, i.e., the women of humanity. Thus, the 'sons of God' must be creatures existing outside the sphere of humankind.[17] The fact that the term 'sons of God' in many other passages in the Hebrew Bible denotes angels seems as a valid argument.

I am rather skeptical to the idea that there is a polytheistic narrative in the Hebrew Bible in its present form. Maybe, it could be that Gen 6:1–4 is a transformation of an earlier polytheistic myth that has been altered in accordance to the Israelite monotheistic faith. The intermarriages are depicted in neutral terms, and it seems like the women willingly married the 'sons of God'. The text does not speak of violence or rape on part of the male actors.[18]

The next problem is the meaning of verse 3. The peculiar Hebrew verb ידון is difficult to translate and is a *hapax legomenon*, there is a variety of suggestions.[19] The oldest variant, attested in the Septuagint and the Vulgate is the translation 'to abide/remain', and this is also the rendering chosen in the New Revised Standard Version.[20] Another suggested interpretation of the possible root, דון is the meaning 'to be mighty, rule'. Other suggestions are that the word is a derivation from דין 'to judge/contend with'.[21] The New King James Version and the New International Version have chosen the translations 'strive' and 'contend' respectively. Besides these variants, there are a few additional, less usual interpretations of the word.[22] Westermann, Sarna and Cassuto all prefer the meaning 'abide/remain.' They argue that this translation best suits the context,[23] and I agree with them. Most scholars seem to consider 'the Spirit of God' in verse 3 as referring to the 'breath of life',[24] (compare Gen 2:7).

The Hebrew term בשגם is best understood to be a combination of the preposition ב, the relative pronoun ש and the particle גם ('also') meaning

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parallels in the surrounding cultures of Israel. For example, the term בני אלהים signifies gods in Canaanite.See also Hendel, 2004, 23-34.

[17] von Rad, 1985, 114. See also Harland 1996, 23-24.

[18] Sarna, 1989, 46. See also Parker, 1999, 794-798 and Hendel, 2004, 17-18.

[19] Westermann, (1990, 375) has listed the various translations.

[20] According to Koehler/Baumgartner's lexicon, vol. 1, 1994, 217 the word is derived from דון and is "… unexpl., to stay or siml. by context." See also LXX Gen 6:3.

[21] Westermann, 1990, 375. See also von Rad, 1985, 114, and Sarna, 1989, 46.

[22] See Westermann, 1990, 375 and Speiser, 1964, 44. Hendel (2004, 15) have chosen to translate the word as 'be strong', from the root דנן. In the various translations that I have checked, I have not found any of the other variants, except those mentioned above.

[23] Westermann, 1990, 374. Sarna, 1989, 46 and Cassuto, 1972, 295-296.

[24] See, e.g., Westermann, 1990, 374, Sarna, 1989, 46, and von Rad, 1985, 114.

'because'.[25] According to most exegetes, the phrase "בשגם הוא בשר" refers to humanity as a whole.[26] Others interpret it as referring to the hybrid children born in the mixed marriages; they are 'flesh', in spite of their nonhuman paternity.[27]

Regarding the significance of the 120 years in verse 3 there are two main interpretations. According to the first, the 120 years refer to a period of grace before the deluge, and this interpretation is indicated in the LXX rendering of Gen 6:3:

> And the Lord God said: "My spirit will not abide *in these men* [Οὐ μὴ καταμείνῃ το πνεῦμα μου ἐν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τούτοις… i.e., the generation of the flood,] forever, because they are flesh, but their days shall be one hundred and twenty years."[28]

According to the second interpretation the overall human life-span is limited to a maximum of 120 years.[29] The latter alternative is the most common among exegetes today.[30]

Those who adhere to the first mentioned interpretation see an obvious connection between Gen 6:1–4 and the deluge. The angel-human intermarriages are a compelling cause for the disaster.[31] The mixing of heavenly and human substances by the illicit sexual unions brought about a disorder in the creation which God could not suffer to put up with permanently. Therefore, he decided to end it by the deluge.[32] Franz Delitzsch, who also advocated this interpretation, argued that in light of the long life of the post-diluvial patriarchs from Shem to Terah, the latter mentioned interpretation cannot be correct.[33] However, Westermann, Cassuto and von Rad maintain this understanding of the verse.[34] Westermann denies that the story told in Gen 6:1–4 has any connection to the flood and considers it to be a totally independent narrative.[35] Cassuto claims that the first mentioned interpretation is ruled out

[25] von Rad, 1985, 114, Westermann, 1990, 375 and Hendel 2004, 15.
[26] See, e.g., Westermann, 1990, 376 and von Rad, 1985, 114.
[27] Cassuto, 1972, 296-297.
[28] My italics and translation. See also Kugel, 1998, 183-185.
[29] Cassuto, 1972, 297, Westermann. 1990. 376 and Sarna, 1989, 46.
[30] See e.g., von Rad, 1985, 114 and Westermann, 1990, 376.
[31] See, e.g., Speiser, 1964, 46 and Skinner, 1930, 145.
[32] Skinner, 1930, 145. See also the discussion in Harland 1996, 24.
[33] See the discussion in Westermann, 1990, 376.
[34] Westermann, 1990, 376, Cassuto, 1972, 297-298, and von Rad, 1985, 114.
[35] Westermann, 1990, 368 and 376. See also Harland (1996, 23-26) who likewise considers the pericope as an isolated tale with no connection to the story of the flood. He further argues that the mixed divine-human marriages are described in neutral terms in Gen 6:1–4 and the statement in v. 3a is to be understood as referring to humankind's mortality in general, including the hybrid children. Thus, the limitation of the human life-span does not constitute a punishment for the relationships between the mortal women and the divine beings. According to Harland, the purpose of the text is simply to inform the reader of the fact that, alongside the multiplication of humans (Gen 6:1), there "…was also intermingling of human and divine beings in the antediluvian world." However, the intermarrying with divine beings did not help

because of contextual reasons, and he points out that in the continuation of the narrative, there is nothing said to indicate that the respite had passed without the sinners repenting, among other reasons.[36] He understands verse 3 to mean that the children born in these unnatural marriages are 'flesh', just like ordinary humans, and their life-span will be as short as other human lives, i.e., a maximum of 120 years. By this way, Cassuto regards the pericope as an example of how the Torah attempts to demythologize pagan legends. The children born in the mixed marriages between the 'sons of God' and the human women were not immortal.[37] Personally, I consider the interpretation of the 120 years as referring to the limitation of the human life-span as the most plausible.

Another key-problem in the pericope is the meaning of the Hebrew words נפלים and גברים in verse 4. The only other reference to the נפלים in the Hebrew Bible is in Num 13:32–33, where they are described as unusually big humans. Therefore, the term was understood to mean 'giants':[38]

> [Num 13:32] So they brought to the Israelites and unfavourable report […], saying, "The land that we have gone through as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people we saw in it are of great size. [33] There we saw the Nephilim (the Anakites come from the Nephilim); and to ourselves we seemed like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them."

A more literal translation of the term would be 'fallen ones', as נפלים derives from the verb נפל/'to fall'. However, the most common translation is 'giants'.[39] Most exegetes see these נפלים as identical with the children born in the mixed marriages between the 'sons of God' and the 'daughters of men'. Thus, the גברים /'heroes', and 'the men of renown' are alternate designations for the נפלים.[40] Cassuto explains the term נפלים in the light of Ezek 32:20f. The children in these strange marriages were denoted נפלים because they all fell and descended to Sheol. The term גנורים is used in Ezek 32:20 and the verb נפל occurs there several times.[41] The LXX translates both terms in Gen 6:4 as γίγαντες, 'giants'. Thus, the LXX rendering equates the נפלים and

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humans to improve morally, and not even these alliances could save humanity from destruction.

[36] Cassuto, 1972, 297.

[37] Cassuto, 1972, 297-300

[38] Sarna, 1989, 46, and Westermann, 1990, 378. In the LXX Gen 6:4, the 'Nephilim' are identified as giants. See below and Kugel, 1998, p. 181. Koehler/Baumgartner, vol. 2, 1995, 709, renders the word as 'giants', which also is the meaning in Mishnaic Hebrew. However, in Num 13:33 they regard it as a gloss. According to Mussies (1999, 343-344) the term Nephilim in Num 13:13 most likely is not to be understood as referring to the same kind of beings as mentioned in Gen 6:4.

[39] Ibid.

[40] See e.g., von Rad, 1985, 115, Skinner, 1930, 146-147, Cassuto, 1972, 298-299, Sarna, 1989, 46 and Coxon, 1999, 345-346.

[41] Cassuto, 1972, 298.

the גנורים, i.e., both terms refer to the hybrid offspring of the mixed unions, and these beings are identified as giants.[42]

However, according to Westermann, verse 4 contains two conclusions, distinct from each other, (Gen 6:4a resp. 6:4c). Thus, נפלים and גברים did not originally denote the same beings. The term נפלים refers to mythical beings, semi-gods, whereas גברים depicts strong humans, real men, but it is possible that the נפלים later became identified with the גברים .[43]

A thought that occurred to me while reading Gen 6:4 was that the term נפלים may refer back to the 'sons of God', i.e., the fallen angels, an interpretation that is supported by the fact that this Hebrew term became the origin to the legend about the fallen angels.[44]

An additional problem in verse 4 is how to understand the phrase "... and also afterward ..." Skinner explains it as a trace of a glossator.[45] According to Sarna, the idea that the נפלים /גברים would have survived the deluge is contrary to the central message of the biblical narrative. The reference to the נפלים in Numbers 13 is not to be seen as a proof text for the existence of these beings in Israelite times, the term is rather used for oratorical effect.[46] However, Loren Stuckenbruck points out that there is no clear connection between the birth of נפלים /גברים and the punishment of the flood in Genesis 6, and that such a text as Numbers 13 seems to indicate the existence of a biblical tradition claiming that some of them survived the flood.[47] Roland Hendel argues that the references in Gen 6:4 and Num 13:33 most likely bear witness to the existence of different, not entirely consistent traditions regarding the נפלים.[48]

The religious-historical background of Gen 6:1–4 is not the main issue in this paper, but it is worth mentioning that there are many similar narratives about giants of antiquity among other peoples; e.g., the Greeks, Arabs and Phoenicians. However, up to the present, there is no known narrative which corresponds to Gen 6:1–4.[49]

Thus, what is the main message of the story? I agree with Westermann that Gen 6:1–4 is one of the narratives telling about the sin of humankind, the pericope is to be read in the light of the transgressions mentioned in Genesis chapters 3, 4 and 11:1–9. The first mentioned chapters are con-

[42] See also Sullivan 2004, 205-207 and Stuckenbruck 2004, 89.
[43] Westermann, 1990, 377-379.
[44] Cassuto, 1972, 298.
[45] Skinner, 1930, 147.
[46] Sarna, 1989, 46, see also Coxon 1999, 619. However, an additional possible interpretation of the phrase " … and also afterwards…" is that the נפילם, already were present on the earth at the time of the birth of the גבורים, see e.g., van Ruiten 2007, 596.
[47] Stuckenbruck, 2004, pp. 89-93.
[48] Hendel 2004, 22.
[49] Westermann, 1990, 379-381. See also Speiser, 1964, 45-46. For a discussion of the 'Nephilim' in the context of other Ancient Near Eastern and Greek traditions, see Hendel, 2004, 11-34 and Bremmer, 2004, 35-61.

cerned with individual sin, while Gen 11:1–9 concerns the sin of the community, as well as chapter 6:1–4, the focus of this paper. Both in Gen 6:1–4 and 11:1–9 humans transgress the boundaries prescribed to them by God. Both pericopes describe how humans try to revolt against God's decrees. The 'daughters of men' were not innocent participants, but were well aware of the fact that these marriages were violating God's prescribed world order. The result was a deterioration and corruption of the creation. The connection to Gen 3:22[50] is clear; when humans could not reach the tree of life they tried to prolong and secure their lives by marrying divine beings. The result became the opposite; the judgment of God limited the human life-span, including the life-span of the semi-god children.[51]

2. The Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament

In the Pseudepigrapha, there is more material to be found related to Gen 6:1–4 compared to the Apocrypha.[52] The main sources are *1 Enoch, Jubilees, the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs and 2 Baruch.*[53] From considerations of space, I have chosen to focus mainly on the expansion of the biblical narrative found in *1 Enoch* 6–11.

1 Enoch constitutes the most detailed source regarding the interpretation of Gen 6:1–4 in the Pseudepigrapha.[54] This work is the oldest of the three books attributed to Enoch, the seventh descendant of Adam and Eve. In Gen 5:24 we read that "Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him." The disappearance of Enoch inspired many legends about him. [55]

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[50] Gen 3:22 also refers to the human attempt to cross the borderline between the human and the divine realms: "Then the Lord God said; 'See, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil, and now, he might reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever'."

[51] Westermann, 1990, 368-370 and 373-374, 382. See also von Rad, 1985, 114-115, Coxon 1999, 618-620, and Sullivan, 2004, 197-200.

[52] In the Apocrypha, there are a few minor references to our pericope found in Wis 14:6; Sir 16:7; 3 Macc 2:4 and Bar 3:26-28. See also Kugel, 1998, 180-183.

[53] In *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* (*L.A.B*/*Pseudo-Philo*) chapter 3.1-3; 9:8 and 48.1 the Genesis text is quoted, but there is no comment on the identity of the 'sons of God' or their offspring. In *L.A.B* 3.1-2 the designation בני אלוהם is rendered as 'sons of God' and the verb ידון is rendered as 'judge'. See also Bowker, 1969, p. 153. In *L.A.B* 48.1 the 120 years mentioned in Gen 6:3 are understood as referring to the divinely established life-span of humankind in general. According to the *Hellenistic Synagogal Prayers* 12.57-59, the flood is depicted as God's punishment of the the wicked multitude of Noah's day, only he and his family were saved.

[54] I use the English translation by Isaac of *1(Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch*, in *OTP* vol. 1 1983, (ed. Charlesworth). Scholars believe the original language of *1 Enoch* to be Hebrew or Aramaic, or maybe a combination of both languages. The discovery of fragments of the book in Qumran is a proof of the fact that at least a greater part of it was known in pre-Christian times, see Isaac; *1 Enoch*, "A new translation and introduction", 1983 6-7 in *OTP* vol. 1 (ed. Charlesworth), and Knibb, Introduction to *1 Enoch*, 1984, 172 in *AOT* (ed. Sparks).

[55] See Isaac, introduction to *1 Enoch* in *OTP*, vol.1, 5-12.

In *1 Enoch* 6–11 the short biblical pericope has been transformed into a detailed account telling about the fall of the angels and thereby the entry of evil into the world. Thus, the 'sons of God' are interpreted as angels. These angels bore a specific title; the 'Watchers'.[56] In *1 Enoch* 6.1–7 it is pointed out that the angels themselves were aware of the fact that their intention to marry human women and beget children was evil. This constitutes a striking distinction to the biblical text where the marriages are described in neutral terms. In *1 Enoch*, the mating of the 'Watchers' with the human females is explicitly denoted as a deed of deliberate rebellion against God:

> [*1 Enoch* 6.1] In those days, when the children of man had multiplied, it happened that there were born unto them handsome and beautiful daughters. [2] And the angels, the children of heaven, saw them and desired them, and they said to one another, "Come, let us choose wives for ourselves from among the daughters of man and beget us children." [3] And Semyaz, being their leader, said unto them, "I fear that perhaps you will not consent that this deed should be done, and I alone will become (responsible) for this great sin. [4] But they all responded to him, "Let us all swear an oath and bind everyone among us by a curse not to abandon this suggestion but to do the deed." [5] Then they all swore together and bound one another by (the curse). [6] And they were altogether two hundred; and they descended into Ardos, which is the summit of Hermon. And they called the mount Armon, for they swore and bound one another by a curse. [7] And their names are as follows: Semyaz, the leader of Arakeb, Rame'el, Tam'el, Dan'el, Ezeqel […] These and their chiefs of tens and all the others with them.

The נפלים and the גברים of Gen 6:4 are defined in *1 Enoch* 7.1–6 as evil giants, the hybrid progeny of the fallen angels, and it is stated that the birth of the giants unleashed the forces of chaos and evil in the world, an additional distinction from the biblical account. As a consequence of the evil deeds performed by the giants, the earth revolted against them.[57]

The penalty of the fallen angels and their sons is similar to that recounted in *Jubilees*[58], i.e., God imprisons them in the depths of the earth. There will

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[56] See, e.g., *1 Enoch* 10.7–9. *1 Enoch* chapters 6–11 form contextually a part of a larger narrative, the *Book of Watchers* (*1 Enoch* 1–36). There are some scholars who have argued that the story in *1 Enoch* 6–11 is even older than the narrative in Genesis 6, but this view has not won general acceptance. Most scholars consider the Enoch-narrative as an expansion of the briefer Genesis-pericope. See, e.g., Sullivan 2004, 200-201, and Bhayro 2005, 227- 228. In the Hebrew Bible, the only occasion where the term עיר, i.e., 'Watcher' is used is in Daniel 4, where it is commonly interpreted to signify an angel. However, Bhayro (2005, 22-25) has recently contested this understanding of the word. In Jewish literature of the Second Temple period, the term most commonly denotes fallen angels, i.e., the 'sons of God' mentioned in Genesis 6. However, the epithet is not confined to the fallen angels but is also applied to God's holy angels, e.g., Raphael in *1 Enoch* 22.6. For more information, see Collins 2007, 893-895, Guiley, 2004, 365-367, and Tuschling 2007, 89-91.

[57] See also Nickelsburg, 1977, 386, Hanson, 1977 199 and Stuckenbruck, 2004, 99-102.

[58] The version in *Jubilees* is generally considered to be a later adaption building on the earlier tale found in *1 Enoch* 6–11. See e.g., Sullivan 2004, 213-215. See also Stuckenbruck 2004, 113 and Bhayro 2005, 235. In addition to considerations of space, this is the reason for why I

they wait for their final destruction at the Day of Judgement.[59] Prior to their imprisonment, the rebellious angels are forced to witness the death of their sons, the giants.[60] In this context, there is an interesting account in *1 Enoch* telling that the sons of the 'Watchers' are to be destroyed by fighting each other, "… for length of days have they not", a statement that is made in contrast to their hope – to obtain eternal life, or at least live for five hundred years.[61] Maybe, this statement is to be seen as a connection to Gen 6:3; the giants will not live forever, because in spite of their nonhuman paternity, they are 'flesh'.

The leader of the fallen angels is named Semyaz in *1 Enoch* 6–7.[62] Thus, it is a bit surprising suddenly to read about another prominent angel named Azaz'el in chapter 8. His crime is not to mate with human women and to sire giant-sons, but to teach men to make weapons and women to use jewelry and cosmetics. By this way, warfare was introduced into the world and the women began to cause fornication. Chapter 8 continues to tell about other angels who also transmitted evil knowledge into the world, e.g., astrology, and thus corrupted humankind.[63]

Most scholars agree that this story testifies to at least two different versions of the legend about the fall of the angels: the Azaz'el-version is a later addition to the older Semyaz-story.[64]

Devorah Dimant sees three different versions behind the story in *1 Enoch* chapters 6–11. In chapters 6–7 the main, core-version is that the angels sinned by marrying human women and begetting giant sons. This version was later combined with a story telling about how the fallen angels corrupted humanity by teaching forbidden knowledge.[65] Because both traditions are based on the same biblical text, i.e., Gen 6:1–4, they were early combined. The third strata, the Azaz'el–tradition lived an independent life longer until it finally was combined with the legend of the fallen angels by the editor of *1*

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have omitted *Jubilees* in my paper. The fact that according to *Jub*. 4.15, it was God who originally sent the angels to the earth constitutes a noteworthy difference between *Jubilees* and the rendering of the fall of the 'Watchers' in *1 Enoch*, but, according to Dimant, the statement is a later insertion out of a desire to soften the sin of the angels. In this way, *Jubilees*'s version also distinguishes itself from the account in Genesis. See also van Ruiten 2007, 594-595 and Dimant, 1974, XIII-XIV.

[59] *1 Enoch* 10. Compare Jude 6 and 2 Pet 2:4-5.

[60] 1 *Enoch* 10.

[61] *1 Enoch* 10.9–10.

[62] There are different versions of the name of this angel; sometimes he is also called Semyaza or Shamhazai, among other variants.

[63] *1 Enoch* 8.2–4.

[64] See, e.g., Nickelsburg, 1977, 383-386, and Hanson, 1977, 220. For a more detailed analysis of *1 Enoch* 6-11, see, e.g., Siam Bhayro, 2005: *The Shemihazah and Asael Narrative of 1 Enoch 6-11*. On pp. 11-39, Bhayro argues that there are as many as five distinct strata in the Enoch-narrative.

[65] According to (Bhayro, 2005, 25-28) one of the original purposes of the narrative in *1 Enoch* 6–11 was to present a condemnation of the mantic arts, such as astrology and divination.

Enoch 6–11.[66] Some scholars see a connection between the Azaz'el–tradition and the introduction of cultural devices by the Cainites in Genesis 4. A connection to the scapegoat Azaz'el in Leviticus 16 is also probable.[67]

According to the first version the humans are not to blame for the corruption of the world. They are instead said to suffer under the terrible acts of the evil giants,[68] but, as is well-known, the deluge in Gen 6:5 is described as the punishment of a wicked humanity. Thus, originally, only the two latter versions are connected to the flood-story. In *1 Enoch* 10 there are clear references to Noah and the flood related to the deeds of the fallen angel Azaz'el, who, by God's command, is bound by his angel Raphael and thrown into the darkness.[69]

1 Enoch 15–16 describes the origin of demons; the souls of the deceased giants are depicted as evil spirits that emerges out of the giants' bodies.[70] They will not be destroyed until the Day of Judgement.[71] These chapters also explain why the angels' marriages were such a grave sin. The angels were not created for this purpose, spiritual beings as they are. They defiled themselves by going against their spiritual nature and violated the boundaries prescribed for them by God, a sin for which there is no forgiveness. Even though Enoch himself is sent by the fallen angels before God to intercede for them, they will not be pardoned.[72]

To conclude, it may be stated that the narrative in Gen 6:1–4 has inspired detailed narratives in *1 Enoch* regarding the fall of the angels and the origin of evil. The story in chapters 6–11 consists of at least three original different variants that later were interwoven into one. In all of them, the 'sons of God' are identified as angels who sinned by marrying human women or teaching humankind forbidden knowledge. According to the first version, evil has its

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[66] Dimant, 1974, VI-X.
[67] See, e.g., Hanson, 1977, 220-233 and Olyan 1993, 109-111.
[68] See *1 Enoch* 9:1-3 where the angels Michael, Surafel and Gabriel are said to have hearkened the humans petitions for deliverance and brought their pleads before God. See also Stuckenbruck 2004, 99-102 and Sullivan 2004, 203.
[69] *1 Enoch* 10.1–7. See also Dimant, 1974, VI-X.
[70] Cf., *Jub*. 10.4–14.
[71] See also Stuckenbruck 2004, 102-103 and Riley 1999, 238-239.
[72] In the allegorical version of the fall of the angels, the so-called *Animal Apocalypse*, found in the *Dream Visions* (*1 Enoch* 83–90) the rebellious angels are designated as stars falling from heaven down to the earth where they impregnate the women (designated as cows). Their hybrid offspring, the giants, are labeled 'elephants, camels and asses'72 who kill each other before the time of the deluge. In contrast to *1 Enoch* 15–16 (part of the Book of Watchers) nothing is said of giants' survival in spiritual form after the flood. This version most certainly builds upon the earlier narrative in *1 Enoch* 6–11. See also Stuckenbruck 2004, 109-110. Stuckenbruck (2004, 93-98) also mentions some fragments preserved by Alexander Polyhistor in his work On the Jews which refer to the pre-diluvial giants. In these fragments, the giants are linked with Babylonia and the introduction of, e.g., the knowledge of astrology is ascribed to them. These fragments also contain indications that some giants may have physically survived the flood. See also, e.g., Coblentz Bautch, 2007, 464. For more references to the fall of the angels in *1 Enoch*, see Coblentz Bautch 2007, 462-467.

origin in the birth of their sons, the cruel giants, the נפלים and the גברים in Gen 6:4. The humans are innocent.

The second variant (including the third, the Azaz'el–tradition), assigns the existence of evil in the world to the corruption of humankind by the teaching of the fallen angels. Originally, this version may have been aimed to explain the wickedness of humanity prior to the deluge, which in the Bible occurs without a clear motif, if not connected to the story about the 'sons of God'. A fourth variant in *1 Enoch* 15–16 ascribes the presence of evil in the world to demons who emerged out of the giants' bodies.[73]

In accordance to its name, the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* declares itself to be a collection of the last words of the twelve sons of Jacob.[74] In *the Testament of Reuben* chapter 5 it is told how the pre-diluvial women allured the 'Watchers' (i.e., the fallen angels) to lust after them. The women seduced the 'Watchers' and these transformed themselves into human form and appeared to the women while they had intercourse with their husbands.[75] The result was that the women gave birth to giants, although the biological fathers were humans.

Thus, the women are blamed for the sin of the angels and it is denied that there existed any real marriages between angels and mortals. Probably, the reason to this rendering is the author's objection to the idea of angels involved in sexual intercourse. However, it is remarkable, that they nevertheless are described as having coveted the women.[76] Thus, according to this interpretation, are the women considered as responsible for the world's evil? No, it is the devil, Beliar, and his evil sprits who are seen as the source of evil, but the women receive a considerable part of the blame for the deluge.[77]

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[73] In *Jubilees* we find the first and last of these versions, but we have only one short reference in *Jub*. 8.1–4 to the tradition of the angels' transmission of evil knowledge. In this context, however, the angels' revelation of celestial secrets is more a sin of carelessness than of deliberate malice. In addition to the discussed texts of *1 Enoch* in my paper, there are a few shorter references to our pericope in the 'Enochic books', e.g., *2 Enoch* 7. From considerations of space I do not deal with them in this paper.

[74] I use the English translation by Kee of the testaments in *OTP*, vol. 1, 1983 (ed. Charlesworth). It has been disputed whether the testaments originally are a Jewish or Christian work, most probably both. The time of its composition is also under discussion. The main part of it was maybe written sometime during the first century B.C.E. See the introduction by Sparks, 1984, 508-512, in *AOT* and Kee's introduction in *OTP*, 775-780.

[75] Cf., *1 Enoch* 19.2.

[76] *The Testament of Reuben* 5.6. See also Bamberger 1952, p. 31, and Alexander, 1972, pp. 67-68.

[77] See *the Testament of Reuben* 2–6, and Kee's notes 4c-d and 5a, pp. 783-784 in *OTP* vol. 1, 1983, and Bamberger, 1952, p. 31. In *the Testament of Naphtali* 3.5 there is a short allusion to our pericope. The 'sons of God' are once more identified as 'Watchers', i.e., fallen angels who are said to ".. have departed from nature's order …", undoubtedly an allusion to their unnatural union with the human women. The angels are not created in order to have sexual relationships. In distinction to *the Testament of Reuben,* it is clear that the fallen angels are blamed for the deluge. Their transgression of the natural order is depicted as a grave sin and the reason to the flood. When reading the whole of chapter 3, we see that the 'Watchers' are compared to gentiles and the people of Sodom.

The last Pseudepigraph of interest for our quest is *2 Baruch*. The work claims to be a writing by Jeremiah's scribe Baruch concerning his revelations of the destruction of the First Temple. However, the real author is living at the time of the fall of the Second Temple.[78] In *2 Bar.* 56.10-15 we find an interpretation of Gen 6:1–4:

> [10] For he who was a danger to himself [i.e., humankind] was also a danger to the angels. [11] For they possessed a freedom in that time in which they were created.[79] [12] *And some of them came down and mingled themselves with women* [my italics] [13] At that time they who acted like this were tormented in chains. [14] But the rest of the multitude of angels, who have no number, restrained themselves. [15] And those living on earth perished together through the waters of the flood.

The above cited passage is part of an explanation of an apocalyptic vision of dark clouds and waters, depicting the course of world history, from the creation to the end. The preceding context describes the fall of humanity and thereby the entrance of evil, sickness and death into the world. The culmination of the world's corruption is then described in the passage; in their fallen state, humans are a danger not only to themselves but also to angels. Thus, humans are culpable for the angelic sin, an interpretation similar to that in the *Testament of Reuben*, but in *2 Baruch* the women are not singled out, the blame rests upon humanity as a whole. However, the angels are not without guilt and they are punished by God, compare *1 Enoch* 10.4–6, 11–13, Jude 6 and 2 Pet 2:4.[80] The last verse of the passage implies that any offspring resulting from the angel-human unions were destroyed in the flood.[81]

3. The Targums

Targum Onqelos (*Onq.*) is a rather literal paraphrase of the Masoretic Hebrew text of Genesis,[82] but in its rendering of Genesis 6 it contains some derivations that are worth considering. The designation 'sons of God' is interpreted/translated in Gen 6:2, 4 as the 'sons of the great ones'. Probably, this interpretation is to be seen in the light that *Onq*. belongs to the tradition

[78] I use the English translation by Klijn in *OTP*, vol. 1, 1983, see his introduction to the book on pp. 615-620 and Sullivan, 2004 pp. 220.
[79] This remark concerning the free will of the angels is interesting, because one of the objections against the "angel-interpretation" of Gen 6:1–4 in the later Rabbinic Judaism seems to have been the perception of angels as good by definition and so unable to sin, an objection we also find among early Christians, e.g., Augustine, see the discussion of the early exegesis of the pericope in Alexander, 1972, 66-67.
[80] See also Justin Martyr, *Apology* 2.5, and Sullivan 2004, 221-223.
[81] See also Sullivan 2004, 220-221.
[82] Alexander, 1992, 321. I consult the Aramaic text and English translation of *Onq.* found in Abebach/Grossfeld 1982. If not otherwise stated, quotations are from the English translation by Grossfeld, 1988.

of the school of Rabbi Aqiva who was opposed to the legend about fallen angels who in primeval times had intermarried with humans.[83] Therefore, the 'sons of the great ones' most certainly allude to 'sons of nobility', i.e., ordinary humans from well-to-be families.[84]

Gen 6:3 is very freely translated; the Hebrew phrase באדם is rendered as "this wicked generation", which refers to the generation of the marriages mentioned in the previous verse. The Spirit of God is not mentioned in *Onq.*'s version of the pericope, probably because of the targumic tendency to avoid anthropomorphism.[85]

The Hebrew verb ידון is in *Onq.* interpreted to mean 'endure': "This wicked generation shall not endure before me forever, because they are flesh and their deeds are evil …" The 120 years are denoted as a period of grace, an opportunity for the evil generation to repent.[86] Thus, *Onq.* seems to connect our pericope with the deluge. The people did not repent, and God erased them (except for Noah and his family), from the face of the earth.

The Hebrew terms נפלים and גברים in Gen 6:4 are both translated in *Onq.* as 'the mighty ones'. They were mere humans of extraordinary stature.

In targum *Neofiti 1* (*Neof.*), the 'sons of God' in Gen 6:2, 4 are referred to as the 'sons of the judges', an interpretation very close to the one attested in *Onq.*[87] However, in the third verse of the pericope, there is a slightly different rendering. The verb ידון is translated as 'judge', and the reference to the deluge is clear. The Lord says: "None of the generations that are to arise will be judged according to the judgment of the flood".[88] This statement clearly alludes to the promise of God to Noah in Gen 8:21–22.

In distinction to *Onq.*, targum *Neof.* mentions the Spirit of God in Gen 6:3, God is said to have given His Spirit to men "... because they are flesh and their deeds are evil". This interpretation appears to me as a bit peculiar,

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[83] See, e.g., Grossfeld, 1988, note 1, 52. The idea of angels (i.e., spiritual, heavenly beings) intermarrying with human women was probably problematic because of its obvious anthropomorphic character.

[84] The same interpretation is also to be found in, e.g., *Gen. Rab.* 26. However, Rabbi Ishmael, Rabbi Aqiba's contemporary, accepted the legend of the fallen angels as a historical fact. See, e.g., *b.Yoma* 7b, Grossfeld 1988, 52 note 1 and *b.Nidd.*61a where Sihon and Og are depicted as descendants of the fallen angel Shamhazai (Semyaz), in *b.Yoma* 67b the name of the scapegoat, Azazel is connected with the angel of that name. See also Alexander 1972, 62-63, who concludes that these passages reflect an older interpretation (cf., *1 Enoch* 6–11) which was suppressed in the later mainstream Rabbinic Judaism. Also in *Pirqê de Rabbi Eliezer* 22 (its final composition is usually dated to the 8th /9th century C.E), the old interpretation of the 'sons of God' as angels is still extant. See also Sullivan 2004, 223-225.

[85] See Grossfeld, 1988, note 2, 52.

[86] *Onq.* Gen 6:3. See also Grossfeld 1988, note 4, 53.

[87] I use the English translation of *Neof.* by McNamara/Maher, 1968 (ed. Díez Macho). See also Grossfeld, 2000, 97-98. Neither the Fragment Targums nor the targumic fragments of the Cairo Genizah contain any references to the unions of the 'sons of God' and the 'daughters of men'.

[88] *Neof.* Gen 6:3.

but in light of the context I assume it implies that God hopes his Spirit will bring humankind to repentance.

The rest of the verse is rendered similarly to *Onq*.; the 120 years constitute an era of mercy during which humankind has the possibility to repent, an opportunity they did not utilize. The נפלים and the גברים in v. 4 are understood as referring to the children sired by the 'sons of the judges'' and are designated as 'warriors'.[89] A *Neofiti* marginal gloss renders Gen 6:4 as follows:

> ..there were the warriors dwelling on the earth in those days […] after the sons of the angels had joined (in wedlock) with the daughters of the sons [of man]. [90]

Philip Alexander concludes that the above quoted passage is a remnant of an older interpretation (cf., *1 Enoch* 6–11) which later was suppressed by the Rabbis, who considered the 'angel-interpretation as blasphemous. Thus, it seems like the view of Rabbi Aqiva prevailed in Rabbinic Judaism. [91]

The version of Gen 6:1–4 in targum *Pseudo-Jonathan* (*Ps-Jon*.) has many similarities with the rendering of the pericope in *Neof.* The 'sons of God' are labeled the 'sons of the great ones' and the translation of verse 3 is nearly the same as in *Neof.* Thus, the verb ידון is interpreted to mean 'judge', and the 120 years refer to a time of grace when the corrupted humankind is granted an opportunity to repent, but to no avail.[92]

However, there are some differences between the two targums' renderings of the pericope. According to *Ps-Jon*.'s version of Gen 6:2, the women are partly blamed for the sinful marriages. They are said to have seduced the men by walking around naked, wearing make-up.[93] (Compare the *Testament of Reuben*, chapter 5.)

In Gen 6:4, *Ps-Jon.* refers to the fallen angels Shamhazai (cf., Semyaz) and Azaz'el who

> …fell from heaven and were on earth *in those days, and also after that, when the sons of* the great ones came in unto the daughters of men, *and they bare children to them*: *the same are* called men of the world, *the men of renown*.[94]

Thus, the term נפלים is interpreted as referring to the two leaders of the fallen angels who we recall from *1 Enoch*. Most probably, this interpretation of the

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[89] *Neof.* Gen 6:4.
[90] See McNamara/Maher, 1968, note 5, 511. See also Grossfeld 2000, 98-100
[91] See Alexander 1972, 60-71, and footnote 84 above.
[92] See *Ps-Jon*. Gen 6:2–3. For the Aramaic text of *Ps-Jon.*, see Clarke 1984. I use the English translation of *Ps-Jon.* by Bowker, 1969. See also Maher's translation, 1992.
[93] *Ps-Jon.* Gen 6:2. See also Bowker, 1969, 151.
[94] *Ps-Jon*. Gen 6:4, Eng. trans. Bowker, 1969, p. 151. The words in italics represents the passages where the targum is close to the Hebrew text, see Bowker, 1969, 94.

term נפלים as denoting fallen angels is based on the root of the Hebrew verb נפל, 'to fall'.[95]

It is noteworthy that the נפלים and the גברים in Gen 6:4 not are equated with each other in *Ps.-Jon.* The גברים are in *Ps-Jon*. labeled "... men of the world, the men of renown".[96] It is also rather confusing that *Neof*. translates the 'sons of God' in both vv. 2 and 4 as the 'sons of the great ones' while the targum at the same time paraphrases הנפלים in v. 4 by "Shamhazai and Azaz'el fell from heaven…"As the text now stands, the two angels appears to be distinguished from 'the sons of the great ones', i.e., the fathers of the children. How are we to explain the reference to Shamhzai and Aza'zel? According to Alexander, the answer to this question is that the targum displays a mixture of traditions; *Ps.-Jon* has been "censured" and the designation 'sons of the great ones' in vv. 2 and 4 has at some stage replaced the older, original rendering, such as 'angels', compare the marginal gloss to *Neof*. Gen 6:4.[97] Alexander concludes his discussion of the targumic renderings of Gen 6:1–4 by declaring:

> The conclusion of the matter seems to be this. *O*. [*Onq.*] and *N*.[*Neof.*] represent an exegesis which originated with the rabbis shortly after the Second Jewish war–an exegesis which reflects the general struggle to wean Jews from beliefs out of keeping with the essence of Torah Judaism. *Ps.-J.* (in its original from) and *Nmg*. [*Neof.* marginal gloss] represent the old Palestinian Targum, current before the Second Jewish War, which the *O*. tradition was intended to replace.[98]

4. Summary and Conclusions

As mentioned above in the introduction, this paper has been an attempt to a short survey of the early Jewish interpretations of Gen 6:1–4, found in the Pseudepigrapha and the targums. As a comparison, I have briefly discussed how the text is understood in a sample of modern scholarly commentaries. The method of the study has been to try to find answers to exegetical problems in the pericope. From considerations of space I cannot here present all the answers and details that have been found in the analysis. However, it is possible to point out some main models of interpretation.

Of importance to the understanding of the whole pericope is the interpretation of the mysterious identity of 'sons of God' in Gen 6:2 and 4. It has

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[95] See the commentary on *Ps-Jon*. by Bowker, 1969, 157. See also Maher's notes 10 and 11, 1992, 38.
[96] *Ps-Jon*. Gen 6:4. Eng. trans. Bowker, 1969, 151.
[97] Alexander 1972, 70-71. See also Maher 1992, note 2, 37.
[98] Alexander 1972, 71. According to Alexander, it was not only the "scandal" of the angel-interpretation that made the Rabbis to combat this tradition, (although that constituted a mayor reason), but also a general polemic against a (in their opinion) too exuberant angelology among more esoteric circles within Judaism, see his whole article, pp. 60-71. See also Rebiger, 2007, 629-642.

been showed that there are mainly two answers to the question of their identity. The ‘sons of God’ are depicted either as angels, or as human men of noble families.

In *1 Enoch* the biblical pericope has been used as a foundation to the legend of the fall of the angels, and this appears to be the oldest understanding of the text. The interpretation of the ‘sons of God’ as angels is also attested in, for example, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* and *2 Baruch*.

In common to all these sources is that the angel-human intermarriages are seen as something wicked and unnatural, and thus a main reason for the deluge. The unions are not looked upon in neutral terms, a possible interpretation when reading the biblical text.

However, there are some differences between the sources. One is the degree of the degradation of humanity before the arrival of the angels. In for example, *1 Enoch*, the corruption of humankind is due to the fallen angels, at least in the version where they are said to have taught men evil knowledge. In the *Testament of Reuben*, a great part of the blame for the fall of the angels is laid upon the women.

The identifying of the ‘sons of God’ as angels is attested also among modern exegetes, for example, Cassuto, von Rad and Sarna. I presume that the main underlying reason for this interpretation in both kinds of material is that the term in other texts of the Bible also denotes angels (e.g., Job 38:7, Ps 29:1, etc.). As mentioned earlier, I personally adhere to this interpretation.

The targums attest to the second main understanding of the identity of the ‘sons of God’, i.e., they were mere humans of well-to-be families, leaders of the people. Most probably, this interpretation is to be seen as a reaction to the ‘scandal of the angel-explanation’, in addition to a general Rabbinic polemic against a too exuberant angelology after the fall of the Second Temple. The Rabbis could not accept the idea that angels, i.e., spiritual, heavenly beings, would be able to sexually intermingle with human women.

During my work, I have noted that the “scandal” is seen as a problem in all of the investigated interpretations of the text. Even if sexual intercourse is admitted to have really happened between angels and mortal, human women, it is considered as something bizarre. Angels are not created in order to have sexual relationships. As mentioned in chapter 2, this problem is most certainly the reason for why the angels and the women are not described as really married in the *Testament of Reuben.*

The Jewish interpretation that the ‘sons of God’ were human men from noble families reminds me of the Christian interpretation mentioned in chapter 1, i.e., the ‘sons of God’ were noble descendants of Seth who married Cainite women.

A problem related to the mystery of the ‘sons of God’ is how to identify the נפלים and the גבורים in Gen 6:4. As shown, the most common answer is that both terms signify the same creatures, i.e., the children born in the mixed marriages. These children are in turn called giants, either in the real

sense of the word as mythical beings, or as famous human men of extraordinary strength and stature. Naturally, the definition of the נפלים and the גבורים depends on who the fathers are claimed to be.

In targum *Ps-Jon.*, there is a slightly different interpretation; the נפלים refer to the two fallen angels Shamhazai and Azaz'el, two mayor characters in the legends surrounding the pericope that we recognize from *1 Enoch* 6–11. As we have seen, this targum displays a mixture of traditions, the reference to the fallen angels is most probably a remnant of the older interpretation of the text, which was later suppressed in Rabbinic Judaism, cf., the rendering 'sons of the great ones' in *Ps.-Jon* Gen 6:2.

Another line of interpretation is to be found *1 Enoch* 15–16 where the 'sons of God', i.e., the fallen angels, are the alleged fathers of the demons.

It is not possible to mention all of the various translations of the Hebrew verb ידון. The most common renderings are 'judge' or 'abide/remain'. In for example, the targums *Neof.* and *Ps.-Jon.* we find the first mentioned translation, and the interpretation of verse 3 is that God never again will judge future generations in the same way as the generation of the flood, a generation which is considered as evil. Thus, from the context, it seems clear that the marriages mentioned in verse 2 are not approved by God, and this applies also to *Onq.*

There are two main models regarding the interpretation of the 120 years in Gen 6:3. One is that God is diminishing the life-span of humankind to 120 years. His Spirit, the life-force, is not to abide in humans forever. The other model is that the 120 years refer to a period of grace prior to the deluge. The deluge is connected to the narrative in our pericope in all of the examined Jewish sources.

The answer to the question of the main theological message of Gen 6:1–4 depends above all on how the 'sons of God' are identified. In the interpretations where they are denoted as angels, their intermingling with human women is described as a sin of cosmic dimensions; the whole natural order became disturbed and corrupted. The fallen angels and their hybrid offspring are connected to the entering of evil into the world, an interpretation found in, for example, *1 Enoch*.

If we chose the identification of the 'sons of God' and their children as immoral men, but nevertheless mere humans, we receive another answer to the question of the text's main message. In the Jewish interpretations of this model, the marriages in Gen 6:1–4 are seen as one example of the sins of the flood–generation, but without cosmic dimensions. However, the wickedness of Noah's generation is still perceived as the reason for the deluge.

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Short Paper

The Portrayal of Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon in Jer 27 MT and 34 LXX

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The present paper on the portrayal of Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon in Jer 27 MT and 34 LXX has three parts: In the first part, the doctoral project which forms the background of this paper will be presented in general (cf. 1.). The second part is the main section of this paper and contains the analysis of Jer 27 MT and 34 LXX respectively (cf. 2.). Finally, the paper ends with a short summary (cf. 3.).[1]

Besides comments on my analysis of the literary development of Jer 27 MT with regard to reflecting on Babylon I would especially welcome discussion of my dealing with the two text forms of the book of Jeremiah (combination of textual and literary history).

1. Introduction to the Doctoral Project

The beginning of the Jeremiah tradition is marked by a historical crisis: the conquest of Jerusalem by the Babylonians (598/7 and 587/6 BCE) followed by deportations of Judeans to Babylonia. The book of Jeremiah reflects on those events and attempts to interpret them theologically. This includes a reflection on the historical figure of Babylon. Consequently, thinking about Babylon became an integral part of the book of Jeremiah.[2] This is valid both diachronically and synchronically: On the one hand, phrases mentioning Babylon are already found among the oldest parts of the book of Jeremiah, namely in the texts warning about a

[1] The bibliographic references in the footnotes of this paper follow the scheme "author's surname: short title, page number". A full bibliography is given at the end of this paper.

[2] For an overview on Babylon in the book of Jeremiah cf. KRATZ: Babylon, 30-35, and THELLE: Babylon, 187-232.

nameless enemy from the north (Jer 4:5-6:26). On the other hand, the figure of Babylon is also a recurrent theme in the final form of the book of Jeremiah.[3] Unlike in other biblical books,[4] however, the portrayal of Babylon and its king Nebuchadnezzar II. (605-562 BCE) is ambiguous in the book of Jeremiah. On the one hand, the historical figure of Babylon is presented as an evil and aggressive power (especially in Jer 37-44 and 52), whose king is characterized as an insatiable monster (Jer 51:34). In addition, the country of Babylonia is said to be a place of no-return for the Judean deportees, the *golah* (Jer 20:4-6; 22:24-30 [especially v. 26). On the other hand, Babylon and especially her king are held in high esteem. Nebuchadnezzar is called "servant of Yahweh" thrice (Jer 25:9; 27:6; 43:10) and functions as his earthly representative.[5] Moreover, Babylonia becomes a place of new life for the *golah* (Jer 29:4-6), whereas Judah appears as a place of doom (Jer 29:13-19; cf. also Jer 24).

Starting from these observations, my own research focuses on the questions of how the reflections on Babylon and the *golah* developed and what functions they fulfilled within the book of Jeremiah. The core texts of my project are the passages on Babylon and the *golah* in Jer 20-29 MT as well as their Greek translation.[6] For, at least in my opinion, these chapters exemplarily contain all important aspects of the Jeremianic portrayal of Babylon and the Babylonian *golah*. Moreover, they are an important part of the book of Jeremiah in terms of textual history, literary development, structure and content.[7] The analysis of the texts on Babylon and the *golah* in Jer 20-29 MT is guided by three questions: First, how is their literary development to be reconstructed? Second, what can be said about the theological function and the historical setting of the Jeremianic portrayal of Babylon and the *golah*?

[3] The atmosphere of almost the whole first part of the book is dominated by the threat of an anonymous enemy from the North (cf. Jer 1-19). The narratives of the second part of the book, which are mostly set in the last decade of the kingdom of Judah (about 598/7 and 587/6 BCE), deal several times with the Babylonians and their king Nebuchadnezzar II. (605-562 BCE). At the end of the book – before the description of the second and final Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem (587/6 BCE; cf. Jer 52) – the destruction of the great enemy Babylon is announced (cf. Jer 50f.).

[4] For on overview on Babylon within the Hebrew Bible cf. BELLIS: Face, 65-73, as well as KRATZ: Babylon, 28-39, and KRATZ: Babylonbilder, 553-556.

[5] In a similar way, the Persian king Cyrus II (559-529 BCE) was honoured by Second Isaiah (cf. Isa 44:28: רֹעִי; 45:1: מְשִׁיחוֹ).

[6] In detail these are the following texts: Jer 20,1-6 MT / LXX; Jer 21,1-10 MT / LXX; Jer 22,24-30 MT / LXX; Jer 23,1-8 MT / 23,1-6 LXX (vv. 7f. lacks in JerLXX); Jer 24 MT / LXX; Jer 25,1-14(.26) / 25,1-13 LXX (v. 14 lacks in JerLXX); Jer 27,1-15; 28,1-17 MT / 34,1-12; 35,1-17 LXX; Jer 27,16-22 MT / 34,13-18 LXX; Jer 29 MT / 36 LXX.

[7] Concerning the text of the book of Jeremiah it should be noted that JerMT and JerLXX share the same structure until Jer 25,13; from this verse onwards, the structure differs due to the different position of the so-called Oracles against the Nations (Jer 46-51 MT / 25,14-31,44 LXX). Moreover, Jer 20-29 MT contains several units which possibly were originally independent (cf. Jer 27f.; 29 MT) and whose analysis may offer insights into the formation of the book of Jeremiah as whole. Finally, Jer 20-29 MT is the transition between the first half of the book (Jer 1-25 MT) and its second half (Jer 26-45 MT). In these chapters, the anonymous enemy from the North (cf. Jer 1:13-16; 4:1-6:30 MT) is identified with the Babylonians for the first time (cf. Jer 20:4 MT); at the same time, a new perspective of hope is foreshadowed (cf. especially Jer 29 MT).

Finally, how does the development of the reflections on Babylon fit into the formation of the book of Jeremiah as whole?

The methods applied in this investigation are those of the historical-critical exegesis.
In this regard, the question of how to correlate textual criticism as well as *Literar*- and *Redaktionskritik* represents a special problem.[8] This is due to the fact that the book of Jeremiah has come down to us in two different editions, namely the Masoretic text (JerMT) and the Septuagint version of the book of Jeremiah (JerLXX) which is about one seventh shorter than JerMT and shows a different structure.[9] Among scholars the differences between JerMT and JerLXX are explained in two contrary ways: First, JerMT is taken as the Hebrew *Vorlage* of JerLXX which is supposed to have been shortened or changed by the translator(s). In other words: JerMT is seen as the older text and JerLXX is to be derived from it.[10] Second, JerMT is *not* taken as the Hebrew *Vorlage* of JerLXX. Instead, JerMT and JerLXX are said to represent different local texts or different developmental stages of the book of Jeremiah.[11] As a consequence, textual differences between JerMT and JerLXX may be relevant for reconstructing the literary development of the book of Jeremiah.
In my research I follow the second option – as the majority of present scholars does – and take JerMT and JerLXX as two different developmental stages of the book of Jeremiah. As a preliminary rule, I assume that in many – if not most – instances JerLXX represents an older Hebrew text than JerMT.

[8] On the problem of connecting textual criticism as well as *Literar*- and *Redaktionskritik* cf. exemplarily STIPP: Textkritik, 143-159.

[9] In JerMT the so-called Oracles against the Nations are found at the end of the book (Jer 46-51 MT) whereas they are in the middle of the book in JerLXX (Jer 25:14-33:44 LXX). In addition, their structure is different. Finally, the pericope in which Yahweh makes the nations drinking a cup forms the end of the first part of JerMT (Jer 25:15-38). In JerLXX, however, it stands at the end of the oracles against the nations (Jer 32:1-24 LXX).

[10] This hypothesis was brought forward first by M.G.L. SPOHN (1824) und K.H. GRAF (1862) (cf. HUWYLER: Jeremia, 44f.). This position is held today by scholars such as S. SODERLUND and especially G. FISCHER, who wrote the latest German commentary on the book of Jeremiah.

[11] Though disputed among scholars, this hypothesis may be confirmed by the Jeremiah-fragments of Qumran (as an overview cf. LANGE: Handbuch, 297-324). Brought forward first by F.C. MOVERS (1837), A. SCHOLZ (1875) und A.W. STREANE (1896) (cf. HUWYLER: Völker, 45f.), this position is held today by scholars such as J.G. JANZEN, E. TOV, P.-M. BOGAERT, Y. GOLDMAN, W. MCKANE and H.-J. STIPP.

2. The Portrayal of Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon in Jer 27 MT and Jer 34 LXX

The main part of this paper starts with some general remarks on Jer 27 MT dealing with its historical background as well as its structure and content (cf. 2.1). It is followed by a brief sketch of the portrayal of Babylon given in Jer 27 MT, which resulted from a synchronic reading of this text (cf. 2.2). Then, turning to a diachronic perspective, the literary development of this chapter and its Greek counterpart shall be analysed (cf. 2.3).

2.1 Historical Background, Structure and Content of Jer 27 MT

Despite the dating in v. 1, the reign of Zedekiah (598/7-587/6 BCE), the last king of Judah, provides the background for the events described in Jer 27 MT.[12] Zedekiah was made king by the Babylonians after their first conquest of Jerusalem in 598/7 BCE. A few years later, however, he failed to attend to his duties as a vassal of the Babylonians, because he may have hoped for a coalition with Egypt. Thus, the Babylonians came back to Judah in order to punish their renegade vassal. In 587/6 BCE they conquered Jerusalem for a second time and turned the kingdom of Judah into a Babylonian province.[13]

Jer 27 MT can be divided into three sections:[14] In the *first section* (vv. 1-11), there is the description of a symbolic act. Yahweh orders Jeremiah to make a yoke for himself and to send yokes to several foreign kings respectively (vv. 2f.). By this, the prophet shall order those kings to submit themselves to the Babylonians and warn against other prophets and their advice not to surrender (vv. 4-11).[15] The *second section* (vv. 12-15) contains a short message

[12] In Jer 27:1 MT the events of this chapter are dated to the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim (609/8-598/7 BCE), which is in contrast to the fact that in the following verses only Zedekiah is mentioned (Jer 27:3.12 MT). I will come back to this problem later on (cf. 2.3.1).

[13] Cf. ALBERTZ: Exilszeit, 52f., and BERLEJUNG: Geschichte, 120f.

[14] Jer 34 LXX has the same structure as Jer 27 MT. However, due to the fact that the Greek text of this chapter is shorter than the Hebrew text, the numbering of the verses is a bit different. Thus, the numbering in Jer 34 LXX is as follows: (1) vv. 1-9: symbolic act; (2) vv. 10-12: message to Zedekiah; (3) vv. 12-18: temple vessels.

[15] Accounts of symbolic acts are a genre in its own right within the prophetic literature of the Hebrew Bible. In general, such accounts have three parts: 1. Yahweh orders a prophet to perform a certain act. 2. The

of Jeremiah for Zedekiah. The Judean king is also ordered to submit himself to the Babylonians and not to listen to other prophets. Finally, the *third section* (vv. 16-22) deals with the vessels of the temple in Jerusalem. After the first conquest of Jerusalem parts of them were taken as booty to Babylonia, whereas the rest of them still remained in the city. The debated question is whether and, if so, when those temple vessels in Babylonia will be returned to Jerusalem.

Jer 27 MT and the following two chapters are closely connected and form a sort of unit.[16] Jer 28 MT, to which Jer 27 MT acts as a prelude, deals with a conflict between Jeremiah and another prophet named Hananiah, who is opposed to surrendering to the Babylonians. In Jer 29 MT one finds a letter of Jeremiah to those Judeans, who were deported to Babylonia after the first conquest of Jerusalem in 598/7 BCE.

2.2 The Portrayal of Babylon in Jer 27 MT

In Jer 27 MT, three points are considered concerning Babylon, namely the relationship between Yahweh and the Babylonians, the duration of the Babylonian reign, and the options of behaving towards the Babylonians.

The following presentation of these points is based on a synchronic reading of Jer 27 MT.

a) The Relationship between Yahweh and the Babylonians

In various texts of the Hebrew Bible Yahweh is said to use certain foreign nations such as the Assyrians (e.g. Isa 10:5) in order to punish Israel or Judah.[17] However, in the text under discussion the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar seem to be more than a simple instrument of punishment for Yahweh.[18] For there is obviously a special relationship between him and the Babylonians and their king respectively. This relationship is firstly marked by the fact, that Yahweh, the creator and sovereign over the world, appoints Nebuchadnezzar (and his

prophet performs the ordered act. 3. An explanation of the act is given. Sign acts are meant to illustrate the prophet's preaching; in addition, they hint at future events or shall bring them about (cf. KAISER: Grundriß, 23, as well as UTZSCHNEIDER / NITSCHE: Arbeitsbuch, 145-147). Next to Jer 27 MT, there are further accounts of sign acts in the book of Jeremiah, namely Jer 13:11; 16:1-9; 18:1-12; 19:1-11 and, finally, 32:6-15.

[16] For a list of linguistic or thematic links, e.g. the spelling of Nebuchadnezzar (נבוּבת‌אצר instead of the form נבוכד אצר which is more common in Jer [and Ez]) or the problem of false prophecy, cf. WANKE: Jeremia II, 244, and – more detailed – PLANT: Figs, 96-98. WANKE: Jeremia II, 247, lists also some differences between those texts.

[17] Cf. CARROLL: Jeremia, 532.

[18] Against LEMKE: "Nebuchadnezzar", 46f., and FENSHAM: Nebukadrezzar, 60f.

successors) his earthly representative and ruler of the created world (vv. 5-7).[19] Even more remarkable is the fact, that Yahweh calls Nebuchadnezzar his servant (עבד ; v. 6: נבוכדנאצר מלך בבל עבדי), which usually is an honorary title for great figures of Israelite history like Moses, Abraham or David.[20] Thus, it does not apply quite well to the conqueror and destructor of Jerusalem. Anyway, the intension of using this title here is to portray Nebuchadnezzar not as a follower but as a vassal of Yahweh.[21] Among the foreign kings mentioned in the Hebrew Bible only the Persian ruler Cyrus II (559-529 BCE) who conquered Babylon in 539 BCE is honoured in a similar way (cf. Isa 44:28; 45:1).

b) The Temporal Limitation of the Babylonian Reign

Yahweh limits the duration of the Babylonian reign to three generations ("Nebuchadnezzar – son – grandson") and decrees, that after this period the Babylonians themselves will have to serve other nations (v. 7; cf. also v. 22). Historically speaking, this is not entirely correct. For three kings were ruling between Nebuchadnezzar and the end of the Babylonian empire in 539 BCE, and only one of them belonged to Nebuchadnezzar's family.[22] However, the correct representation of historical developments may not have been the main interest of the text under discussion. More important are two other points: The text obviously aims at presenting Yahweh as the ruler over history. Similarly, the period of the Babylonian reign shall be integrated into a divine history, which is governed by Yahweh.[23] Comparable attempts may be found in Jer 25:11f.; 29:10 according to which the Babylonian reign will last for 70 years.[24]

[19] The presentation of Yahweh (creator and ruler) and Nebuchadrezzar (subordinate) is based upon several traditions, namely creation traditions from Gen 1f. where a human being is set over the whole creation (cf. HILL: Babylon, 134f., and SCHENKER: Metamorphose, 500-504) as well as Babylonian and Persian kingship ideology which claim that the respective king was endowed with power over the world by the head of the respective pantheon (for Babylon cf. LANG: Motiv, 236f., and VANDERHOOFT: Empire, 34-45; for Persia cf. SCHMID: Buchgestalten, 240).

[20] Cf. ThWAT V, 1001, as well as THAT II, 192f. (both articles list a lot of Biblical references). In the book of Jeremiah, not only Nebuchadnezzar but also David (Jer 33:21f.26 [only MT]) and Jacob (Jer 30:10 [only MT]; 46:27f.) are designated as servants of Yahweh

[21] Cf. ZEVIT: Use, 74-77, as well as SCHENKER: Metamorphose, 523-525, who argues similarly. Cf. also MCKANE: 'Nebuchadnezzar', 108. MCKANE hints at the portrayal of Nebuchadnezzar in the book of Daniel where Nebukadnezzar will be shown as a follower of Yahweh (cf. Dan 2:47; 3:28-4,3.34-37) and states then that "עבדי [in Jer 27:6 MT; C.H.] signals an attempt to portray Nebuchadnezzar as consciously subserving Yahweh's purposes" (108). In contrast, LEMKE: "Nebuchadnezzar", 46f., and FENSHAM: Nebukadrezzar, 60f., argue that there is no special relationship between Yahweh and Nebuchadnezzar but the latter is only an instrument in the hand of the former.

[22] Nebuchadnezzar II (605-562 BCE) was followed by his son Amel-Marduk (562-560 BCE). The line of Nebuchadnezzar broke up when Amel-Marduk was murdered by Neriglissar (560-556 BCE; probably his brother-in-law). After him Nabonidus (560-539 BCE) was the last Babylonian ruler. Cf. FISCHER: Jeremia II, 53f., as well as CARROLL: Jeremiah, 527f.

[23] Cf. WANKE: Jeremia II, 254.

[24] For the meaning of the 70 years cf. FISCHER: Jeremia I, 741f., und WANKE: Jeremia I, 226f.

c) Possible Modes of Conduct towards Babylon

The text in question presents two options of how to behave towards the Babylonians and their claim to power: Either the Judeans submit themselves voluntarily or they are subjugated forcibly by the Babylonians. In the former case, they will survive and remain in their own country as Babylonian subjects (vv. 11f.17). In the latter case, they will lose their lives (vv. 8.13) or will be deported and finally die in a foreign country (vv. 10.15). At the end of this passage, however, in the section on the temple vessels (vv. 16-22) one may get the impression that the clear-cut alternative of surviving in the own country or dying in a foreign country has been given up. For Yahweh announces there that he will return the temple vessels to Jerusalem one day (v. 22). This promise may hint at the opportunity for people to survive even in a foreign country and to return to Judah later.[25]

2.3 A Diachronic Analysis of Jer 27 MT and 34 LXX

As noted above, Jer 27 MT consists of three sections, namely vv. 1-11, vv. 12-15 and vv. 16-22. The major topics developed in these verses are the submission to the Babylonians, the warning against false prophets and the fate of the temple vessels (cf. 2.1). After the synchronic overview of Jer 27 MT (cf. 2.2) it shall now be investigated how these different topics were brought together and whether it is possible to reconstruct a literary development. In this respect, Jer 27 MT and Jer 34 LXX are treated separately first. Then the respective findings will be correlated.

2.3.1 Analysis of Jer 27 MT

I shall start my diachronic analysis with three observations on the coherence of Jer 27 MT, which can already be made during a first reading of this text and may hint at a literary growth of these verses. First, it is to be noted that the reference to Jehoiakim (v. 1) in the superscription contrasts the following verses mentioning Zedekiah twice (vv. 3.12). Second, the passage on the temple vessels (vv. 16-22) uses several phrases from the preceding verses, yet in terms of content it is only loosely connected to the preceding verses and rather opens a new section.

[25] For the temple vessels as a symbol of continuity with the past and for the combination of exile and restoration cf. ACKROYD: Temple, 176f.

Third, Jer 27 MT as a whole is marked by several stereotypical formulations.[26] In addition, some verses seem to quote each other.[27]

Starting from these observations, all the material, which in my view may not belong to the original core of Jer 27 MT, is to be sorted out. First, there is the superscription (v. 1). Among scholars it has been debated to replace simply Jehoiakim by Zedekiah. However, as there is no superscription in Jer 34 LXX it is more probable that v. 1 was added later, using the almost identical superscription in Jer 26:1 MT as a paradigm.[28] Second, due to their content vv. 16-22 are closer to Jer 28 MT than to Jer 27 MT. For Jer 28 MT deals with a prophet called Hananiah who announces an early return of the temple vessels from Babylon and attacks Jeremiah because of his differing prophecies (cf. especially Jer 28:1-4 MT). In this respect vv. 16-22 function as an anticipation of the following chapter or as a transition that may be younger than the context.[29] After singling out v. 1 and vv. 16-22, vv. 2-15 remain as an object for further analysis.

In Jer 27:2-15 MT three topics are developed, namely the urgent call to submit to the Babylonians in order to survive (vv. 8.11.12.13), the theological reflection on this submission and on the Babylonians (vv. 5-7[.11?[30]] and, finally, the warning to beware of false prophets (vv. 9f.14f.).

In terms of theology, vv. 5-7 are probably the most thoughtful verses of this chapter, as they deal with Yahweh's relation to the Babylonians. In addition, they draw heavily on other traditions such as the creation theology in Gen 2, Babylonian-Persian kingship ideology and also presumably Second Isaiah's view on Cyrus II.[31] Thus, vv. 5-7 are not likely to have been composed close to the nineties of the 6th century BCE. In contrast to these verses, at least the call to submit to the Babylonians – and perhaps also the warning against other prophets – is

[26] A sort of leitmotif of theses verses is the phrase עבד את־מלך־בבל which is variegated several times (vv. 6.7.8.9.11.12.13.14.17). In addition, there are three stereotyped formulations: 1. the triad of דבר, רעב and חרב (vv. 8.13); 2. the warning against other prophets, namely the prohibitive אל־תשמעו אל (vv. 9.14.16.17); 3. the phrase כי נבאים לכם [v. 16: המה] שקר הם (vv. 10.14.16).

[27] Cf. vv. 8 and 13, vv. 9 and 14f., vv. 12b and 17a as well as vv. 13a and 17b. Cf. also THIEL: Redaktion II, 6, as well as HUWYLER: Völker, 310.

[28] So, among others, MCKANE: Jeremiah II, 685, THIEL: Redaktion II, 6, as well as TOV: Notes, 321.

[29] So MCKANE: Jeremiah II, 696, and THIEL: Redaktion II, 8f. Furthermore, it is to be noted that vv. 16-22 are not a coherent text as vv. 19f. are probably a later expansion of these verses (cf. also TOV: Notes, 329f.).

[30] According to SCHMID: Buchgestalten, 240, this verse draws on the ideology of the Persian empire. In addition, he assumes that the verse contains the original explanatory word of the symbolic act but in his opinion it is impossible to reconstruct the original wording of this verse.

[31] For the relations to Gen 2 cf. HILL: Friend, 134f., and SCHENKER: Metamorphose, 500-504. Concerning the Babylonian and Persian kingship ideology for Babylon cf. LANG: Motiv, 236f., and VANDERHOOFT: Empire, 34-45; for Persia cf. SCHMID: Buchgestalten, 240.

more pragmatic and interlinked with a situation of threat. Therefore, I would like to argue that vv. 5-7 are younger than vv. 2-4.8-15 and presuppose the end of the exile.

Concerning vv. 2-4.8-15, one has to ask how the message to the foreign kings (vv. [2-4.]8-11) and the address to the Judean king Zedekiah (vv. 12-15) are connected. This also includes the question of whether the submission to the Babylonians (vv. [2-4.]8.11.12.13) and the warning against false prophets (vv. 9f.14f.) are separable or to be taken as a unit. Regarding the latter question, it is to be noted that the call to submit to the Babylonians can exist without the warning against false prophets but not vice versa.[32] In addition, the warning against false prophets is influenced by Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic phraseology. For example, the list of diviners in v. 9 may be based on similar material in Deut 18:10f. and the prohibitive אל־תשמעו אל in vv. 9.14 may recall the respective prohibitive in Deut 13:4.9; 18:15 (yet in Deuteronomy the prohibitives are in the singular).[33] For these reasons I tend towards the assumption that the warning against false prophets was added to the call to submit to Babylon.[34]

The former question on the relation between the message to the foreign kings (vv. [2-4.]8-11) and the address to Zedekiah (vv. 12-15) is more difficult.[35] The majority of scholars separates the message to the foreign kings from the address to Zedekiah, which they take as a later addition. According to them, the basis of Jer 27 MT is an account of a symbolic act followed by a message for the foreign kings, namely either vv. 2-4.11 or vv. 2-4.12b.[36] However, in my opinion none of these options is convincing so far. I think in the case of vv. 2-4.11 it is not possible to separate v. 11 from v. 8*, as they are counterparts, which complement each other. Thus, I would favour the second option (vv. 2-4.12). But if vv. 12-15* were a *Fortschreibung*

[32] In a similar way argues MCKANE: Jeremiah II, 701f.

[33] The classification of the triad of דבר, רעב and חרב (vv. 8.13), which in this form occurs mainly in the book of Jeremiah (Jer 14:12; 21:7.9; 24:10; 27:8.13; 32:24.36; 34:17; 38:2; 42:17.22; 44:13; Ez 6:11; 12:19), is controversial among scholars. For example, THIEL: Redaktion I, 18, takes it as a feature of D because of its frequent and nearly exclusive occurrence in the book of Jeremiah. In contrast to him, WEIPPERT: Reden, 191, concludes after a long analysis of the history of this motif (cf. 148-191) that the respective formulation is not Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic but Jeremianic in origin.
Furthermore, the phrase כי שקר הם [המה v. 16:] נבאים לכם, which occurs in Jer 27:10.14.16, is also to be found especially in the book of Jeremiah (20 times; cf. also 1Kgs 22:22f.; Isa 9:14; Zech 13:3) and may not of Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic origin.

[34] Cf. AEJMELAEUS: "Nebuchadnezzar", 7, MCKANE: Jeremiah II, 702, as well as SCHMID: Buchgestalten, 239f. One may also argue that after 587/6 BCE the political problem of choosing the right protecting power (Egypt or Babylon), which was of eminent importance during the last decades of the kingdom of Judah, has been transformed into the theological problem of false prophecy (cf. KRATZ: Propheten, 79f.).

[35] In my opinion, there are two main problems: The first concerns the historical context, in which one can imagine such a positive view on foreign kings; as far as I can see at the moment such notion would not have been possible in pre-exilic times. The second problem pertains to the observation that certain parts of these verses seem to quote each other and to the subsequent question of who is quoting whom here (cf. especially vv. 8 and 13 as well as vv. 9f. and 14f.).

[36] For vv. 2-4.11 cf. SCHMID: Buchgestalten, 239f., and THIEL: Redaktion II, 6f. and 10. Concerning vv. 2-4.12b cf. MCKANE: Jeremiah II, 696-699, as well as WANKE: Jeremia II, 247f.

of vv. 2-11*, I would not expect them to contain older material. Anyway, I will have to do more research on that. Yet, because of these doubts, I would like to suggest as a temporary compromise that the message for the foreign kings and the word to Zedekiah should be taken as a unit, which is also the basis of Jer 27 MT (vv. 2-4.8*.11-13).[37] In addition, if one is looking for an old ("authentic") core of this chapter, the best candidate – in my opinion – is not v. 11 but it would be v. 12b. Its pragmatic call to submit to the Babylonians could fit into the historical context of the nineties of the 6th century, which is also mirrored in the Lachish Ostraca.[38] However, up to now this is only a hypothesis.

In sum, according to the diachronic analysis presented above, there are four different literary layers in Jer 27 MT, which shall be given here in a relative chronology (for dating cf. 3.). The basis of Jer 27 MT is the account of a symbolic act of Jeremiah followed by the call to several foreign kings and Zedekiah to submit to the Babylonians in order to survive (vv. 2-4.8*.11-13). First, this basis was expanded by warnings against false prophets (vv. 9f.14f.). Then the passage on the temple vessels (vv. 16-22*) as well as the reflections on Yahweh and the Babylonians (vv. 5-7) were added. Furthermore, the chapter got a superscription.

2.3.2 Analysis of Jer 34 LXX

Jer 34 LXX and its Hebrew counterpart Jer 27 MT are among those texts, which show most differences between JerMT and JerLXX.[39] Nevertheless, both texts have the same tripartite structure and agree in the essential statements. Like in Jer 27 MT Yahweh endows Nebuchadnezzar with power over the created world (vv. 4f. LXX). Equally important is the alternative of submission to the Babylonians, which leads to survival in the own country (v. 9 LXX), and resistance against them, which causes destruction and death (v. 6.8[.12] LXX). Finally, the main parts of the passage on the temple vessels are also to be found in the Septuagint (v. 13-18 LXX).

Turning to the differences between Jer 27 MT and Jer 34 LXX, it has to be noted above all that Jer 34 LXX is significantly shorter than its Hebrew counterpart. The minus consists in single words, parts of verses or even whole verses.[40] For example, Jer 34 LXX does not have a superscription. Moreover, it lacks v. 7 MT, vv. 12bβ*.13.14a MT – probably due to homoio-

[37] Cf. also AEJMELAEUS: "Nebuchadnezzar", 2-5, who takes vv. 2-4.6*.8*.11-13 as the core of Jer 27 MT.

[38] For the Lachish ostraca cf. RENZ: Handbuch, 405-440.

[39] A comprehensive list of the differences between Jer 27 MT and 34 LXX is presented by TOV: Notes, as well as VAN DER KOOIJ: Jeremiah. Cf. also PLANT: Figs, 103-105.

[40] Cf. the overview given by PLANT: Figs, 103-105. Cf. also TOV: Notes.

teleuton[41] – and parts of vv. 16-22 MT. In the case of Babylon, there are three major differences: First, in the Septuagint Yahweh does not call Nebuchadnezzar his servant (עבד / δοῦλος; cf. v. 5 LXX and v. 6 MT). In v. 5 LXX, however, the phrase δουλεύειν αὐτῷ occurs instead or there is no equivalent at all. Second, as v. 7 MT is lacking a Greek equivalent, there is no temporal limitation of the Babylonian reign and no hint that the Babylonians themselves will experience servitude one day. Finally, the passage on the temple vessels (vv. 13-18 LXX) is less detailed than its Masoretic counterpart (cf. vv. 16-22 MT). In addition, it is only announced that the rest of the temple vessels left in Jerusalem will be brought to Babylon as booty (vv. 16-18 LXX), whereas the promise of their return (cf. v. 22 MT) is missing.

What is the significance of the three Babylon-related differences between JerMT and JerLXX and how may they be explained? To begin with the missing honorary title עבד / δοῦλος, the situation is somewhat complicated, because the most important textual witnesses of JerLXX differ from each other at this point. LXX^{BA} read δουλεύειν αὐτῷ (לעבדו) whereas LXX^{S}, which is followed by the Bohairic and Ethiopian versions, has no equivalent at all. In contrast, Origen's Hexapla reads τῷ δούλῳ μου and the Lucianic recension has τοῦ δουλοῦ μου.[42] As a consequence of this variety, scholars reach quite different conclusions when it comes to explain why Nebuchadnezzar was called servant of Yahweh. Some argue that the servant-title was already part of the *Vorlage* of JerLXX but may be deleted or changed in the course of the translation process.[43] According to others, the title is a later extension of JerMT or resulted from scribal errors (loss of the preposition ל because of haplography, confusion of ו / י).[44] At the moment, I tend towards the assumption that the title עבד is a later development within JerMT being an intentional addition rather than a mistake in the textual transmission. For I think that – in terms of its theological significance – this title is too deliberate for having originated by chance. In a similar way I would like to argue that the other Babylon-related differences between JerMT and JerLXX – namely the temporal limitation of the Babylonian reign in v. 7 MT and the plusses in vv. 16-22 MT – cannot be attributed to deletions by translators, but they are later additions to JerMT. For without this material Jer 34 LXX

[41] Cf. AEJMELAEUS: "Nebuchadnezzar", 10. In contrast, STIPP: Sondergut, 43f. and especially 63, argues that v. 13 MT is a later addition in JerMT, whereas v. 12.14 MT got lost in the course of the transmission of the text.

[42] Besides the apparatus of the *Göttinger Septuaginta* cf. also the overviews on the textual tradition given by MCKANE: Nebuchadnezzar, 99 and 100, as well as AEJMELAEUS: "Nebuchadnezzar", 14, and LEMKE: Nebuchadnezzar, 47f.

[43] Cf. SCHMID: Buchgestalten, 232f., VAN DER KOOIJ: Jeremiah, 64 (referring to Y. GOLDMAN), and ZEVIT: Use, 77.

[44] For the servant-title being a later extension of Jer 27 MT cf. SCHENKER: Metamorphose, 518f., and MCKANE: Jeremiah II, 700f., as well as MCKANE: Nebuchadnezzar, 99-101. For taking it as a mistake in the course of textual transmission cf. AEJMELAEUS,: "Nebuchadnezzar", 12-19, LEMKE: Nebuchadrezzar, 47f.50, and TOV: Notes, 323-325.

presents a situation which is marked solely by the fear of the overpowering Babylonians. The addition of v. 7 MT and of the hope for a return of the temple vessels (v. 22 MT) opens new perspectives: Even the reign of the mighty Babylonian kings such as Nebuchadnezzar is volatile and subject to Yahweh and his plans.[45]

2.3.3 Comparison of the Analyses of JerMT and JerLXX

As noted above, the longer text of Jer 27 MT and the shorter text of Jer 34 LXX have the same outline and agree in their basic statements (cf. 2.3.2). Acting on the assumption that by and large Jer 34 LXX represents an earlier stage of the book of Jeremiah (cf. 1.), this observation implies that the essential literary developments within the text under discussion were already finished by the time when the book of Jeremiah was translated into Greek. Besides the agreement in outline and basic statements Jer 27 MT shows several plusses in comparison with its Greek counterpart. The plusses of major relevance are found primarily in those verses, which have been attributed to the probably youngest parts of the chapter at hand (cf. 2.3.1), namely the superscription in v. 1, the verses dealing with the role of Nebuchadnezzar and his successors (vv. 5-7 MT), and the passage on the temple vessels (vv. 16-22 MT). This may confirm the diachronic analysis of Jer 27 MT presented above, which argued that the superscription (v. 1 MT) as well as the title עבד for Nebuchadnezzar (v. 6 MT) and the limitation of the Babylonian reign (v. 7 MT; cf. also v. 20-22* MT) belong to the latest additions of this text (cf. 2.3.1).

In terms of content, it is to be noted that Jer 34 LXX focuses primarily on the Babylonians as an actual threat, which Yahweh brings upon Judah and other nations. The reflection on Babylon and its king does not go beyond this point. In Jer 27 MT, however, the threat by the Babylonians was explained and put within a wider context. The decades of the Babylonian reign are now presented as part of a history guided by Yahweh. This theological view of history may be interpreted as a step towards the idea of succeeding superpowers that can be found later in apocalypticism.[46]

[45] Similarly argue MCKANE: Nebuchadnezzar, 102-104, AEJMELAEUS: "Nebuchadnezzar", 12f., and TOV: Notes, 325f. For a critical position cf. VAN DER KOOIJ: Jeremiah, 65f.

[46] Cf. also AEJMELAEUS: "Nebuchadnezzar", 12f.

3. Conclusions

The basis of Jer 27 MT is an account of a symbolic act by which several foreign kings and the Judean king Zedekiah were advised to submit themselves to the Babylonians in order to survive (vv. 2-4.8*11-13). This basic text does not belong to the oldest parts of the book of Jeremiah. Like the other accounts of symbolic acts (cf. Jer 13; 16; 18; 32 MT), it already presupposes the combination of laments (cf. especially Jer 4-10*) and accusations against a feminine figure (2.f.sg.).[47] In contrast to these earliest texts within the book of Jeremiah the accounts of symbolic acts understand the upcoming disaster as a work of Yahweh.[48] Therefore – and due to the fact that at least several nations are mentioned positively – the basis of Jer 27 MT should be dated into exilic times.[49] Although Jer 27 may look like an autobiographical account (cf. especially 1.c.sg.), it is to be doubted that the chapter mirrors a scene of the life of the historical Jeremiah. At most the pragmatic call to submit to the Babylonians in order to survive (cf. v. 12b MT) may be a sort of authentic core of this passage.

Starting from vv. 2-4.8*.11-13 with the pragmatic call to surrender the chapter was further developed by adding verses on the problem of false prophecy (cf. vv. 9f.14f. MT) as well as reflections on the role of the Babylonians (cf. vv. 7-5 MT) and the fate of the temple vessels (cf. vv. 16-22). It was not before the end of the exile that the two latter additions were brought into the text. The literary development of the chapter as a whole may be described as a process of turning a pragmatic warning against an overpowering enemy into a theological interpretation of history. The Greek and the Hebrew version of this chapter mark stepping stones of this process.

Struggling with the end of the kingdom of Judah and its consequences, one of the major theological concerns of Jer 27 MT is to define the relationship between Yahweh and the Babylonians. This leads to the portrayal of Nebuchadnezzar as a vassal of Yahweh and to the characterization of the Babylonian reign as a sort of interlude of three generations within history controlled by Yahweh.

[47] Cf. KRATZ: Propheten, 78f., as well as SCHMID: Literaturgeschichte, 128-130.
[48] Cf. KRATZ: Propheten, 79. Similarly argues SCHMID: Literaturgeschichte, 130.
[49] Among others, cf. WANKE: Jeremia II, 247f.

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Sanballat and Tobiah Challenging Boundaries in the Book of Nehemiah

(first draft)

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Introduction

The reframing of traditions related to experiences of exile and restoration, as well as continuity and discontinuity, have influenced the formation of Judean identities in the Persian period, in which we can find traces in Jewish identity formation also in our time. The terminology used for defining different groups in the Persian period, both when it comes to the definitions of the Judeans and of others, is ambiguous. This reflects a situation of transitions of boundaries and identity during the post-exilic era. The concept of Israel, for instance, is vague in this time. It embraces religious, ethnic and geographic aspects; and is a conglomerate of various groups: descendants of the indigenous population of the Kingdom of Judah, returnees from the Babylonian Exile, Mesopotamians exiled by Assyrian Kings, and the like. The experience of the exile becomes one of many ingredients in the community's struggle for identity. Strategies of exclusion are related to, for instance, denial of participation in the cult and rejection of mixed marriage. In this, the distinction between the historical circumstances and the terminology of self-definition is intriguing.

The Book of Nehemiah

The office of Nehemiah and his enterprises in the time of Artaxerxes are crucial to the events narrated in the book of Nehemiah.[1] His mission is to restore the broken city walls, a task which is met with opposition.[2] Nehemiah is the king's cupbearer in the Persian court (1:11) and תִּרְשָׁתָא "governor" (8:9, 10:2)[3]; he resides in the fortress of Susa (1:1, 5:14-16, 13:6-7) and is acting in Jerusalem by permission of the king (2:6, 13:6-7). His concern is related to the Judeans, the remnant of those who survived the captivity and with Jerusalem (1:1-2)[4] and his ancestors are buried in Jerusalem (2:3). He is speaking on behalf of himself, his ancestral house (בֵּית־אָבִי) and בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל "the children of Israel" (1:6). Nehemiah himself might work as an illustration of how collective identities might be multiple and overlapping, with ties both to the Judean community and the Persian king.

In the book of Nehemiah, a distinction is made between the people of the Judean community and those who do not belong to this. From Nehemiah's point of view it seems to be about him and his allies against the neighbouring peoples like Samarians (3:34), Ashodites (4:1, 13:23), Arabs (4:1), Moabites (13:1;23) and Ammonites (4:1, 13:23) and their leaders, where his main adversaries are Sanballat ("the Horonite"), Tobiah ("the Ammonite") and Geshem ("the Arab").[5] Nehemiah mentions these leaders with their geographical affiliation and not with their official titles and roles in the area. As we shall see below, Sanballat and Tobiah are challenging a clear-cut definition of who's ally and who's adversary in the Judean community.

The "Nehemiah Memoir"

Neh. 1-7; 12:27-43 and 13, is a story about Nehemiah and his activities, which is entitled the "Nehemiah Memoir" by the majority of EN scholars. This is I-speech

[1] While most scholars regard the books of Ezra and Nehemiah as one composition, I prefer to read them separately, cf. J.C. VanderKam, "Ezra-Nehemiah or Ezra and Nehemiah" in E. Ulrich, J.W. Wright, R.P. Carroll and P.R. Davies (eds.), *Priests, Prophets, and Scribes: Essays in the Formation and Heritage of Second Temple Judaism in Honour of Joseph Blenkinsopp* (JSOTSup, 149; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992) 55-76, D. Kraemer, "On the Relationship of the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah", *JSOT* 59 (1993) 73-93, B. Becking, "Ezra's Re-Enactment of the Exile" in L.L. Grabbe (ed.), *Leading Captivity Captive: 'The Exile' as History and Ideology* (JSOTSup, 278= European Seminar in Historical Methodology, 2; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998) 47-48, and M. Cohen, "Leave Nehemiah Alone: Nehemiah's 'Tales' and Fifth-Century BCE Historiography" in M.J. Boda and P.L. Redditt (eds.), *Unity and Disunity in Ezra and Nehemiah: Redaction Rhetoric, and Reader* (Hebrew Bible Monographs, 17; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2008) 55-74, who argue that the two books convey different interests and perspectives. Kraemer argues, for instance, that the book of Ezra has a priestly authorship, with its focus on restoration of the temple and cult, while the book of Nehemiah is written by lay people who regard the law as a focus for holiness.

[2] P. Bedford, "Diaspora: Homeland Relations in Ezra-Nehemiah", *VT* 52 (2002) 150 and G.N. Knoppers, "Nehemiah and Sanballat: The Enemy Without or Within?" in O. Lipschits, G.N. Knoppers and R. Albertz (eds.), *Judah and the Judeans in the Fourth Century B.C.E.* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007) 316, n. 32.

[3] The title תִּרְשָׁתָא also appears in Neh. 7:65 (par. in Ezra 2:63);69. It has been explained as a Persian word, working as a variation of פֶּחָה "governor", a title elsewhere ascribed to Shesbazzar, Zerubbabel and Nehemiah. For a discussion on the uncertainty of תִּרְשָׁתָא, see H.G.M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah* (WBC, 16: Waco, TX: World Books, 1985) 27 (63.a.).

[4] Cf. n. 10.

[5] Sanballat is mentioned in 2:10;19, 3:33, 4:1, 6:1;2;5;14, 13:28 (called Horonite in 2:10;19, 13:28), Tobiah in 2:10;19, 3:35, 4:1, 6:1;12;14;17;19, 13:4;7 (called Ammonite in 2:10;19, 3:35) and Geshem in 2:19, 6:1-2 (called Arab in 2:19 and 6:1); in 6:16 called Gashmu. See more on Sanballat in n. 13, Tobiah in n. 14 and Geshem in n. 20.

conveyed in the mouth of Nehemiah, recounting events in which he is personally involved.[6]

Williamson distinguishes two stages in the composition of the Nehemiah Memoir: an earlier building account (1:1-5:13, 6:1-7, parts of 12:27-43) and a later addition written by Nehemiah himself (5:14-19, 13:4-14;15-22;23-31), after serving as a governor for 12 years.[7]

J.L. Wright has recently offered another contribution to the composition of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. This study, which is characterised by a literary-critical approach, is further based on W. Zimmerli, O.H. Steck and R.G. Kratz.[8] According to Wright, Neh. 1-13 developed in seven main strata. The first stratum is a short building report in 1:1a;11b, 2:1-6;11;15;16a;17;18b, 3:38, 6:15. The texts which will be treated in this paper belong to Wright's third stratum, 2:10;19-20, 3:33-34;35;36-37, 4:1-3; 4-9;10-17, 5:16-18, 6:5-9;16, which introduces Nehemiah's conflict with Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem and his fifth stratum, in which Nehemiah institutes "extramural" reforms (1:1b-4, 5:1-13;19, 6:10-14;17-19 and 13:4-14;15-22;22-30a;31b).[9]

Nehemiah, the Judean Community and Opposition in the Book of Nehemiah

While הַגּוֹלָה-terminology is prominent in the book of Ezra, it is mentioned only once in the book of Nehemiah, that is, in the list of the returnees in 7:6: הָעֹלִים מִשִּׁבְיֵ הַגּוֹלָה "those who came up from the captivity of the exile" (par. Ezra 2:1). In the book of Nehemiah, the people of the Judean community are further designated as הַשָּׁבִים מִן־הַשִּׁבְיָ כָּל־הַקָּהָל "the whole congregation, those who had returned from the captivity" (8:17), הַיְּהוּדִים הַפְּלֵיטָה אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁאֲרוּ מִן־הַשֶּׁבִי "the Judeans, the remnant who had survived the captivity" (1:2), הַנִּשְׁאָרִים אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁאֲרוּ מִן־הַשִּׁבְיָ "the survivors who had survived the captivity" (1:3) as well as יִשְׂרָאֵל/בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (1:6, 2:10, 7:7;72, 8:1;14;17, 9:1;2, 10:34;40, 11:3;20, 12:47, 13:3;18) and הַיְּהוּדִים "the Judeans", the last one which can

[6] While Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, pp. xxxiii-xxxv;8;28-30;201-202, suggests a combination and rearrangement of the Ezra Memoir (Ezra 7-10;Neh. 8) and the Nehemiah Memoir, to which Ezra 1-6 was added later, J. Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah: A Commentary* (OTL; London: SCM Press, 1988) 40-47, takes the Nehemiah Memoir to be added later into Ezra 1-10; Neh. 8.
[7] Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, p. xxiii.
[8] J.L. Wright, *Rebuilding Identity: The Nehemiah-Memoir and its Earliest Readers* (BZAW, 348; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004) 4, n. 14.
[9] A summary of all the levels is given in Wright, *Rebuilding Identity*, pp. 330-340. For a brief overview of various recent explanations of the Nehemiah Memoir, see Knoppers, "Nehemiah and Sanballat", p. 309.

refer to the inhabitants of Judah(1:2[10], 2:16, 3:33-34, 5:1;17, 6:6, 13:23, though there were Judeans living elsewhere (4:6, 5:8).[11] Eskenazi regards הַיְּהוּדִים "the Judeans" as Nehemiah's primary group, just as הַגּוֹלָה "the returned exiles" is the primary community of Ezra: "Nehemiah's initial inquiry pertains to the fate of the Judeans who had remained in the land (note the repetition of אשר־נשארו מן־השבי in Neh. 1:2 and 1:3)."[12] According to her, these two groups do not converge, since the names in the list of the builders in Neh. 3:1-32 are not the same as those mentioned in the book of Ezra.

Nehemiah presents the peoples as his foes. He speaks about הַגּוֹיִם אוֹיְבֵינוּ "our enemies, the peoples" (5:9, cf. 6:16: "When כָּל־אוֹיְבֵינוּ 'all our enemies' heard it, כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר סְבִיבוֹתֵינוּ 'all the nations round about us were intimidated'"). מִכֹּל בְּנֵי נֵכָר זֶרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל "those of the stock of Israel separated themselves from all foreigners" (9:2) and the people separated כָּל־עֵרֶב "all of mixed descent" from Israel (13:3). A union of "the rest of the people", the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the temple servants and כָּל־הַנִּבְדָּל מֵעַמֵּי הָאֲרָצוֹת "all who separated themselves from the peoples of the lands", together with the nobles of their brothers, took an oath with sanctions to follow the Law of God (10:28-31), while Nehemiah separated his people מִכָּל־נֵכָר "from anything foreign" (13:30). Strategies of exclusion are related to, for instance, denial of participation in the cult and rejection of intermarriages: Mixed marriages with Ashodite, Ammonite and Moabite women are regarded as an abomination (13:23), cf. also the treatment of נָשִׁים נָכְרִיּוֹת "foreign women" (13:26-27). The marriage of the grand-child of the high priest Eliashib with the daughter of Sanballat leads to a pollution of the priestly lineage (13:28). No Ammonite or Moabite are allowed to enter קְהַל הָאֱלֹהִים "the congregation of God" (13:1). Nehemiah expels Tobiah from one of the storerooms in the temple, since his presence is ritually defiling (13:4-9).

[10] In Neh. 1:2, Nehemiah is asking some men of Judah who are visiting him in Susa, about מִן־הַשִּׁבְיָ הַיְּהוּדִים הַפְּלֵיטָה אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁאֲרוּ "the Judeans, the remnant who had survived the captivity". This phrase has been interpreted in different ways: Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, p. 207 takes it to refer to those who had never left the land, and adds: "In general, Nehemiah, unlike Ezra, is not at all concerned with return from exile, and the heavily charged language used here occurs nowhere else in the Nehemiah material." L.L. Grabbe, *Ezra-Nehemiah* (Florence, KY: Routledge, 1998) 39-40, on the other hand, takes the phrase to mean the הַגּוֹלָה community, while Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, p. 171, suggests that a distinction between Judeans who had returned from the Babylonian exile and those who had remained in the land might not have been intended in the first place.
[11] Neh. 4:6 and Neh. 5:8 is treated in n. 34 below.
[12] T.C. Eskenazi, *In an Age of Prose: A Literary Approach to Ezra-Nehemiah* (SBLMS, 36; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988) 81-82, quotation is taken from p. 81.

Neh. 2: Sanballat and Tobiah become very displeased and deride Nehemiah and his people

The butler of the Persian king, Nehemiah, is permitted by the king to go to Jerusalem to restore the city walls (2:6). Upon his own request, Nehemiah is equipped with a letter from the king, addressed to the governors Beyond the River (v. 7), to assure that he will get a safe journey. He asks for yet another letter to Asap, the keeper of the king's park, so that he may supply him with timber for the restoration to be done (v. 8). Nehemiah is also accompanied by an armed guard (v. 9). When he arrives Jerusalem, some adversary inhabitants become dissatisfied:

Neh. 2:10:

10 וַיִּשְׁמַע סַנְבַלַּט הַחֹרֹנִי וְטֹבִיָּה הָעֶבֶד הָעַמּוֹנִי וַיֵּרַע לָהֶם
רָעָה גְדֹלָה אֲשֶׁר־בָּא אָדָם לְבַקֵּשׁ טוֹבָה לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל׃

2:10. When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant heard about this, they were very displeased that someone had come to improve the welfare of the children of Israel.

Sanballat the Horonite[13] and Tobiah the Ammonite servant[14] become very annoyed when hearing that Nehemiah is coming to promote the welfare of Israel. In this presentation, the Horonite and Ammonite are contrasted with the בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל "children of Israel", that is, they are described by religious and political motivated terms.[15] Nehemiah consistently mentions these adversaries with these geographical affiliations and not with their official titles and roles in the area.[16] It has been suggested that the term הָעֶבֶד "the servant" conveys an ambiguity, as it can both point to Tobiah's official

[13] The Horonite Sanballat might imply that he regarded himself as an Ephraimite, that is, associated with one of the northern tribes. He might also descent from Assyrians who governed Samaria from the late eight century or Israelites deported to Assyria (Lemaire). He has even been taken as belonging to בני הגולה (Mittmann). Or that he was given a Babylonian name. Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, p. 216-217: "That Sanballat was a YHWH worshiper may be deduced from the names of his sons known from an Elephantine letter (Delaiah and Shemaiah)", cf. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, p. 182. On Sanballat as worshipper, see also p. 8 below. For an overview of identifications of Sanballat, see Knoppers, "Nehemiah and Sanballat", p. 325. See also on Sanballat in n. 4.

[14] Tobiah is mentioned in Neh. 2:10;19, 3:35, 4:1, 6:1;12;14, 13:4-9. He is often takeen to be an assistant of Sanballat in Samaria (Clines, p. 145 and Williamson, pp. 183-184). Others have associated him with a Yahwistic group in Ammon (Meyers', p. 340-343), as a Judean (Jerusalemite) residing in Ammon (Grabbe, pp. 192-198) or as belonging to בני הגולה (Blenkinsopp, pp. 92;218-219). Knoppers, "Nehemiah and Sanballat", pp. 317-318, takes Tobiah to be a governor of Ammon, who viewed himself as a member of Israel, perhaps one of the Transjordanian tribes. Knoppers' arguments are related to Tobiah's Ammonite residency and Nehemiah's derogatory reference to him as "Ammonite" (Neh. 2:10;19, 3:35). For an overview of identifications of Tobiah, see Knoppers, pp. 317-318. See also on Tobiah in n. 4.

[15] Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, p. 182. Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, p. 219, suggests a pun on Tobiah's name: Nehemiah had come to Judah to advance טוֹבָה of Israel, and Israel to whom טֹבִיָּה, an Ammonite, could never belong (cf. Neh. 13:1, Deutr. 23:4-7).

[16] Cf. Sanballat in nn. 4 and 13 and Tobiah in nn. 4 and 14.

status as governor as well as be used in a derogatory manner. Williamson suggests another ambiguity, namely that Tobiah the Ammonite is the assistant of Sanballat.[17]

Grabbe explains that Sanballat and Tobiah might become angry because they regard Nehemiah as a potential rival. The letter from the king to the governors of the satrapy of Beyond the River assures a safe journey (v. 7), but Grabbe argues that it may also indicate that Nehemiah has been granted the office of a governor of Yehud.[18] If Nehemiah is appointed as governor in Yehud (cf. 5:14), he could have been regarded as a potential competitor of them.[19]

After a secret journey to survey the wall at night, accompanied by a few men (vv. 12-15), Nehemiah presents his plan to הַיְּהוּדִים, the priests, the nobles, the community officials (סְגָנִים) and the יֶתֶר "rest" (vv. 16-17). He invites Judeans to rebuild (v. 17). The rebuilding plan is due to God's will, approved by the king and supported by all the men (v. 18). Then follows more opposition, as Nehemiah becomes mocked by Sanballat, Tobiah and one more allied:

Neh. 2:19-20:

19 וַיִּשְׁמַע סַנְבַלַּט הַחֹרֹנִי וְטֹבִיָּה הָעֶבֶד הָעַמּוֹנִי וְגֶשֶׁם הָעַרְבִי
וַיַּלְעִגוּ לָנוּ וַיִּבְזוּ עָלֵינוּ וַיֹּאמְרוּ מָה־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם
עֹשִׂים הֲעַל הַמֶּלֶךְ אַתֶּם מֹרְדִים׃20 וָאָשִׁיב אוֹתָם דָּבָר וָאֹמַר
לָהֶם אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם הוּא יַצְלִיחַ לָנוּ וַאֲנַחְנוּ עֲבָדָיו נָקוּם
וּבָנִינוּ וְלָכֶם אֵין־חֵלֶק וּצְדָקָה וְזִכָּרוֹן בִּירוּשָׁלִָם׃

2:19. When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant and Geshem the Arabian heard about it, they derided us and held us in contempt. "What is this that you are doing?", they asked. "Are you rebelling against the king?" 20. I replied to them by saying, "The God of heaven will give us success. We, his servants, will start to rebuild; but you have no share, right or memorial in Jerusalem."

To the two adversaries Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite slave, a third one is added: Geshem the Arabian.[20] When these three men hear about the rebuilding plan, they despise Nehemiah and his allies and ask whether they are rebelling against the king. Nehemiah replies by appealing to the support of the plan by "the God of heaven" (cf. 1:5, 2:4). He also claims that the accusers have neither חֵלֶק "share", צְדָקָה "right" nor זִכָּרוֹן "memorial" in Jerusalem. Williamson understands this as an

[17] Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, p. 183.

[18] Grabbe, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, pp. 41-42.

[19] Also Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, p. 182 sees Sanballat's role as "caretaker" as a potential reason for jealousy.

[20] On Geshem (Kedarites), see also n. 4.

expression for how "Nehemiah is denying to his opponents civic, legal, and cultic rights in the Jerusalem community".[21]

Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite slave, and Geshem the Arabian are not Israel, they are outsiders. They have no rights, in any manner, in Jerusalem, while Nehemiah and his people are supported by "the God of heaven" and are also called עֲבָדָיו "his servants" (2:20). While in 2:10 the displeasure of Sanballat and Tobiah was expressed, in 2:19-20 contempt and accusations are uttered towards Nehemiah's plan by these three men. Williamson suggests that while Sanballat and Tobiah have "personal vested interests in the affair" (cf. v. 10), it is not clear while Geshem is hostile towards Nehemiah.[22]

Neh. 3: Sanballat becomes very indignant and mock the Judeans

The building of the wall and the city starts, and a detailed list of individuals and groups who participate is given (3:1-32). The initiative is taken by Eliashib the high priest (v. 1).[23] While most of those participating in the rebuilding are identified by family or geographical affiliations, some are related by their profession. (Only the elders of Tekoa are refusing to help, cf. v. 5). The list might be parted in two: vv. 1-15 and vv. 16-32. While the first part describes the rebuilding of the former wall, identified by its gates and such features, the second depicts a new direction of the wall, with local landmarks as orientation points.[24]

Neh. 3:33-35:

33 וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמַע סַנְבַלַּט כִּי־אֲנַחְנוּ בוֹנִים אֶת־הַחוֹמָה
וַיִּחַר לוֹ וַיְכַעֵס הַרְבֵּה וַיַּלְעֵג עַל־הַיְהוּדִים׃ 34 וַיֹּאמֶר לִפְנֵי
אֶחָיו וְחֵיל שֹׁמְרוֹן וַיֹּאמֶר מָה הַיְהוּדִים הָאֻמְלָלִים עֹשִׂים
הֲיַעַזְבוּ לָהֶם הֲיִזְבָּחוּ הֲיְכַלּוּ בַיּוֹם הֲיְחַיּוּ אֶת־הָאֲבָנִים

[21] Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, pp. 192-193 (quotation taken from p. 193): חֵלֶק "share" (physical [metaphorical] stake), צְדָקָה "right" (legal claims) and זִכָּרוֹן "traditional claim" (with cultic associations, related to a denial participation in the cult, cf. Ezra 4:3). Grabbe, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, p. 43, wonders whether the expression that Sanballat and his associates have no "portion, legal claim or memorial" in Jerusalem may be "an allusion to a former authority over the city or perhaps to the fact that Sanballat was actually also a worshipper of Yhwh". Eskenazi, *In an Age of Prose*, p. 79, finds a striking similarity between Ezra 4:1-5 and Neh. 2:19-20 with their exclusion of opponents from participation in the building of temple and wall respectively, cf. Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, p. 226.
[22] Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, p. 192.
[23] The high priest Eliashib: 3:20-21, 12:10;22, 13:28. He is grandson of Jeshua (12:10-11). A grandson of the high priest Eliashib had married a daughter of Sanballat, in 13:28. The high priest Eliashib participated in the building of the wall (3:1;20;21). In 13:4 the priest Eliashib and Tobiah are presented as relatives. Eliashib offered Tobiah a place in the storeroom of the temple (v. 5), making Nehemiah angry (v. 8), treated below.
[24] Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, p. 200.

מֵעֲרֵמוֹת הֶעָפָר וְהֵמָּה שְׂרוּפוֹת׃
35 וְטוֹבִיָּה הָעַמּוֹנִי אֶצְלוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר גַּם אֲשֶׁר־הֵם בּוֹנִים
אִם־יַעֲלֶה שׁוּעָל וּפָרַץ חוֹמַת אַבְנֵיהֶם׃

3:33. When Sanballat heard that we were building the wall he became angry and was very indignant. He mocked the Judeans, 34. saying in front of his brothers and the Samarian army: What are those feeble Judeans doing? Will they leave it to God[25], sacrifice and complete in one day? Can they raise these stones to life from the dust heaps, burnt as they are? 35. Tobiah the Ammonite, who was together with him, said: That stone wall they try to build, if a fox climbs it, he will break it.

When Sanballat hears that the building of the wall has begun, he becomes angry and scorns הַיְהוּדִים in front of his allies and the army of Samaria (vv. 33-34). In five mocking questions he is contrasting the weakness of הַיְהוּדִים with the huge task they have set forth to accomplish: rebuilding the walls and gates of Jerusalem. Sanballat refers to Nehemiah and his associates as הַיְהוּדִים while at the same time dissociates himself from them (vv. 33-34).[26] His opposition is supported by Tobiah the Ammonite (v. 35), who adds a joke to his scorn.

Sanballat's negative reactions to the ongoing building of the walls and gates of Jerusalem are stronger here than in 2:10;19, perhaps because the work has really started, and is not anymore on a level of being planned only. After having become very annoyed (2:10) and deriding Nehemiah and his allies (2:19), Sanballat and his allies now try to intimidate the Judeans (3:33-35).

Nehemiah responds by a prayer to "our God" (3:36).[27] He begs the reproach of Sanballat and his allies being turned back to them. Nehemiah wishes the opponents to be delivered up לְבִזָּה בְּאֶרֶץ שִׁבְיָה "as plunder in a land of captivity". He is cursing the opponents because of their sin and guilt towards "our God", asking them not to be forgiven for provoking YHWH's anger in front of the builders (vv. 36-37). The call for revenge on the enemies might be relate to the stereotypical language of the psalms of lament.[28] Knoppers argues that when Nehemiah is praying to YHWH not to blot out the sins of Sanballat and Tobiah, he might take for granted that they are praying to the same deity as him. Moreover, he uses this as an argument that Nehemiah is accepting Sanballat and Tobiah as YHWH-worshippers.[29] The wall becomes built to half its height (v. 38).

[25] עזב "leave" ("commit to") (עזב II repair). לָהֶם is taken to be a Tiq Soph (cf. 1 Sam. 3:13), emended to אֱלֹהִים.
[26] Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, p. 223.
[27] Prayers: 3:36, 5:19, 6:9;14, 13:14;22;31, 9. Appeal to God to remember him and hear his prayer: 5:19, 13:14;22;29;31, cf. 6:9;14.
[28] Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, pp. 244-245.
[29] Knoppers, "Nehemiah and Sanballat", pp. 329-330.

Neh. 4:1-5: Sanballat and his allies conspire against Jerusalem

4:1 וַיְהִי כַאֲשֶׁר שָׁמַע סַנְבַלַּט וְטוֹבִיָּה וְהָעַרְבִים
וְהָעַמֹּנִים וְהָאַשְׁדּוֹדִים כִּי־עָלְתָה אֲרוּכָה לְחֹמוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם
כִּי־הֵחֵלּוּ הַפְּרָצִים לְהִסָּתֵם וַיִּחַר לָהֶם מְאֹד׃[2] וַיִּקְשְׁרוּ כֻלָּם
יַחְדָּו לָבוֹא לְהִלָּחֶם בִּירוּשָׁלַם וְלַעֲשׂוֹת לוֹ תוֹעָה׃
[3] וַנִּתְפַּלֵּל אֶל־אֱלֹהֵינוּ וַנָּעֶמֶד מִשְׁמָר עֲלֵיהֶם יוֹמָם וָלָיְלָה מִפְּנֵיהֶם׃
[4] וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוּדָה כָּשַׁל כֹּחַ הַסַּבָּל וְהֶעָפָר הַרְבֵּה וַאֲנַחְנוּ לֹא
נוּכַל לִבְנוֹת בַּחוֹמָה׃
[5] וַיֹּאמְרוּ צָרֵינוּ לֹא יֵדְעוּ וְלֹא יִרְאוּ עַד אֲשֶׁר־נָבוֹא
אֶל־תּוֹכָם וַהֲרַגְנוּם וְהִשְׁבַּתְנוּ אֶת־הַמְּלָאכָה׃

4:1. When Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the Ashodites, heard that the restoration[30] of the walls of Jerusalem was going ahead (and) that the parts which had been broken down were beginning to be filled, they became very angry. 2. So they all conspired together to come and fight against Jerusalem and to cause confusion (to it), 3. but we prayed to our God and set up a wathc over them day and night. 4. Judah said: The strength of basket-carriers is failing and there is so much rubble. We are not able ourselves to rebuild the wall. 5. Our adversaries said: Before they know or see it, we shall come among them and kill them and so make work stop.

The opposition between the workers and the enemies in the area becomes intensified. When Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, Ammonites and Ashdodites hear that the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem progresses, they become very angry (4:1). As they did not succeed with their intimidation (3:33-35), they now try to obstruct the rebuilding. They conspire to launch a surprise attack against the workers on the wall (4:2;5). Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, Ammonites and Ashdodites are outsiders and צָרֵינוּ "our adversaries": Sanballat is associated with the north,[31] the Arabs (represented by Geshem in 2:19 and 6:1[32]) belong to the south, while the Ammonites (represented by Tobiah in 2:10;19 and 3:35[33]) are from the east and the Ashodites from the west. Nehemiah prays to "our God" and puts guards on the walls (v. 3). In the *qinah* form Judah expresses the despair of the community and its ability to rebuild the wall (v. 4).

In v. 6 הַיְּהוּדִים living together with the adversaries are quoted when they tell how they are surrounded by opponents.[34] Nehemiah puts armed guards at the lowest

[30] אֲרוּכָה "healing"
[31] On Sanballat, see nn. 4 and 13.
[32] On Geshem, see nn. 4 and 20.
[33] On Tobiah, see nn. 4 and 14.
[34] 4:6 seems to be corrupt, lit.: "when the Judeans who were living near them came to us, they said to us ten times, 'from all the places which you will return to us'. Although recognising the difficulties and corruption of the verse, S. Japhet, "People and Land in the Restoration Period" in S. Japhet, *From the Rivers of Babylon to the Highlands of Judah: Collected Studies on the Restoration Period* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2006) 110, reads הַיְּהוּדִים הַיּשְׁבִים אצלם "the Jews who lived by them" as a possible reference to those who remained in the land, that is, "'Judeans' settled in the areas of those mentioned beforehand, namely Sanballat (in Samaria), Tobiah (in Ammon), the Arabs, Ammonites and Ashdodites". Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, p. 223, explains how in Neh. 4:6 and 5:8 a shift appears

points behind the wall (v. 7). The enemies have heard that their plans had been made known for Nehemiah and his people and that God had hindered them (v. 9). 4:9 becomes a variation of a pattern: "When our enemies heard that all was known to us…"[35] In this case, all opposition has failed and Nehemiah and his people can continue without hindrances. The people turn back to continue the building of the wall, where half of them were working and the other half were armed to protect towards the enemies, and where officers were behind כָּל־בֵּית יְהוּדָה "all the house of Judah" (vv. 9-10). Also, the workers are equipped with weapons (vv. 10-17). Blenkinsopp describes the unfolding of the conflicts as patterned according to a holy war-tradition:

> [E]nemies conspire together, the people call to God for help, then human resources are limited, they form battle lines according to the ancient tribal levy, they are urged not to fear since God will fight for them, and finally the enemy's plans are frustrated.[36]

Neh. 6:1-9: Sanballat and his allies try to destroy Nehemiah

6:1 וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁמַע לְסַנְבַלַּט וְטוֹבִיָּה וּלְגֶשֶׁם
הָעַרְבִי וּלְיֶתֶר אֹיְבֵינוּ כִּי בָנִיתִי אֶת־הַחוֹמָה וְלֹא־נוֹתַר בָּהּ
פָּרֶץ גַּם עַד־הָעֵת הַהִיא דְּלָתוֹת לֹא־הֶעֱמַדְתִּי בַּשְּׁעָרִים׃
[2] וַיִּשְׁלַח סַנְבַלַּט וְגֶשֶׁם אֵלַי לֵאמֹר לְכָה וְנִוָּעֲדָה יַחְדָּו
בַּכְּפִירִים בְּבִקְעַת אוֹנוֹ וְהֵמָּה חֹשְׁבִים לַעֲשׂוֹת לִי רָעָה׃
[3] וָאֶשְׁלְחָה עֲלֵיהֶם מַלְאָכִים לֵאמֹר מְלָאכָה גְדוֹלָה אֲנִי
עֹשֶׂה וְלֹא אוּכַל לָרֶדֶת לָמָּה תִשְׁבֹּת הַמְּלָאכָה כַּאֲשֶׁר
אַרְפֶּהָ וְיָרַדְתִּי אֲלֵיכֶם׃
[4] וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ אֵלַי כַּדָּבָר הַזֶּה אַרְבַּע פְּעָמִים וָאָשִׁיב אוֹתָם
כַּדָּבָר הַזֶּה׃
[5] וַיִּשְׁלַח אֵלַי סַנְבַלַּט כַּדָּבָר הַזֶּה פַּעַם חֲמִישִׁית אֶת־נַעֲרוֹ
וְאִגֶּרֶת פְּתוּחָה בְּיָדוֹ׃
[6] כָּתוּב בָּהּ בַּגּוֹיִם נִשְׁמָע וְגַשְׁמוּ אֹמֵר אַתָּה וְהַיְּהוּדִים
חֹשְׁבִים לְמָרוֹד עַל־כֵּן אַתָּה בוֹנֶה הַחוֹמָה וְאַתָּה הִוֶּה לָהֶם
לְמֶלֶךְ כַּדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה׃
[7] וְגַם־נְבִיאִים הֶעֱמַדְתָּ לְקָרֹא עָלֶיךָ בִּירוּשָׁלַם לֵאמֹר מֶלֶךְ
בִּיהוּדָה וְעַתָּה יִשָּׁמַע לַמֶּלֶךְ כַּדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וְעַתָּה לְכָה
וְנִוָּעֲצָה יַחְדָּו׃
[8] וָאֶשְׁלְחָה אֵלָיו לֵאמֹר לֹא נִהְיָה כַּדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר
אַתָּה אוֹמֵר כִּי מִלִּבְּךָ אַתָּה בוֹדֶאם׃
[9] כִּי כֻלָּם מְיָרְאִים אוֹתָנוּ לֵאמֹר יִרְפּוּ יְדֵיהֶם מִן־הַמְּלָאכָה
וְלֹא תֵעָשֶׂה וְעַתָּה חַזֵּק אֶת־יָדָי׃

from territorial to ethnic sense with religious overtones, especially with reference to the people of Judean origin living outside the province.
[35] Cf. p. 13 below.
[36] Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, p. 223.

6:1. Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab and the rest of our enemies heard that I had rebuilt the wall and that no break remained in it, though up to now I had not hung the doors in their gates. 2. Sanballat and Geshem sent a message to me, saying, “Come, let us meet in Chephirim in the Ono Valley.” They were planning to do me harm, 3. so I sent messengers to them, saying, “I am engaged in great tasks; I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it to come down to you?” 4. They sent me the same message four times, and I gave them the same answer. 5. Sanballat sent me the same message a fifth time by his servant, now in an open letter. 6. In it was written: “It is reported among the nations, and Gashmu also is saying it, that you and the Judeans are planning to rebel – for this reason you are rebuilding the wall – and that you are to be their king, 7. and you have even set up prophets to proclaim about you in Jerusalem, saying, ‘There is a king in Judah!’. Now, the king will hear these reports. Come, therefore, let us confer together.” 8. I sent him a reply saying, “None of the things of which you speak has happened; you are inventing them in your own mind.” 9. They were all trying to intimidate us, thinking, “Their hands will drop from the work so that it will not be finished.” But I strengthened my hands the more.

After some internal conditions to be sorted out in Neh. 5, the story of the building of the wall continues in Neh. 6. Nehemiah’s adversaries, here identified as “Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab and the rest of our enemies”, hear that the wall is now almost finished: the breaches are all repaired to full heights and the only that remains is to set up the doors of the gates (v. 1). As they did neither succeed with their intimidation (3:33-35) nor to obstruct the rebuilding (4:1-5), the enemies of Nehemiah now try to destroy him. Sanballat and Tobiah send a message to Nehemiah to meet them in Chephirim (v. 2). He knows they are going to hurt him, and replies by messengers that he is too busy with an important task (v. 3). He receives the same message four times and answers the same every time (v. 4). For the fifth time Sanballat sends the message, this time by a messenger with an open letter (v. 5). In this letter, he tells that he has heard rumours that Nehemiah and the Judeans are planning to rebel by rebuilding the wall and making Nehemiah king. Sanballat reports that he has got these news from הַגּוֹיִם “the nations” (v. 6).[37] He further claims that Nehemiah’s plan is supported by prophets (v. 7). The king will get to know about this, and Sanballat and his men want to discuss the matters with Nehemiah. Nehemiah replies that this is only made up by Sanballat (v. 8). He thinks that they just want to frighten them so that they shall not fulfil the restoration – and he prays to the deity to strengthen his hands (v. 9).

Since Nehemiah’s adversaries did not succeed with this meeting in the Ono Vally, they try to humiliate him by getting him inside the temple: Nehemiah goes to visit Shemaiah, son of Delaiah, son Mehetabel, who, by uttering a prophecy, suggests

[37] Knoppers, “Nehemiah and Sanballat”, p. 328, comments how הַגּוֹיִם “the nations” here appear as a collective third group, in which Sanballat does not belong, and so Sanballat refers to הַגּוֹיִם “the nations” similar to how Nehemiah does, that is, it might express Nehemiah and Sanballat as “us” towards the “other people”.

that Nehemiah seeks refuge in the temple because his adversaries want to kill him (v. 10). But he refuses; he cannot go into the temple, presumably because he’s not a priest (v. 11). Also, he realises that this Shemaiah is not a man of God, but has been paid by his enemies Sanballat and Tobiah, so that he should do something foolish and gain a bad reputation (vv. 12-13). Nehemiah calls on his God to punish Tobiah, Sanballat, the prophetess Noadiah and other prophets who tried to frighten him (v. 14). For some reason Shemaiah is not mentioned by name in this call for revenge.

Since the enemies of Nehemiah did not succeed with their obstruction of the rebuilding of the wall (4:1-5), they conspire against him, trying to eliminate him, but also this fails. Despite all this opposition, the wall was finished on the 25th of Elul, after 52 days (6:15), in front of כָּל־אוֹיְבֵינוּ “all the enemies” and כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר סְבִיבֹתֵינוּ “all the peoples surrounding”, who realised that the restoration was supported by their God (v. 16).

6:17-19: Tobiah and his allies

17 גַּם בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם מַרְבִּים חֹרֵי יְהוּדָה אִגְּרֹתֵיהֶם הוֹלְכוֹת
עַל־טוֹבִיָּה וַאֲשֶׁר לְטוֹבִיָּה בָּאוֹת אֲלֵיהֶם׃
18 כִּי־רַבִּים בִּיהוּדָה בַּעֲלֵי שְׁבוּעָה לוֹ כִּי־חָתָן הוּא
לִשְׁכַנְיָה בֶן־אָרַח וִיהוֹחָנָן בְּנוֹ לָקַח אֶת־בַּת־מְשֻׁלָּם בֶּן בֶּרֶכְיָה׃
19 גַּם טוֹבְיָּה יָהִיו אֹמְרִים לְפָנַי וּדְבָרַי הָיוּ מוֹצִיאִים לוֹ
אִגְּרוֹת שָׁלַח טוֹבִיָּה לְיָרְאֵנִי׃

6:17. Also, in those days the nobles of Judah were sending many letters to Tobiah and Tobiah’s letters were coming to them, 18. for many in Judah were his sworn allies to him since he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah[38], son of Arah, and his son Jonathan had married the daughter of Meshullam, son of Berechiah. 19. They also spoke well to me about his good deeds and then reporting my words back to him. Tobiah sent letters to intimidate me.

The leaders in Judah send many letters to Tobiah, in which he responds (v. 17). Many in Judah had ties to him, as both he and his son had married Judean women (v. 18). Tobiah was the son-in-law of Shechaniah, son of Arah (mentioned as one of the families in the list of returnees in Neh. 7:10/Ezra 2:5)[39], while his son Jonathan had married the daughter of Meshullam, son of Berechiah (Meshullam is mentioned in the list of builders in Neh. 3:4;30 and among the heads of the people who signed the pledge in 10:21-22 [incl. also his grandfather Meshezabel]). Thus, Tobiah has good family ties, which were fastened by marriages. Knoppers comments that Nehemiah

[38] Some MSS read Shebaniah. Neh. 3:39: list of builders, mentiones Shemaiah, son of Shecaniah.
[39] In 13:4 Sanballat is also called a relative of Eliashib, see more below.

does not act against Tobiah's marriage; perhaps of strategic reasons because he realises that Tobiah had relations to his own allies.[40] חֹרֵי יְהוּדָה "the nobles of Judah" continue to speak well about Tobiah, and he responds by writing letters to intimidate Nehemiah (v. 19). Thus, Judeans who participated in the restoration do not necessarily support Nehemiah in other matters; his enemies had close ties with his allies.[41]

In Neh. 6, the walls are completed (v. 15) despite what might look like opposition both from outside (Sanballat, Tobiah and the surrounding peoples) as well as from inside (the prophetess Noadiah and other prophets, v. 14, and also the nobles of Judah).

Williamson suggests a literary pattern where every step in the building project is followed by a reference to the opposition from Sanballat and his allies. This structure consists of variations of the phrase "When X heard…" in relation to the opposition (2:10;19, 3:33, 4:1;9, 5:6, 6:1;16) as well as the "Remember!"-formula.[42] 2:10 and v. 19 convey identical formulations in relation to the plans of rebuilding.[43] The pattern from Neh. 2 continues when it comes to the very building and becomes expanded as regards Nehemiah's response to the opposition: while in 2:10 no response is mentioned, in 20:20 Nehemiah responds by assuring that they will succeed by the support of "the God of heaven" and in 3:36-37 he prays that those who mock him and his people must be revenged by plundering and exile, and not be forgiven. Also in chapter 4 the adversaries fail and Nehemiah and his people can continue their work, now equipped with weapons (4:7;10-17). Also the enemies' attempt to eliminate Nehemiah in chapter 6 fails. Despite all this opposition, the wall was finishe (6:15), in front of כָּל־אוֹיְבֵינוּ "all the enemies" and כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר סְבִיבֹתֵינוּ "all the peoples surrounding", who realised that the restoration was supported by their God (v. 16). This literary structure mirrors the growing intensity of the conflict, where Nehemiah uses increasing measures in handling this opposition.[44]

[40] Knoppers, "Nehemiah and Sanballat", p. 324.
[41] Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah,* p. 261 and Knoppers, "Nehemiah and Sanballat", p. 324.
[42] Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, p. 251.
[43] Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, p. 215.
[44] Also Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, p. 243, comments on this structural and stereotypical element in Neh. 2:10-6:16. He further depicts the pattern of Neh. 1-6 as close to that of the psalms of lamentations:

Neh. 13

The law of Moses is read for the people, where it is said that no Ammonite or Moabite are admitted to קְהַל הָאֱלֹהִים "the congregation of God" (13:1, cf. Deutr. 23:4-7) and the people separate כָּל־עֵרֶב "all of mixed descent" from Israel (v. 3). Strategies of exclusion are here related to denial of participation in the cult and community.[45]

Neh. 13:4-9: Tobiah becomes expelled from the storeroom of the Temple

4 וְלִפְנֵי מִזֶּה אֶלְיָשִׁיב הַכֹּהֵן נָתוּן בְּלִשְׁכַּת בֵּית־אֱלֹהֵינוּ קָרוֹב לְטוֹבִיָּה׃
5 וַיַּעַשׂ לוֹ לִשְׁכָּה גְדוֹלָה וְשָׁם הָיוּ לְפָנִים נֹתְנִים אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה
הַלְּבוֹנָה וְהַכֵּלִים וּמַעְשַׂר הַדָּגָן הַתִּירוֹשׁ וְהַיִּצְהָר מִצְוַת
הַלְוִיִּם וְהַמְשֹׁרְרִים וְהַשֹּׁעֲרִים וּתְרוּמַת הַכֹּהֲנִים׃
6 וּבְכָל־זֶה לֹא הָיִיתִי בִּירוּשָׁלִָם כִּי בִּשְׁנַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּשְׁתַּיִם
לְאַרְתַּחְשַׁסְתְּא מֶלֶךְ־בָּבֶל בָּאתִי אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ וּלְקֵץ יָמִים
נִשְׁאַלְתִּי מִן־הַמֶּלֶךְ׃
7 וָאָבוֹא לִירוּשָׁלִָם וָאָבִינָה בָּרָעָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אֶלְיָשִׁיב
לְטוֹבִיָּה לַעֲשׂוֹת לוֹ לִשְׁכָּה בְּחַצְרֵי בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים׃
8 וַיֵּרַע לִי מְאֹד וָאַשְׁלִיכָה אֶת־כָּל־כְּלֵי בֵית־טוֹבִיָּה הַחוּץ
מִן־הַלִּשְׁכָּה׃
9 וָאֹמְרָה וַיִּטַהֲרוּ הַלְּשָׁכוֹת וָאָשִׁיבָה שָׁם כְּלֵי בֵית הָאֱלֹהִים
אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה וְהַלְּבוֹנָה׃

13:4. Earlier, Eliashib the priest, who had been appointed over the rooms in the House of our God and a relative of Tobiah, 5. had assigned to him a large storeroom where they used to store the meal offering, the incense, the vessels, the tithes of grain, wine and oil as prescribed for the Levites, singers and gatekeepers, and the portions for the priests. 6. During all this time, I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes, king of Babylon, I went to the king, and only after a while did I ask leave of the king. 7 and I came back to Jerusalem and I learned of the evil that Eliashib had done on behalf of Tobiah in assigning him a room in the courts of the house of God. 8. I was very angry, and threw all the household goods of Tobiah out of the room. 9. I gave orders to purify the rooms, and had the vessels of the House of God and the meal offering and the incense put back.

Eliashib the priest has made available one of the storerooms in the temple for Tobiah to use (vv. 4-5). Eliashib is presented as קָרוֹב "a relative" of Tobiah, who is not called Ammonite here.[46] This happened when Nehemiah is away in Babylon reporting to the king (v. 6). When he arrives in Jerusalem, he learns that Eliashib has assigned this place to Tobiah, Nehemiah's opponent (v. 7). Nehemiah dislikes this very much and

"hostile accusation or action against an innocent party who counters with trustful prayer to God and thus overcomes (e.g., Pss 7;9;54;56;59). The comparison may help to explain some features of the genre in which the NM is cast, and should be borne in mind in evaluating the historical character of his *apologia*" (p. 225).
[45] Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, p. 380, sees the theme of the use of the temple chambers as uniting 12:44-13:14.
[46] Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, p. 386, and Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, pp. 353-354, do not regard this Eliashib as the high priest Eliashib mentioned in 3:1;20-21, 12:10, 13:28, while Grabbe, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, p. 65, thinks it is one and the same. On Eliashib, see also n. 23.

expels Tobiah and his belongings from the temple room (v. 8), purifies the room and restores it to its proper use (v. 9). The storeroom in the temple is for holy objects and tithes. Tobiah and his belongings have to be removed because his presence is regarded as ritually defiling the room he occupies. Both Olyan and Albertz argue that Nehemiah's command that the room be purified presupposes the view that alienage was in and of itself ritually defiling.[47] What is at stake is ritual impurity. It is not said that Tobiah has failed to observe any purity rules that should qualify any purification. He is not accused for any moral "abomination" (and Tobiah himself is a Yhwh-worshipper?). It is the Judean community, represented with Eliashib the priest, who has failed to uphold the boundaries of the temple and also fraternizing with the enemy. The cause of the pollution is alienage. Tobiah is a perpetual polluter, a threat to the holiness of the sanctuary and presumably, the community. [48]

Neh. 13:28:

[28] וּמִבְּנֵי יוֹיָדָע בֶּן־אֶלְיָשִׁיב הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל חָתָן לְסַנְבַלַּט הַחֹרֹנִי וָאַבְרִיחֵהוּ מֵעָלָי׃

13:28. One of the sons of Joiada son of the high priest Eliashib was a son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite; I drove him away from me.

A grandson of Eliashib the hight priest had married a daughter of Sanballat the Horonite, and for this he becomes expelled by Nehemiah. Then Nehemiah again prays to his God, asking the deity to remember them for having defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priests and the Levites (v. 29, cf. Lev. 21:13-15). Nehemiah separated his people מִכָּל־נֵכָר "from anything foreign" (v. 30, cf. v. 3). Nehemiah. Knoppers comments how Sanballat seems to have no religious issue in that his daughter married a descendant of the high priest Eliashib, maybe bonding south/north alliance?[49] According to Olyan, Nehemiah presents the marriage of the son of Joiada, son of the high-priest Eliashib, with the daughter of Sanballat as a defilement of the

[47] S. Olyan, "Purity Ideology in Ezra-Nehemiah as a Tool to Reconstitute the Community", *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 35 (2004) 4 and R. Albertz, "Purity Strategies ans Political Interests in the Policy of Nehemiah" in S. Gitin, J.E. Wright, J.P. Dessel (eds.), *Confronting the Past: Archaeological and Historical Essay on Ancient Israel in Honor of William G. Dever* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006) 199-206. Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, pp. 362-363, speaks about "ritual ethnicity" in this regard.
[48] Olyan, "Purity Ideology in Ezra-Nehemiah as a Tool to Reconstitute the Community", p. 4.
[49] Knoppers, "Nehemiah and Sanballat", p. 327.

priestly bloodline. This has to be punished and atoned for, unless future generations of the priestly lineage shall become contaminated.[50]

Judah/Israel

In the book of Nehemiah, lots of identity markers appear, where Israel becomes differentiated in various ways. In a treatment of competing assumptions about identity in Achaemenid Yehud, Berquist emphasises how texts from this time recognize identity as "unclear, inconsistent, and always contested".[51] He questions the assumptions which underlie the use of terms such as Judeans, Jews, Yehudites, Jerusalemites, הַגּוֹלָה, and others to describe the population of Persian Yehud. Berquist examines the way that multiple forces shape identity, including ethnic, religious and political processes. The Yehudite society became an amalgamation of divergent forms and structures in which the various centres of power forced identity into hybridity. An interplay of forces appears in identity formation, where we have seen how, for instance, both Nehemiah, Sanballat and Tobiah might have overlapping and multiple collective identities.[52] In the discussion of the relation of Nehemiah to his allies and adversaries, Knoppers emphasises the importance of seeing this debate in a broader frame, that is, it is not only a debate about Judean identity but also about Israelite identity.[53]

Conclusions

The community of Judah is neither self-enclosed, independent nor self-sufficient. Both Nehemiah and Tobiah, for instance, have double loyalities, working for the Persian administration and Judean interests. Also, Nehemiah and Sanballat might

[50] Olyan, "Purity Ideology in Ezra-Nehemiah as a Tool to Reconstitute the Community", pp. 4-10. When in Ezra 4:2 the descendants of foreigners forcibly resettled in the region of Samaria in the late eight century argue to Zerubbabel and Jeshua that they worshipped to the same God as their Judean neighbours, this might be related to Sanballat, governor in Samaria, who had close contacts with the high priestly family in Jerusalem (Neh. 13:28) and was himself a worshipper of YHWH.
[51] J.L. Berquist, "Constructions of Identity in Postcolonial Yehud" in O. Lipschits and M. Oeming (eds.), *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006) 55.
[52] On the variety of definitions of Judah and Israel in the Persian Period, see also P.R. Davies, "Exile? What Exile? Whose Exile?" in L. L. Grabbe (ed*.), Leading Captivity Captive: 'The Exile' as History and Ideology* (JSOTSup, 278; Sheffield, 1998) 128-138, E. Ben Zvi, "Inclusion and Exclusion from Israel as conveyed by the Use of the Term I'srael' in Post-Monarchical Biblical Texts" in S.W. Holloway and L.K. Handy (eds.), *The Pitcher is Broken: Memorial Essay for Gösta W. Ahlström* (Sheffield, 1995) 95-149, Bedford, "Diaspora", p. 149.
[53] Knoppers, "Nehemiah and Sanballat", pp. 320;322.

belong to different geographical areas (tribes) and simultaneously share some common attributes (religion, institutions, ancestor (Jacob)).

In this situation of boundary and identity maintenance, an approach based on a dichotomy of two clear cut parties tends to be reductionistic. We are obviously dealing with subtle cultural transformations and political enfranchisement with fluid boundaries and competing definitions. The book of Nehemiah illustrates how historical circumstances contribute to the shaping of tradition, which again serves to construct identity.[54] In this process of identity formation, "shared" traditions, social structures, religious institutions, and so on are central ingredients.[55] Knoppers emphasises how the book of Nehemiah convey signs of internal resistance to and subversion of initiatives taken by the Judean leaders appear.[56] This shows that collective identities and boundaries are not stable, uniform and singular.[57]

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[54] J. Kessler, "The Diaspora in Zechariah 1-8 and Ezra-Nehemiah: The Role of History, Social Location, and Tradition in the Formulation of Identity" in G.N. Knoppers and K.A. Ristau (eds.), *Community Identity in Judean Historiography: Biblical and Comparative Perspectives* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009) 145.
[55] Knoppers, "Ethnicity, Genealogy, Geography, and Change: The Judean Communities of Babylon and Jerusalem in the Story of Ezra" in Knoppers and Ristau, *Community Identity in Judean Historiography*, p. 157. He further refers to S.J.D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999) 1-10 and Berquist, "Constructions of Identity in Postcolonial Yehud".
[56] See n. 2.
[57] Knoppers, "Nehemiah and Sanballat", p. 316.

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Hymn and History in Exod 15: Observations on the Relationship between Temple Theology and Exodus Narrative in the Song of the Sea

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1. Introduction

The Exodus has undergone a wide reception in the poetic texts of the Hebrew Bible. The best-known example is the Song of the Sea in Exod 15. Following the narrative account in Exod 14, the song praises the divine deliverance of Israel at the Red Sea. However, the divine deeds that are glorified go far beyond the literary setting and extend to the biblical period of the entry into the land. Yhwh is depicted as a warrior god who leads his people to his holy mountain, the place from where he rules as divine king. As such, the Song of the Sea contains not only a number of linkages to the Hexateuchal narrative, it is also influenced by the Canaanite myth, traces of which are frequently encountered in the Book of Psalms.

Though the various parallels both to the Hexateuchal narrative and the Book of Psalms have been widely acknowledged, scholarship has not yet undertaken to investigate fully the character of the relationship between hymn and history in Exod 15.[1] This will be attempted in the following contribution. Starting point of my observations is a literary critical and redaction historical analysis of Exod 15, which demonstrates that the song is not a unified composition, but rather the product of a longer literary growth. The second part of my paper investigates the extent to which the literary genesis has been influenced by references to poetic and narrative texts respectively. Finally, the results will allow for some concluding remarks on the idea of history in the Song of the Sea and its importance for the reformulation of biblical history in the Old Testament poetic texts.

2. Textual Observations

2.1. Literary Critical Analysis

Strictly speaking, the poetic account of the events at the Red Sea in Exod 15:1-21 comprises two poems praising Yhwh's act, namely the Song of

[1] However, some fruitful contributions should be mentioned here: S. Norin has already been well aware of the links with other texts from the Psalms or the Hexateuchal narrative (cf. S. Norin, *Er spaltete das Meer: Die Auszugsüberlieferung in Psalmen und Kult des Alten Israel* (CB.OT 9; Lund, 1977), 77-107); more recently the study by B.D. Russell should be mentioned (*The Song of the Sea: The Date and Composition and Influence of Exodus 15:1-21*, Studies in Biblical Literature 101; New York, 2007). C. Berner, *Die Exoduserzählung* (Habilition; Göttingen, 2010), 381-395, though, investigates the various literary links with the Exodus narrative.

the Sea initiated by Moses[2] in V 1b-18 and the Song of Miriam in V 21b. Thereby, the hymnic praise of the Song of Miriam in V 21b (שירו ליהוה כי גאה גאה סוס ורכבו רמה בים) has a close parallel in the introduction of the Song of the Sea V 1b (אשירה ליהוה כי גאה גאה סוס ורכבו רמה בים) and thus frames the combination of both texts. The short hymn glorifies Yhwh who is exceedingly glorious and has thrown horse and its rider into the sea. A prose transition in V 19-21a links the two songs, while a similar prose introduction in V 1a provides a joint to the preceding narrative account in Exod 13:17-14:31.

Obviously, the literary relationship between the Song of the Sea and the Song of Miriam represents the crucial literary problem. As is clearly demonstrated by the identical wording, one of the songs should be given literary priority. Here the evidence suggests that V 1b has to be understood as a resumption of V 21b in order to place the Song of the Sea before the Song of Miriam. Apparently, a later author did not want Moses to be inferior to Miriam and thus attributed to him a similar praise of Yhwh, relegating the Song of Miriam to second place.[3]

However, the literary unity of the Song of the Sea as a whole also has to be questioned. The main corpus of the song in V 1b-18 consists of two parts: The first part in V 1b-11 praises the supremacy of Yhwh over the enemy and draws heavily on the events at the Red Sea. Its basic literary layer can be found in V 1-3, 6-11a* and has later been supplemented by V 4, V 5 and minor additions in V 8bβ and V 11b.[4] Moreover, the mentioning of the Israelites (ובני ישראל) next to Moses in V 1b is a secondary insertion, which explains why the plural subject disagrees with the singular verbal form ישיר. The first part can be divided further into a hymnic introduction V 1b-3 and a poetic unit in V 6-11a* that is mainly composed of regular bicola. While the hymnic introduction invokes the praise of Yhwh and introduces him as a mighty warrior (איש מלחמה, V 3), the poetry

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[2] The mention of the Israelites in V 1b represents a secondary insertion, cf. in the following.

[3] Furthermore, the differing of the introductory verbal forms points to this direction of literary dependency: While the Song of Miriam is opened with the summons שירו that fits well into the literary setting, V 1b starts with the liturgical formula אשירה. This shows an acquisition of the literary preceding hymn by the language of prayer. Scholarship takes a nearly unanimous point of view in this question with only H. Spieckermann, *Heilsgegenwart: Eine Theologie der Psalmen* (FRLANT 148; Göttingen, 1989), 99f., opting for the literary priority of 15:21b.

[4] V 4 represents a doublet to V 1b varying the assertion that Yhwh has cast his enemies into the sea, while V 5 anticipates the sinking of the foe from V 8, 10 (similarly S. Norin, *Er spaltete*, 93-95; 98-100, and J. Jeremias, *Das Königtum Gottes in den Psalmen* (FRLANT 141; Göttingen, 1987), 98). V 8aβ and V 11b can mainly be discarded *metri causa*.

further dwells on this topic and describes the supremacy of Yhwh over the foe culminating in stating his supremacy over other gods (V 11a). The second part of the song in V 12-18 deals with leading the people to the sanctuary, where Yhwh will reign as king forever. The basic layer comprises V 13 and V 17f., while V 12 and V 14-16 represent later additions.[5]

The clear bisection of the Song of the Sea raises the question as to the literary relationship between V 1b-3, 6-11a* and V 13, 17f. There is no denying the fact that the two parts deal with different events in the history of the people, which points to a redactional unity rather than an original unity. Not only exceed V 13, 17f. with the topic of entry into the land the exposition of V 1b in a thematic way, but the verses also represent a surplus in view of the self-contained part V 6-11a*. Therefore, it can be assumed that the original Song of the Sea in V 1b-3, 6-11a* has been secondarily supplemented with V 13, 17f.

Finally, the prose joint in V 19-21a has to be considered. While V 20, 21a represent the original introduction to the hymnic praise of V 21b,[6] V 19 seems to be rather redundant. The verse does not introduce anything new but rather recalls the events at the Red Sea, thus providing a literary setting for the following Song of Miriam in V 20f. Hence it has to be seen in connection with the continuation in V 13, 17f., as only the addition of the Zion topic necessitates the back reference in order to shift back Miriam's praise to the banks of the Red Sea. At last, the collective reworking that shaped the introduction in 15:1b has also left its traces in the exposition of the Song of Miriam: The masculine pronoun להם in 15:21a only makes sense as secondary reference to the group of Israelites from V 1b, whose praise is answered by Miriam's song.

After having established sufficient evidence for a longer literary growth, the following account will describe the literary genesis of Exod 15:1-21 as a whole.

2.2. Tradition and Redaction

The *nucleus* of Exod 15:1-21 is the Song of Miriam in 15:20f.* praising the might of Yhwh, who has thrown horse and rider into the Sea (סוס ורכבו רמה בים, V 21b). Its prose introduction in V 20.21a* depicts the women as meeting the victorious men and initiating the glorification. However, though the divine praise fits well with the preceding victory over the

[5] The addition of V 12 has to be seen in connection with the supplementation of V 11b, whereas V 14-16 disrupt the connection between the arrival at the Zion in V 13 and V 17 that further dwells on the Zion topic (cf. Spieckermann, *Heilsgegenwart*, 195-107).

[6] The apposition אחות אהרו in V 20 represents a secondary bonding that makes the Exodus a family affair.

Egyptian enemy, the setting as a victory procession does not correspond to the scenery at the Red Sea, where the people as a whole have been the subject of rescue. Furthermore, the description of Yhwh's action lacks specific reference to the narrative account; even more so as horses (סוס) are only mentioned in post-priestly additions within Exod 14 (14:9, 23).[7] Thus, Exod 14 and its poetic counterpart in Exod 15 do not share any literary links in their respective earliest literary layers. It can therefore be suggested that Exod 15:21b represents an older tradition that has been combined with the narrative account of Exod 14 at a later stage. Praising the glorification of Yhwh (כי גאה גאה), a *Sitz im Leben* in the temple theology can be assumed.[8] Such a setting, however, is by no means an indication of the antiquity of the Exodus creed. What is praised here is not the concrete action of Yhwh at the Red Sea, but his divine kingship that is manifested in his supremacy over his enemies. The horses and their riders are mere wild-card characters, whose identification has long since slipped into the obscurity of tradition.

Supplemented with its prose introduction, the cultic hymn is given the context of a victory scene and attributed to Miriam. Later on, the tradition piece 15:20f* has been used by the author of the Exodus narrative and was placed at the end of the pre-priestly account, thus giving the cultic praise a life setting at the Red Sea. In the next step, the original Song of the Sea in 15:1-3, 6-11a* is set before the Song of Miriam by using the actual hymn of 15:21b as means of introduction in 15:1b. Apparently, the short hymn by Miriam provided the reason to insert a longer poetic praise at precisely this place. However, the Song of the Sea clearly outlines different priorities: First of all, the praise of Yhwh is now attributed to Moses, the leading man of the Exodus narrative, while Miriam's song becomes a mere antiphon. Moreover, the praise is transformed into a hymn of an individual (אשירה, V 1) with elements of a thanksgiving (cf. V 2). Thus, the poetry is shaped as a psalm that can be re-used over and over again. In view of the content of praise, Yhwh's victory over his enemies undergoes a substantial embellishment and is interpreted in terms of his supremacy over the other gods.

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[7] The literary layering in the narrative account of the sea miracle in Exod 14:15-31 is well established. Since Nöldeke, the demarcation of the priestly parts 14:15-18, 21*, 22f., 16, 27*, 28f. is virtually certain (cf. T. Nöldeke, *Untersuchungen zur Kritik des Alten Testaments* (Kiel, 1869), 45). The remaining text is divided into the pre-priestly account of the sea miracle and post-priestly additions.

[8] Cf. F. Crüsemann, *Studien zur Formgeschichte von Hymnus und Danklied in Israel* (WMANT 32; Neukirchen, 1969), 19-24; Spieckermann, *Heilsgegenwart*, 100-102; C. Levin, *Der Jahwist* (FRLANT 157; Göttingen, 1993), 343.

Considering the major continuation in 15:13, 17-19 and the further additions in 15:11b-12; 15:14-16; 15:4f.; 15:8aβ, the relative chronology is difficult to establish. As V 13, 17-19 are presupposed by the majority of the other additions, these verses presumably form the first supplement to the Song of the Sea. Their insertion creates a historical account that goes beyond the literary setting of the original song. While the people are still on the bank of the sea according to Exod 14:30; 15:22, the continuation already knows of their successful arrival at Mount Zion. Close in time to this insertion (or even as part of it), V 4 was added. Like V 19, the verse has a number of references to Exod 14, thus paving the way for an understanding that identifies the nameless foe in the Song of the Sea as the Egyptian adversary. A later author inserted V 11b-12 in order to supplement the historical account with an allusion to the Datan/Abiram-Episode. By again referring anew to the "right hand" of Yhwh (ימינך, V 12), the extermination of the rioter comes to be paralleled with the victory over the Egyptians, who have similarly been destroyed by the divine right hand (ימינך, V 6). As V 5 prepares for the parallelisation of Yhwh's punishment, the verse might also be assigned to this redactional reworking.[9]

The last major reworking was done by inserting V 14-16 into the second part of the Song of the Sea. Theses verses complement the reaction of the nations in view of Israel's entry into the land and display various links with the preceding literary version of the song.[10] In this way, the nations are shaped in great similarity to the foe of the original song and additionally, the march of the Israelites through the nations takes features of their march through the divided waters of the Red Sea. Similarly, the insertion of V 8aβ uses the term "standing up in a heap" (נצבו כמו נד) to describe the floods when destroying the enemy. The phrase represents a fixed literary term that is normally used for the crossing of the Jordan (cf. Jos 3:13, 16) so that the march through the waters of the Red Sea becomes transparent for the crossing of the Jordan. To sum up, V 8aβ, 14-16 as a whole belong to a redaction that uses the divine praise of Exod 15 as a paradigm extending to the events of the entry into the land.

Finally, the collective interpretation in 15:1*, 21* has to be considered. It seems safe to assume that this reworking presupposes the post-priestly

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[9] The synonym parallelism in 15:5 sets the covering with floods (V 5a) next to the going down into the depths (V 5b) and thus prepares for the fate of Datan and Abiram who are swallowed by the earth (V 12).

[10] For example, the verses are inserted into the context by the resumption of עם זו גאלת („the people whom you redeemed", V 13) in form of עם זו קנית („the people whom you acquired, V 16). Furthermore, while in V 5 the enemies sank „like a stone" (כמו אבן), in V 16 the nations become still as a stone (ידמו כאבן), thus taking the place of the foe from the original Song of the Sea.

ending of the Red Sea episode in 14:31, where the people are said to believe in Yhwh and his servant Moses. Turning the Song of Moses into a thanksgiving song of the people following their rescue at the Sea, the collective reworking can be understood as a redactional answer to the creed in Exod 14:31.

The preceding account of the literary genesis has clearly demonstrated that the understanding of history and the reception of existing literary tradition plays an important part in the literary growth of the song. The following part will further investigate the different pretexts that are referred to during the process.

3. Temple Theology and Exodus Narrative

In view of the Song of Miriam, it has already been demonstrated that the hymn has a cultic *Sitz im Leben* in the temple theology. Praising Yhwh as being glorious (גאה גאה) is an integral part of this theology and strongly recalls Ps 93, in which the divine king Yhwh is characterised by being robed in glory (גאות לבש, 93:1). Thus, the author who integrated the hymn into the Exodus narrative not only created a perfect ending for the events at the Red Sea, but he also glorified the victory as deed of the mighty god-king.

As far as the original Song of the Sea in Exod 15:1-3, 6-11a* is concerned, the influence of two different backgrounds can be noticed. Firstly, motifs and coined issues from the psalms are referred to, whereby the influence of Canaanite mythology clearly prevails. Secondly, the Exodus narrative and especially the account of the events at the Red Sea in Exod 13:17-14:31 had a considerable impact on the poetic praise in Exod 15. Already the introductory statement of faith in 15:2 shows the double influence, as textual linkages both to Ps 118 and Exod 14:13 exist. Apparently, the designation of the events at the Red Sea as "deliverance" (ישועה) in Exod 14:13 recalls associations to the thanksgiving Ps 118 that was subsequently quoted in Exod 15:2a (עזי וזמרת יה ויהי לי לישועה; = Ps 118:14) and 15:2b (זה אלי ואנוהו אלהי אבי וארממנהו; cf. אלי אתה ואורך אלהי ארממך, Ps 118:28).[11] Yet the differing address of Yhwh in terms of "God of my father" (אלהי אבי) in Exod 15:2b can be explained as a reference to the narrative of Moses' appointment in Ex 3:6, where God introduces himself as "God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob" (אלהי אביך אלהי אברהם אלהי יצחק ואלהי יעקב). This scene is further alluded to when Exod 15:3 stresses the divine name: "Yhwh is his name" (יהוה שמו). The statement reminds us of Moses' question of Exod 3:13 and

[11] The use of the short form יה, which is singular in Exod 15:2, while it occurs frequently in Ps 118 (V 5; 14; 17; 18; 19), shows that the dependency runs from Ps 118 to Exod 15 and not the other way round.

once and for all closes the discussion about the divine name.[12] These linkages to the beginning of the Exodus narrative demonstrate that the god who is praised in the original Song of the Sea was supposed to be identified with the god who had already introduced himself to both the patriarchs and Moses. However, the divine image is further complemented with characteristics that describe god as divine king and mighty chaos fighter in the psalms. As an example, Exod 15:3 might suffice, where the praise of Yhwh as "warrior" (איש מלחמה) complements the references to Exod 3. This characterisation is borrowed from Ps 24:8, according to which Yhwh's fighting strength establishes his kingship.[13]

In the same manner, the description of Yhwh's victory over the foe in Exod 15:8-10 is clearly shaped by elements of the chaos fight. Yet a decisive change has taken place. The floods are no longer the antagonist of Yhwh as for example in Ps 93 but they are a device in conquering the enemies. The mythical cloak cannot be misunderstood, since the waters are described as "mighty waters" (מים אדירים), thus using the same adjective that usually characterises divine kingship (cf. Ps 93:4). Despite these mythical allusions, the description is also influenced by the narrative account in Exod 14. In the pre-priestly version a strong east wind (ברוח קדם, 14:21aα^{2}β) serves Yhwh when pushing back the sea, while the priestly parts add the notion that Moses divided the waters (בקע, 14:21aα^{1}b). Evidently the meteorological event is in the background of the description of 15:8*, according to which Yhwh turns the waters up in a heap by ways of his scornful blast (ברוח אפיך). While the east wind was transformed into the image of the divine blast, the heaping up of the waters clearly refers to the priestly idea of dividing the waters.[14] Furthermore, the quotation of the foe in 15:9, that they want to pursue (ירד) them, reworks the priestly motif that the Egyptians pursued the Israelites into the divided sea (ירד, 14:23). Finally, the notion that the waters covered (כסה) the enemies, succinctly summarises the events described in 14:24-28 (כסה, 14:28). The fate of the Egyptian thus becomes transparent for the fate of the nameless foe of the Song of the Sea.

The tradition historical and literary background demonstrates that the original Song of the Sea in Exod 15:1-3, 6-11a* is an exegesis of the preceding Song of Miriam that had been composed for its current literary

[12] Exod 3:13: But Moses said to God, "If I come to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?"

[13] The linkage between the two verses is also demonstrated by the textual witnesses that partly adjust the text in Exod 15:3 to Ps 24:8 (cf. the Samaritanus and the Syriaca).

[14] Cf. Berner, *Exoduserzählung*, 387.

context.[15] While the Song of Miriam can only be connected to Exod 14 because of its position after the narrative account, the original Song of the Sea displays a number of literary links with and allusions to Exod 14 in its priestly reworked version. These connections clarify that the horses and rider thrown into the waters (15:1b, 21b) can only allude to the army of the Egyptians, while the explanatory statement of the cultic hymn (גאה גאה, 15:1b, 21b) is mainly referred to in those sections that borrow from the imagery found in the Psalms. As the miracle of the Red Sea is merged with elements of Canaanite mythology, it receives a mythical elevation as a mighty deed of the god-king. Speaking of the "myth", however, it should be noted that the author of the original Song of the Sea only used mythological ideas as existent in the psalm compositions.[16] That is clearly demonstrated by the various literary links. Therefore, it seems to be much more appropriate to speak of a temple theological interpretation of the Exodus narrative. This, however, has not been without consequences. When merged with the narrative tradition, the temple theological issues underwent a "historical" transformation: The god-king was identified with Yhwh, who has proven his kingship in acting to the benefit for his people in history; from the time of the patriarchs until the Exodus.

This literary and theological historical development has also affected the subsequent literary genesis of Exod 15, which will be only briefly sketched in the following. As far as the subsequent expansion in 15:4, 13, 17-19 is concerned, the dual background again prevails. V 4 and V 19 serve as a frame and enforce the existing links with Exod 14 by referring to the single units of the Egyptian forces.[17] The main body of the addition, however, is dominated by influence of temple theology. While the guiding statement in 15:13 (נחה) is encountered in passages of the Psalms that compare the people to a flock (cf. Ps 77:21; 78:52f.), it is especially the idea of Yhwh dwelling on his holy mountain that belongs into the realm of the Canaanite myth and has left its traces in the Psalms (cf. Ps 46; 48; 76; 84; 87; 122). All three designations that are used for the sanctuary in Exod 15:17 have close parallels referring to this background. While "mountain

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[15] This excludes the suggestion that the original Song of the Sea similarly represents an old tradition (cf. Brenner, *Song*, 80, and Berner, *Exoduserzählung*, 386. Differently, M. Noth, *Das 2. Buch Mose: Exodus* (ATD 5; Göttingen, 1984), 98; J. Gertz, *Tradition und Redaktion in der Exoduserzählung: Untersuchungen zur Endredaktion des Pentateuch* (FRLANT 186; Göttingen, 2000), 191, and W.H.C. Propp, *Exodus 1-18: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AncB 2, New York, 1999), 562-568.

[16] See in general R.G. Kratz, *Reste hebräischen Heidentums am Beispiel der Psalmen* (NAWG.PH; Göttingen, 2004), 53-62.

[17] On this see E. Zenger, 'Tradition und Interpretation in Ex XV 1-21', in J.A. Emerton (Hg.), *Congress Volume Vienna 1980* (VT Supp. 32; Leiden, 1981), 452-483, 462, and Berner, *Exoduserzählung*, 386.389f.

of your own possession" (הר נהלתך) has a near parallel in the ugaritic Baal cycle ("mountain of my possession" *qdš. b ġr. nḥlty*, KTU 1.3 III,30), the second designation "the place that you made your abode" (מכון לשבתך) has a close parallel in Ps 33:14 (ממכון שבתו), where it refers to Yhwh's dwelling place in the skies. Finally, "sanctuary" (מקדש) is the designation for the holy dwelling place mainly used in the priestly writing and the Book of Ezekiel.[18] Comparable to the Baal myth, the holy dwelling place is a prerequisite for the royal reign. Consequently, Ex 15:18 ends with the proclamation of Yhwh's ever lasting kingship (יהוה ימלך לעלם ועד); a frequently encountered topic in the kingship-psalms (cf. Ps 10:16; 29:10; 93:1; 96:10; 97:1; 99:1).[19] Apparently, only with the arrival at the holy mountain can Yhwh's kingship adequately be proclaimed, though it is presupposed throughout the events described in Exod 15.

The remaining two insertions in Exod 15 fit this picture well. As mentioned above, 15:11b-12 refer to the Datan/Abiram-episode in Num 16.[20] This seems safe to suggest as the combination of בלע and ארץ in the Hebrew Bible only occurs in the context of punishment of the two rioting men (Num 16:32, 34; cf. Deut 11:6; Ps 106:17) and in Exod 15:12. By referring to this episode, the image of the foe in Exod 15 receives a decisive expansion: Not only will Yhwh prove his supremacy over enemies from the outside, but also riots within his chosen people will be punished accordingly. Furthermore, the existing historical account in Exod 15 is supplemented with another station and the enumeration of Yhwh's deeds is labelled as "wonders" (פלא, V 11).

Finally, there remains the last major insertion in 15:8aβ, 14-16. As demonstrated above, the addition of V 8aβ refers to the crossing of the Jordan and combines the march through the divided Sea with the entry into the land. Thus, the time distance between the two events is annulled and Exodus and entry merge into one salvation historical event. Comparable to this fusion, the guidance through the land in 15:14-16 also receives elements of the crossing of both the Red Sea and the Jordan (cf. the use of עבר in Ex 15:16). However, the foreign nations take the place of the Egyptians and while they are not destroyed, they are seized by tremor in view of Yhwh's might (15:14f.). The motif of trembling is also known

[18] Though the dependency on the Canaanite myth is not so dominant in the last two examples, parallels in the Ugaritic texts also exist (on this cf. Norin, *Er spaltete*, 89f.; F.M. Cross (jun.)/D.N. Freedman, 'The Song of Miriam' (JNES 14, 1955), 237-250, 240).

[19] The differing use of the preformative conjugation in Exod 15:18 should not be given too much importance in view of a starting point of Yhwh's kingship (differently Jeremias, *Königtum*, 100, and Spieckermann, *Heilsgegenwart*, 110).

[20] Opposed to this, Noth, *ATD 5*, 99, or Propp, *AncB 2*, 529f., link Exod 15:12 with the demolition of Egypt.

from the idea of Yhwh's kingship (cf. e.g. Ps 48:5f.), however, the wording in Exod 15:14-16 recalls two texts from the context of the entry into the land (Deut 2:25; Jos 2:9, 24).[21] Firstly, Exod 15:14 refers to Deut 2:25 where Yhwh announces that he "will put dread and fear unto the people, when they hear report of you" (אשר ישמעון שמעך ורגזו וחלו מפניך). The author of Exod 15:14 re-uses the verb שמע, which now refers, though, to the report of Yhwh's rescue of his people at the Red Sea. It also leads to dread and fear amongst the nations (שמעו עמים ירגזון חיל). Similarly, Exod 15:15f. quotes from the speech of Rahab in Jos 2, who tells the Israelite scouts that her people are in fear of the Israelites (Jos 2:9, 24). Again, the quotation in Exod 15:15f interprets the reference along the line that not the people give reason to fear but Yhwh and his mighty arm instigate the dread of the nations. To sum up, the quotations from the Hexateuchal narrative are used to emphasise the mighty action of Yhwh and continue to build up the importance of the Exodus as a paradigm for Yhwh's action in general.

4. Hymn and History

On the whole, the fusion of hymn and history in Exod 15:1-21 proves to be a fruitful merge of the literary traditions found in the Psalms and in the Exodus narrative. Its starting point is the insertion of the Song of Miriam that gives the events at the Red Sea a cultic interpretation. Temple theology in all its aspects continues to influence the further literary growth of the poetry in Exod 15, while the references to the literary preceding context in Exod 14 are also strengthened.

Consequently, a twofold development has to be noted: On the one hand, the myth undergoes a historiographical interpretation as the Exodus narrative is interpreted with regard to the image of Yhwh as divine king and chaos fighter. On the other hand, the narrative account is attributed a deeper meaning as the alliance with the temple theology transcends the episode beyond the narrative frame and ascribes to it a paradigmatic impact. A concept of history of salvation emerges that makes the Exodus a key event in the history of Israel and its God. History arises not as the accurate replay of long gone events, but as a means of establishing the timeless relationship between God and his people.

My research so far has shown that a number of historical accounts in the Psalms already know the Song of the Sea and make ample use of the text. Moreover, the praise of Yhwh at the banks of the Red Sea is caused

[21] The dependency clearly runs from the Hexateuch to Exod 15 as the Song displays literary links to both texts, while the two passages are not linked with each other. Furthermore, Exod 15:14-16 shows a clear exegetical intention in view of Deut 2:25 and Jos 2:9, 24.

by a concrete occasion, thus offering an – albeit fictional – *Sitz im Leben* for the merge of hymn and history. This points to the conclusion that Exod 15 figured as the literary birth place of the alliance of hymn and history and might have triggered the literary and theological development of the so-called history psalms.

THE CHRONICLER'S USE HIS SOURCE TEXT IN 2CHR 21-25 – EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FOR EDITORIAL TECHNIQUES

OTSEM congress at Skálholt, September 12-15, 2010
Juha Pakkala

Introduction

In this chapter I will investigate how the author of 2Chr 21-25 used 2Kgs 8-14. Particular emphasis will be on the nature of changes made in relation to the source text. The relationship between 1-2Chr and 1-2Kings has been extensively discussed in scholarly literature,[1] but my approach is to take these two texts as empirical evidence for the scribal changes and transformation processes taking place in a Biblical tradition. Considering the recent interest in the Qumran scholarship on rewritten texts and radical editorial processes,[2] it is apparent that the Chronicles should become part of this discussion. Many of the rewritten texts of Qumran (for example, the Temple Scroll, 4QRP/rewritten Pentateuch, Genesis Apocryphon, Jubilees) show similarities in their relationship to their sources as the Chronicles. Consequently, I will primarily look at the Chronicler as a redactor editing an older text. Although one might argue that the Chronicles is not a further edited version of 1-2Kings as a whole, but an entirely new work, there are many passages which warrant such an approach, and as pointed out by Eugene Ulrich, the Qumranic evidence has shown that composition, redaction, textual transmission and reception often overlap.[3] Composition of a work and rewriting may have been much more part of the transmission process and redaction of the Hebrew Scriptures than traditionally assumed. In fact, when the Chronicles, despite being a rewritten text, is understood as a redaction of an earlier

[1] For example, Thomas Willi, *Die Chronik als Auslegung*, FRLANT 106, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht: Göttingen, 1972; Steven McKenzie, *The chronicler's use of the Deuteronomistic history*, HSM 33, Scholars Press: Atlanta, 1985; Sara Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, 1993; Isaac Kalimi, *Zur Geschichtsschreibung des Chronisten: literarisch-historiographische Abweichungen der Chronik von ihren Paralleltexten in den Samuel- und Könisgbüchern*, BZAW 226, Walter de Gruyter: Berlin – New York; Isaac Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, Royal Van Gorcum: Assen, 2005;

[2] For example, George Brooke, "The Rewritten Law, Prophets and Psalms: Issues for Understanding the Text of the Bible." in *The Bible as Book: The Hebrew Bible and the Judaean Desert Discoveries*, ed. E.D. Herbert, E. Tov, 31-40.Oak Knoll Press, The Scriptorium Center for Christian Antiquities, 2002. Sidnie White Crawford, *Rewriting Scripture in Second Temple Times*, Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 2008; Daniel Falk, *The Parabiblical Texts*, T & T Clark: London, 2007; Eugene Ulrich, "The Evolutionary Production and Transmission of the Scriptural Books," forthcoming;

[3] Ulrich, "The Evolutionary Production and Transmission of the Scriptural Books," 209-210.

text, we may gain new insights about the nature of the transmission processes in the Hebrew Bible.

At the core of the problem is the question, what is the difference between a new compositions, rewritten texts and redactions? For example, the early transmission of 1-2Kings contains series of redactions, such as the nomistic redactions, where the text was comprehensively edited to the extent that it is justified to refer to the new editions as entirely new compositions or even rewritten texts. Moreover, already the history writer edited a book of the royal annals, omitting, rewriting and reorganizing much of the older text. It is probable that the annals were originally written as an independent work, but this applies to the earliest version of 1-2Kings by the history writer as well and to the nomistic editions. The redactions of the nomists were similarly new works, where the older text was completely reworked. The nomists corrected the history to be in harmony with their own theological conceptions. The difference between these redactions and the work of the Chronicler may not be fundamental, except that the Chronicler's sources were preserved, whereas the pre-nomistic 1-2Kings or the royal annals were not.

If the Chronicles is understood as a redaction, the preservation of both Chronicles and 1-2Kings would provide an excellent opportunity to understand the poorly known redactional processes taking place in the Second Temple Period. These processes could then be compared with Qumranic rewritten texts and used as empirical evidence for approaching other books of the Hebrew Bible that were edited. Although the nature of the editorial processes should be discussed in each composition separately, 1-2Chr provides comprehensive evidence about the different editorial processes that were made to an older source or a literary stage.

Much of the traditional discussion concerning Chronicles has approached the composition by assuming that it was meant to be read with its sources, but this is not self evident. It would imply that the Chronicler was writing a Midrash or interpretation (*Auslegung*) of 1-2Kings (and its other sources).[4] There are many reasons that speak against the *Ergänzungstheorie*, as this theory is traditionally called, which assumes that the Chronicles was mainly meant to supplement its sources. In the course of the present analysis it should become clear that this theory is unlikely. The changes with the source are too extensive that it would be reasonable to define 1-2Chr

[4] Most prominently by Thomas Willi, *Die Chronik als Auslegung*, FRLANT 106, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht: Göttingen, 1972, but many other scholars have represented this theory as well.

as an interpretation or Midrash. For example, there are several examples where the Chronicler contradicts his source or omits an event if it was theologically problematical. It is more probable that 1-2Chr was written as an improved version of Israel's past (*Verdrängungstheorie*).[5] 1-2Kings was used as the basis of the work, but the result was a heavily edited version.

I will approach the issue by analysing and discussing some key passages, which illustrate how the stories were edited, and what kind of changes were made. On the basis of these passages, I will then divide the changes into different categories. Although categories are only abstractions of reality and may not represent the thinking of the ancient authors, in this case they will help us understand the changes taking place between 1-2Kings and 1-2Chr, and thus the editorial processes of Second Temple Judaism. One particular question will be, how much was the Chronicler bound by the source text and how much liberty did he have in shaping the older text. What were the limits of his editing?

It should be added that I will compare the texts as literary products. Many scholars have tried to discuss the relationship between these texts in relation to actual events. Many arguments have been made by appealing to what was historically possible in the 'original' context and what was not and thereby trying to understand the relationship between the passages in 1-2Kings and 1-2Chr. But this kind of approach is very problematic, since we know very little about the monarchic times that the authors describe. Most of the texts were written centuries after the events that are described, and in any case it is not the focus of this paper to discuss what really happened. I believe more reliable results can be gained by looking at the technical and theological/ideological differences between parallel texts. Attempts to reflect both texts to 'actual' events may only disturb the discussion about the relationship between the 1-2Kings and 1-2Chr.

King Jehoram

Jehoram's reign is described in 1Kgs 22:51 and 2Kgs 8:16-24. It is evident that the Chronicler used 1-2Kings for his own account of Jehoram's reign in 2Chr 21, but the

[5] The *Verdrängungstheorie* is represented by many scholars, most recently by Isaac Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian*, Royal Van Gorcum: Assen, 2005.

passage was extensively expanded. In his account the death of Jehoshaphat and the ascent to power of Jehoram as described in 1Kgs 22:51 was placed with the rest of material dealing with Jehoram. With some exceptions, the main story of the reign in 2Kgs 8:17-22 was preserved unchanged, but there are two large expansions (2Chr 21:2-4 and 10aβ*-19), as well as several smaller changes.

After the initial reference to Jehoram's rise to power, which was adopted from the source word-for-word, the Chronicler added new information about Jehoram's brothers. 2Chr 21:2 contains a list of the brothers, followed in v. 3 by a reference to the gifts given to them by their father. After his power was consolidated, Jehoram is said to have murdered his brothers (v. 4). With some exceptions, the story in 2Kgs 8:17-22 was also taken word-for-word. The Chronicler apparently did not regard it necessary to make any larger changes to the basic account concerning Jehoram's reign. All the events were adopted as they were described in the source. After the main descriptions of Jehoram's reign, however, there is a major expansion in 2Chr 21:10aβ*-19, without any parallel in 1-2Kings. The description of Jehoram's death and burial was changed considerably (2Kgs 8:23-24 vs. 2Chr 21:20).

There are no major differences between the MT and LXX versions in these chapters, but in some cases the LXX of 2Chr shares a reading with MT/LXX of 2Kgs against MT of 2Chr (e.g., 2Chr 21:8, 9[6]). Most of the differences between the Hebrew and Greek version are minor additions or omissions. There is also no evidence that the Chronicler used a significantly different version of the passage than the MT.[7] This is suggested by the fact that the main text in 2Kgs 8:17-22 was adopted word-for-word, with only some exceptions. Moreover, the Chronicler evidently used a late version of 2Kgs 8, which already contained all its main later additions. Only one sentence, missing in the MT of 2Chr 21:9 but preserved in its LXX version and in the MT of 2Kgs 8:21 (וַיִּנָּס הָעָם לְאׇהָלָיו / *καὶ ἔφυγεν ὁ λαὸς εἰς τὰ σκηνώματα αὐτῶν*), leaves some space for the assumption that here 2Kgs 8:21 was expanded later and that the Chronicler used an earlier version of the verse. The LXX would then have been later influenced by

[6] The LXX of 2Chr 21:9 adds *καὶ ἔφυγεν ὁ λαὸς εἰς τὰ σκηνώματα αὐτῶν* over against MT, but the sentence is found in the MT of 2Kgs 8:20 (וַיִּנָּס הָעָם לְאׇהָלָיו).

[7] One cannot exclude the possibility that the LXX was later harmonized towards the Masoretic text, but this possibility lies beyond this paper.

2Kgs.[8]

2Chr 21:1-20	2Kgs 8:16-24
[1] וַיִּשְׁכַּב יְהוֹשָׁפָט עִם־אֲבֹתָיו וַיִּקָּבֵר עִם־אֲבֹתָיו בְּעִיר דָּוִיד וַיִּמְלֹךְ יְהוֹרָם בְּנוֹ תַּחְתָּיו	[22.51] וַיִּשְׁכַּב יְהוֹשָׁפָט עִם־אֲבֹתָיו וַיִּקָּבֵר עִם־אֲבֹתָיו בְּעִיר דָּוִד אָבִיו וַיִּמְלֹךְ יְהוֹרָם בְּנוֹ תַּחְתָּיו
	[8.16] ~~וּבִשְׁנַת חֲמֵשׁ לְיוֹרָם בֶּן־אַחְאָב מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל וִיהוֹשָׁפָט מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה~~
	~~מָלַךְ יְהוֹרָם בֶּן־יְהוֹשָׁפָט מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה~~
[2] וְלוֹ־אַחִים בְּנֵי יְהוֹשָׁפָט עֲזַרְיָה וְיִחִיאֵל וּזְכַרְיָהוּ וַעֲזַרְיָהוּ וּמִיכָאֵל וּשְׁפַטְיָהוּ כָּל־אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי יְהוֹשָׁפָט מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל	
[3] וַיִּתֵּן לָהֶם אֲבִיהֶם מַתָּנוֹת רַבּוֹת לְכֶסֶף וּלְזָהָב וּלְמִגְדָּנוֹת עִם־עָרֵי מְצֻרוֹת בִּיהוּדָה וְאֶת־הַמַּמְלָכָה נָתַן לִיהוֹרָם כִּי־הוּא הַבְּכוֹר	
[4] וַיָּקָם יְהוֹרָם עַל־מַמְלֶכֶת אָבִיו וַיִּתְחַזַּק וַיַּהֲרֹג אֶת־כָּל־אֶחָיו בֶּחָרֶב וְגַם מִשָּׂרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	
[5] בֶּן־שְׁלֹשִׁים וּשְׁתַּיִם שָׁנָה יְהוֹרָם בְּמָלְכוֹ וּשְׁמוֹנֶה שָׁנִים מָלַךְ בִּירוּשָׁלִָם	[17] בֶּן־שְׁלֹשִׁים וּשְׁתַּיִם שָׁנָה ~~הָיָה~~ בְּמָלְכוֹ וּשְׁמֹנֶה שָׁנָה שָׁנִים מָלַךְ בִּירוּשָׁלִָם
[6] וַיֵּלֶךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ מַלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ בֵּית אַחְאָב כִּי בַּת־אַחְאָב הָיְתָה לוֹ אִשָּׁה וַיַּעַשׂ הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה	[18] וַיֵּלֶךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ מַלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ בֵּית אַחְאָב כִּי בַּת־אַחְאָב הָיְתָה־לּוֹ לְאִשָּׁה וַיַּעַשׂ הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה
[7] וְלֹא־אָבָה יְהוָה לְהַשְׁחִית אֶת־בֵּית דָּוִיד לְמַעַן הַבְּרִית אֲשֶׁר כָּרַת לְדָוִיד וְכַאֲשֶׁר אָמַר לָתֵת לוֹ נִיר וּלְבָנָיו כָּל־הַיָּמִים	[19] וְלֹא־אָבָה יְהוָה לְהַשְׁחִית אֶת־יְהוּדָה לְמַעַן דָּוִד עַבְדּוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר אָמַר־לוֹ לָתֵת לוֹ נִיר לְבָנָיו כָּל־הַיָּמִים
[8] בְּיָמָיו פָּשַׁע אֱדוֹם מִתַּחַת יַד־יְהוּדָה וַיַּמְלִיכוּ עֲלֵיהֶם מֶלֶךְ	[20] בְּיָמָיו פָּשַׁע אֱדוֹם מִתַּחַת יַד־יְהוּדָה וַיַּמְלִכוּ עֲלֵיהֶם מֶלֶךְ
[9] וַיַּעֲבֹר יְהוֹרָם עִם־שָׂרָיו וְכָל־הָרֶכֶב עִמּוֹ וַיְהִי קָם לַיְלָה וַיַּךְ אֶת־אֱדוֹם הַסּוֹבֵב אֵלָיו וְאֵת שָׂרֵי הָרָכֶב	[21] וַיַּעֲבֹר יוֹרָם צָעִירָה וְכָל־הָרֶכֶב עִמּוֹ וַיְהִי־~~הוּא~~ קָם לַיְלָה וַיַּכֶּה אֶת־אֱדוֹם הַסֹּבֵיב אֵלָיו וְאֵת שָׂרֵי הָרָכֶב ~~וַיָּנָס הָעָם לְאָהֳלָיו~~
[10] וַיִּפְשַׁע אֱדוֹם מִתַּחַת יַד־יְהוּדָה עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה אָז תִּפְשַׁע לִבְנָה בָּעֵת הַהִיא מִתַּחַת יָדוֹ כִּי עָזַב אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתָיו	[22] וַיִּפְשַׁע אֱדוֹם מִתַּחַת יַד־יְהוּדָה עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה אָז תִּפְשַׁע לִבְנָה בָּעֵת הַהִיא
[11] גַּם־הוּא עָשָׂה־בָמוֹת בְּהָרֵי יְהוּדָה וַיַּזֶן אֶת־יֹשְׁבֵי יְרוּשָׁלִַם וַיַּדַּח אֶת־יְהוּדָה	
[12] וַיָּבֹא אֵלָיו מִכְתָּב מֵאֵלִיָּהוּ הַנָּבִיא לֵאמֹר כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי דָּוִיד אָבִיךָ תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר לֹא־הָלַכְתָּ בְּדַרְכֵי יְהוֹשָׁפָט אָבִיךָ וּבְדַרְכֵי אָסָא מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה	
[13] וַתֵּלֶךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ מַלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַתַּזְנֶה אֶת־יְהוּדָה וְאֶת־יֹשְׁבֵי יְרוּשָׁלִַם כְּהַזְנוֹת בֵּית אַחְאָב וְגַם אֶת־אַחֶיךָ בֵּית־אָבִיךָ הַטּוֹבִים מִמְּךָ הָרָגְתָּ	
[14] הִנֵּה יְהוָה נֹגֵף מַגֵּפָה גְּדוֹלָה בְּעַמֶּךָ וּבְבָנֶיךָ וּבְנָשֶׁיךָ וּבְכָל־רְכוּשֶׁךָ	
[15] וְאַתָּה בַּחֳלָיִם רַבִּים בְּמַחֲלַת מֵעֶיךָ עַד־יֵצְאוּ מֵעֶיךָ מִן־הַחֹלִי יָמִים עַל־יָמִים	
[16] וַיָּעַר יְהוָה עַל־יְהוֹרָם אֵת רוּחַ הַפְּלִשְׁתִּים וְהָעַרָבִים אֲשֶׁר עַל־יַד כּוּשִׁים	
[17] וַיַּעֲלוּ בִיהוּדָה וַיִּבְקָעוּהָ וַיִּשְׁבּוּ אֵת כָּל־הָרְכוּשׁ הַנִּמְצָא לְבֵית־הַמֶּלֶךְ וְגַם־בָּנָיו וְנָשָׁיו וְלֹא נִשְׁאַר־לוֹ בֵּן כִּי אִם־יְהוֹאָחָז קְטֹן בָּנָיו	
[18] וְאַחֲרֵי כָּל־זֹאת נְגָפוֹ יְהוָה בְּמֵעָיו לְחֳלִי לְאֵין מַרְפֵּא	

[8] ~~Strikethrough~~ = missing in Chr; Gray = minor variant; Outline = plus in Chr.

19 וַיְהִי לְיָמִים מִיָּמִים וּכְעֵת צֵאת הַקֵּץ לְיָמִים שְׁנַיִם יָצְאוּ
מַעָיו עִם־חָלְיוֹ וַיָּמָת בְּתַחֲלָאִים רָעִים וְלֹא־עָשׂוּ לוֹ עַמּוֹ
שְׂרֵפָה כִּשְׂרֵפַת אֲבֹתָיו
20 בֶּן־שְׁלֹשִׁים וּשְׁתַּיִם הָיָה בְמָלְכוֹ
וּשְׁמוֹנֶה שָׁנִים מָלַךְ בִּירוּשָׁלִָם
וַיֵּלֶךְ בְּלֹא חֶמְדָּה

וַיִּקְבְּרֻהוּ בְּעִיר דָּוִיד וְלֹא בְּקִבְרוֹת הַמְּלָכִים

[8.17 בֶּן־שְׁלֹשִׁים וּשְׁתַּיִם שָׁנָה הָיָה בְמָלְכוֹ וּשְׁמוֹנֶה שָׁנָה
שָׁנִים מָלַךְ בִּירוּשָׁלִָם]

~~23 וְיֶתֶר דִּבְרֵי יוֹרָם וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה הֲלוֹא־הֵם כְּתוּבִים
עַל־סֵפֶר דִּבְרֵי הַיָּמִים לְמַלְכֵי יְהוּדָה~~
~~24 וַיִּשְׁכַּב יוֹרָם עִם־אֲבֹתָיו~~
וַיִּקָּבֵר עִם־אֲבֹתָיו בְּעִיר דָּוִד

Observations

One single detail in the source text may have caused most of the larger changes the Chronicler made to the story. The leading difference is that in the Chronicler's account Jehoram is systematically a more evil and unfortunate king than in 2Kgs. The reason for the changes is probably Jehoram's connection with the house of Omri. According to 2Kgs 8:18, Jehoram was married to Ahab's daughter and therefore followed Ahab's sins. Since Ahab was regarded as one of the most sinful kings of the generally sinful Northern Kingdom, such a connection would, in the Chronicler's view, have necessarily meant that Jehoram was also a very evil king. Although already the source text regards Jehoram as a sinner (ויעש הרע בעיני יהוה), his actions are not described as particularly grave and there is no evident punishment. This was against the convictions and theology of the Chronicler and the text was changed accordingly. Jehoram was made one of the most evil kings and because Yahweh should have punished all evils kings, Judah faced many misfortunes during his reign and his fate is described as particularly unfortunate.

To make Jehoram's deeds and fate look as negative as possible, the Chronicler made several different changes. Jehoram was made a murdered of his own family (2Chr 21:4) as well as inciter of whole Judah to the sins of Israel and of Ahab (21:11). As a punishment, Jehoram and his family were hit with a terrible and incurable disease (21:14), which caused his bowels to fall out (21:15, 18-19). Judah was attacked by other nations, which robbed everything in the king's palace, including his wives and sons (21:17). As a final punishment, the king died of the disease, without being buried in the royal tombs (21:19-20). The Chronicler also claims to have known that nobody loved Jehoram when he died.

The descriptions in 2Chr 21 are partly unrealistic and contradict the account in 2Kgs 8 which also suggests that we are dealing with the Chronicler's theological views rising out of his anger against Ahab rather than with texts taken from another source. The changes are most likely the result of Chronicler's own reasoning, because most of the expansions do not contain information that one would not be able to deduce from 2Kgs 8 or that would not be a logical consequence of how the Chronicler viewed the past. Most of the additional material consists of rather stereotypical references to common sins and some of the most terrible punishments that can be imagined.

If one were to assume that the Chronicler used an external source, as suggested by some scholars (for example, Sara Japhet),[9] one would have to assume that already this unknown source described Jehoram's reign in a very negative light. The resulting text accords very well with the Chronicler's view of the past, also acknowledged by Japhet, who notes that the chapter "reflects the almost iron-bound theological system of the Chronicler's most basic convictions".[10] Rather than assuming an unknown source that viewed the past in a very similar way than the Chronicler, it is more probable that the Chronicler is behind the changes and additions that made the text to be closer to his own theology.[11] It should further be pointed out that the Chronicler's expansions are in many ways dependent on 1-2Kings (for example, the sins and the activity of Elijah). They are comprehensible as a reaction to 2Kgs 8 and especially to the connection with Ahab. That also the aggression of the other nations is directed, rather unrealistically, against Jehoram, not Judah, it is evident that the Chronicler attempted to focus the blame on Jehoram. Since more or less direct lines can be drawn from different parts and themes of the expansions to Jehoram's connection with Ahab, it is probable that the Chronicler did not use other sources than 1-2Kings, except possibly in 2Chr 21:2-3, which refers to Jehoram's brothers and their gifts, but even in these verses one should be cautious.[12]

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[9] For example, according to Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 806, assuming an external source "provides a better starting point for understanding the passages".

[10] Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 806.

[11] *Entia non sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitatem* – Occam's razor

[12] Most scholars assume that these verses contain information that was taken from another source. According to Japhet, *I & II Chronicles*, 807, "virtually all scholars" concede "the authenticity of these actions", but one should not underestimate the creative mind of the Chronicler especially when the whole passage was strongly shaped towards his own theology. In the present form, the main focus of v. 2-4 is the murder of Jehoram's brothers, which was against the Kingdom of his father (וַיָּקָם יְהוֹרָם

Besides the two large expansions, the Chronicler omitted and rewrote parts of the account in 2Kgs. One of the most interesting changes deals with Jehoram's burial. Although some words were adopted from 2Kgs 8:24 the text was effectively rewritten in 2Chr. According to 2Kgs 8:24, the king was buried with his fathers in the City of David, implying that he was buried in the royal cemetery, but the Chronicler was not satisfied with such an honorable end to the evil king. He added a sentence specifying that the king was *not* buried in the tombs of the kings. To be consistent, the expansion also necessitated the omission of עם־אבתיו.

2Kgs 8:24	2Chr 21:20
~~וַיִּשְׁכַּב יוֹרָם עִם־אֲבֹתָיו~~	וַיֵּלֶךְ בְּלֹא חֶמְדָּה
וַיִּקָּבֵר עִם־אֲבֹתָיו בְּעִיר דָּוִד	וַיִּקְבְּרֵהוּ בְּעִיר דָּוִיד וְלֹא בְּקִבְרוֹת הַמְּלָכִים

It is evident that 2Chr 21:20 contradicts 2Kgs 8:24, and it seems that the Chronicler consciously altered the fate of Jehoram. This may seem to be a small change, and similar changes can be found throughout Chronicles, but the implications and consequences of changes where part of the source text was rewritten, omitted and contradicted are considerable.[13] They suggest that scribes using on a source text could change it much more radically than usually assumed.

Some of the changes are not connected to Ahab. For example in 2Chr 21:7 the Chronicler wanted to avoid the impression that Judah was spared because of David, and the resulting text refers to the covenant Yahweh made with David. The emphasis is changed from David's deeds to Yahweh's deeds.[14] Similar rather small theological changes can be found throughout Chronicles.

7 וְלֹא־אָבָה יְהוָה לְהַשְׁחִית אֶת־בֵּית דָּוִיד	19 וְלֹא־אָבָה יְהוָה לְהַשְׁחִית אֶת־יְהוּדָה
לְמַעַן הַבְּרִית אֲשֶׁר כָּרַת לְדָוִיד	לְמַעַן דָּוִד ~~עַבְדּוֹ~~
וְכַאֲשֶׁר אָמַר לָתֵת לוֹ נִיר וּלְבָנָיו כָּל־הַיָּמִים	כַּאֲשֶׁר אָמַר־~~לוֹ~~ לָתֵת לוֹ נִיר לְבָנָיו כָּל־הַיָּמִים

עַל־מַמְלֶכֶת אָבִיו), and therefore it serves the main Chronicler's main idea in the passage, which was to show how evil Jehoram was.

[13] In the light of such passages, it would be difficult to define the Chronicles as Midrash or interpretation of 1-2Kings, but the extent to which the text is changed is a very radical also when we regard the Chronicler as an editor of an older text. One rarely assumes that older texts were so extensively rewritten and partly omitted.

[14] Some scholars, for example Japhet, I & II Chronicles, XXX, assume that the Chronicles may preserve a more original reading. The problem is the peculiar reference to the Judah and not to the house of David. Her argument is based on the assumption that the Chronicler's view is historically and linguistically more probable. Here we are walking on this ice, however, since it would be very difficult to determine what is historically more probable (note the discussion in the introduction on arguing on the basis of historical probabilities).

The reference to the book of the kings of Judah in 2Kgs 8:23 was omitted. The reference to the sources, usually the books of the kings, seems to have been omitted in two other passages as well. These passages similarly deal with the reigns of two particularly evil kings, Amaziah, and Amon. That these three kings were among the most evil ones may have been the reason for the omission of a reference to the source. The Chronicler perhaps wanted to avoid a reference to a source which described the kings in more positive terms. In Jehoram's case the radical expansions as well as the partial contradiction could be seen as a further reason for not referring to the sources.

As in other parts of Chronicles, a reference to the relative chronology of the Northern Kingdom in 2Kgs 8:16 was omitted, but this is a systematic omission in Chronicles. Moreover, in the Chronicler's account, a parallel to 2Kgs 8:17 is found twice so that the reference to Jehoram's age and length of reign is met in 2Chr 21:5 and 20. The repetition may have been necessary in order to return to the original text after the large expansion in v. 10-19. Most of the other differences are minor orthographical (יוֹרָם > יְהוֹרָם) and grammatical changes (omission of הָיָה in 8:17) as well as misunderstandings of names (עִם־שָׂרָיו > צָעִירָה).

King Joash

Joash's reign is described in 2Kgs 12:1-22. The Chronicler's account is radically different from that of 2Kgs 12 to the extent that it is reasonable to ask, whether 2Kgs 12 was the basis for the Chronicler's account. Different solutions have been offered for the relationship of these passages. Some scholars assume that all the additional material in the chapter is the result of the Chronicler's own reasoning[15], whereas others assume that he may also have used other sources.[16] Because of the differences, one could suggest that the source was an entirely different version of the story. That the Chronicler untypically referred to a Midrash of the book of the kings (מִדְרַשׁ סֵפֶר הַמְּלָכִים) in 24:27 could be used as an indication that the source was indeed completely different.[17] This possibility should not be excluded, but when one considers that the resulting text is one of the best and purest examples of the Chronist's theology, one

[15] Torrey, Ezra Studies, 1910, XXX; Rudoph, Chronikbücher, XXX
[16] McKenzie, The Chronicler's Use of the Deuteronomistic History, 110.
[17] For example, McKenzie, 110.

would have to assume a source which was ideologically very close to the Chronist. Moreover, the beginning of the story is taken word-for-word from 2Kgs 12, and it is therefore reasonable to assume that the Chronicler knew at least the beginning of this chapter. Although similar parallels are missing in the rest of the passage, shared vocabulary is found in *the same order* in both texts. When one looks at the themes of both passages, the similarities are even more apparent. In fact, all themes of 2Kgs 12 find a parallel in 2Chr 24, although in a radically altered form. Because of the correspondence of the themes, 2Chr 24 can in many ways be seen as a reaction to 2Kgs 12. Taken all these considerations together, it is probable that 2Chr 24 was composed in view of 2Kgs 12.

Assuming an unknown and lost source would not provide any heuristic key to understand the text, because then one would still have to assume that the Chronist is behind most of the differences and changes are well in line with the Chronicler's own ideology. There is no indication of external influence or unfamiliar motifs in the Chronist's version of the events. If other sources had been used, one would expect at least some new themes and excursions that digress from the themes of 2Kgs 12 and of the Chronicler's ideology. Consequently, since the changes in 2Chr 24 develop the text strongly towards the theology of the Chronicler, it is unnecessary to assume another source than 2Kgs 12 (Occam's razor).[18]

2Chr 24	2Kgs 12
[1] בֶּן־שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים יֹאשׁ בְּמָלְכוֹ	[1] בֶּן־שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים יְהוֹאָשׁ בְּמָלְכוֹ
	[2] ~~בַּשְּׁנַת־שֶׁבַע לְיֵהוּא מָלַךְ יְהוֹאָשׁ~~
וְאַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה מָלַךְ בִּירוּשָׁלִָם וְשֵׁם אִמּוֹ צִבְיָה מִבְּאֵר	וְאַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה מָלַךְ בִּירוּשָׁלִָם וְשֵׁם אִמּוֹ צִבְיָה מִבְּאֵר
שָׁבַע [2] וַיַּעַשׂ יוֹאָשׁ הַיָּשָׁר בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה	שָׁבַע [3] וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוֹאָשׁ הַיָּשָׁר בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה
כָּל־יְמֵי יְהוֹיָדָע הַכֹּהֵן	כָּל־יָמָיו אֲשֶׁר הוֹרָהוּ יְהוֹיָדָע הַכֹּהֵן
[3] וַיִּשָּׂא־לוֹ יְהוֹיָדָע נָשִׁים שְׁתַּיִם וַיּוֹלֶד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת	[4] ~~רַק הַבָּמוֹת לֹא־סָרוּ עוֹד הָעָם מְזַבְּחִים וּמְקַטְּרִים~~
	~~בַּבָּמוֹת~~ [5] ~~וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹאָשׁ אֶל־הַכֹּהֲנִים כֹּל כֶּסֶף~~
	~~הַקֳּדָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־יוּבָא בֵּית־יְהוָה כֶּסֶף עוֹבֵר אִישׁ כֶּסֶף~~
	~~נַפְשׁוֹת עֶרְכּוֹ כָּל־כֶּסֶף אֲשֶׁר יַעֲלֶה עַל לֵב־אִישׁ לְהָבִיא~~
	~~בֵּית יְהוָה~~ [6] ~~יִקְחוּ לָהֶם הַכֹּהֲנִים אִישׁ מֵאֵת מַכָּרוֹ וְהֵם~~
	~~יְחַזְּקוּ אֶת־בְּדֶק הַבַּיִת לְכֹל אֲשֶׁר־יִמָּצֵא שָׁם בְּדֶק~~ [7] ~~וַיְהִי~~
	~~בִּשְׁנַת עֶשְׂרִים וְשָׁלֹשׁ שָׁנָה לַמֶּלֶךְ יְהוֹאָשׁ לֹא־חִזְּקוּ~~
[4] וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי־כֵן הָיָה עִם־לֵב יוֹאָשׁ לְחַדֵּשׁ אֶת־בֵּית יְהוָה	
[5] וַיְקַבֵּץ אֶת־הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם צְאוּ לְעָרֵי	
יְהוּדָה וְקַבְּצוּ מִכָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל כֶּסֶף לְחַזֵּק אֶת־בֵּית אֱלֹהֵיכֶם	
מִדֵּי שָׁנָה בְּשָׁנָה וְאַתֶּם תְּמַהֲרוּ לַדָּבָר וְלֹא מִהֲרוּ הַלְוִיִּם	

[18] If one would assume a different source, the close parallels and connections throughout the passage imply that there is a literary dependency between the passages. Implying a middle stage in the process of the text's transmission would only mean that the omissions took place in a different stage. Because of the evident contradictions combined with the evident literary connection, it would be difficult to explain the connection between the texts without assuming omissions at some stage in the textual transmission. In other words, even if the Chronicler had used an unknown source one would have to assume that the changes took place in the transmission of the passage.

6 וַיִּקְרָא הַמֶּלֶךְ לִיהוֹיָדָע הָרֹאשׁ
וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מַדּוּעַ
לֹא־דָרַשְׁתָּ עַל־הַלְוִיִּם לְהָבִיא מִיהוּדָה וּמִירוּשָׁלַם
אֶת־מַשְׂאַת מֹשֶׁה עֶבֶד־יְהוָה וְהַקָּהָל לְיִשְׂרָאֵל לְאֹהֶל
הָעֵדוּת 7 כִּי עֲתַלְיָהוּ הַמְרַשַּׁעַת בָּנֶיהָ פָּרְצוּ אֶת־בֵּית
הָאֱלֹהִים וְגַם כָּל־קָדְשֵׁי בֵית־יְהוָה עָשׂוּ לַבְּעָלִים
8 וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אֲרוֹן אֶחָד וַיִּתְּנֵהוּ
בְּשַׁעַר בֵּית־יְהוָה חוּצָה 9 וַיִּתְּנוּ־קוֹל בִּיהוּדָה וּבִירוּשָׁלַם
לְהָבִיא לַיהוָה מַשְׂאַת מֹשֶׁה עֶבֶד־הָאֱלֹהִים עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל
בַּמִּדְבָּר וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ כָּל־הַשָּׂרִים וְכָל־הָעָם
10 וַיָּבִיאוּ וַיַּשְׁלִיכוּ לָאָרוֹן עַד־לְכַלֵּה
11 וַיְהִי בְּעֵת יָבִיא אֶת־הָאָרוֹן אֶל־פְּקֻדַּת הַמֶּלֶךְ בְּיַד
הַלְוִיִּם וְכִרְאוֹתָם כִּי־רַב הַכֶּסֶף
וּבָא סוֹפֵר הַמֶּלֶךְ וּפְקִיד כֹּהֵן הָרֹאשׁ וְיָעֲרוּ אֶת־הָאָרוֹן
וְיִשָּׂאֻהוּ וְישִׁיבֻהוּ אֶל־מְקוֹמוֹ כֹּה עָשׂוּ לְיוֹם בְּיוֹם
וַיַּאַסְפוּ־כֶסֶף לָרֹב
12 וַיִּתְּנֵהוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ וְיהוֹיָדָע אֶל־עוֹשֵׂה מְלֶאכֶת עֲבוֹדַת
בֵּית־יְהוָה וַיִּהְיוּ שֹׂכְרִים חֹצְבִים וְחָרָשִׁים
לְחַדֵּשׁ בֵּית יְהוָה וְגַם לְחָרָשֵׁי בַרְזֶל וּנְחֹשֶׁת
לְחַזֵּק אֶת־בֵּית יְהוָה 13 וַיַּעֲשׂוּ עֹשֵׂי הַמְּלָאכָה וַתַּעַל
אֲרוּכָה לַמְּלָאכָה בְּיָדָם וַיַּעֲמִידוּ אֶת־בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים
עַל־מַתְכֻּנְתּוֹ וַיְאַמְּצֻהוּ 14 וּכְכַלּוֹתָם הֵבִיאוּ לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ
וְיהוֹיָדָע אֶת־שְׁאָר הַכֶּסֶף וַיֵּעָשֵׂהוּ כֵלִים לְבֵית־יְהוָה כְּלֵי
שָׁרֵת וְהָעֹלוֹת וְכַפּוֹת וּכְלֵי זָהָב וְכֶסֶף וַיִּהְיוּ מַעֲלִים עֹלוֹת
בְּבֵית־יְהוָה תָּמִיד כֹּל יְמֵי יְהוֹיָדָע
15 וַיִּזְקַן יְהוֹיָדָע וַיִּשְׂבַּע יָמִים וַיָּמָת בֶּן־מֵאָה וּשְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה
בְּמֹתוֹ 16 וַיְקַבְּרֻהוּ בָּעִיר־דָּוִיד עִם־הַמְּלָכִים
כִּי־עָשָׂה טוֹבָה בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל וְעִם הָאֱלֹהִים וּבֵיתוֹ
17 וְאַחֲרֵי מוֹת יְהוֹיָדָע בָּאוּ שָׂרֵי יְהוּדָה וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ לַמֶּלֶךְ
אָז שָׁמַע הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲלֵיהֶם 18 וַיַּעַזְבוּ אֶת־בֵּית יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵיהֶם וַיַּעַבְדוּ אֶת־הָאֲשֵׁרִים וְאֶת־הָעֲצַבִּים
וַיְהִי־קֶצֶף עַל־יְהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלַם בְּאַשְׁמָתָם זֹאת
19 וַיִּשְׁלַח בָּהֶם נְבִאִים לַהֲשִׁיבָם אֶל־יְהוָה וַיָּעִידוּ בָם וְלֹא
הָאֱזִינוּ 20 וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים לָבְשָׁה
אֶת־זְכַרְיָה בֶּן־יְהוֹיָדָע הַכֹּהֵן וַיַּעֲמֹד מֵעַל לָעָם וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם
כֹּה אָמַר הָאֱלֹהִים לָמָּה אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים אֶת־מִצְוֹת יְהוָה
וְלֹא תַצְלִיחוּ כִּי־עֲזַבְתֶּם אֶת־יְהוָה וַיַּעֲזֹב אֶתְכֶם 21 וַיִּקְשְׁרוּ
עָלָיו וַיִּרְגְּמֻהוּ אֶבֶן בְּמִצְוַת
הַמֶּלֶךְ בַּחֲצַר בֵּית יְהוָה
22 וְלֹא־זָכַר יוֹאָשׁ הַמֶּלֶךְ הַחֶסֶד אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יְהוֹיָדָע אָבִיו
עִמּוֹ וַיַּהַרֹג אֶת־בְּנוֹ וּכְמוֹתוֹ אָמַר יַרְא יְהוָה וְיִדְרֹשׁ 23 וַיְהִי
לִתְקוּפַת הַשָּׁנָה עָלָה עָלָיו
חֵיל אֲרָם וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל־יְהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלַם וַיַּשְׁחִיתוּ
אֶת־כָּל־שָׂרֵי הָעָם מֵעָם וְכָל־שְׁלָלָם שִׁלְּחוּ לְמֶלֶךְ דַּרְמֶשֶׂק
24 כִּי בְמִצְעַר אַנְשֵׁים בָּאוּ חֵיל אֲרָם
וַיהוָה נָתַן בְּיָדָם חַיִל לָרֹב מְאֹד כִּי עָזְבוּ אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי
אֲבוֹתֵיהֶם וְאֶת־יוֹאָשׁ עָשׂוּ שְׁפָטִים
25 וּבְלֶכְתָּם מֵאֶצְלוֹ כִּי־עָזְבוּ אֹתוֹ בְּמַחֲלֻיִם רַבִּים הִתְקַשְׁרוּ

~~הַכֹּהֲנִים אֶת־בֶּדֶק הַבָּיִת~~
8 וַיִּקְרָא הַמֶּלֶךְ יְהוֹיָדָע וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מַדּוּעַ
~~אֵינְכֶם מְחַזְּקִים אֶת־בֶּדֶק הַבַּיִת וְעַתָּה אַל־תִּקְחוּ־כֶסֶף~~
~~מֵאֵת מַכְּרֵיכֶם כִּי־לְבֶדֶק הַבַּיִת תִּתְּנֻהוּ~~ 9 וַיֹּאתוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים
~~לְבִלְתִּי קַחַת־כֶּסֶף מֵאֵת הָעָם וּלְבִלְתִּי חַזֵּק אֶת־בֶּדֶק הַבָּיִת~~

10 וַיִּקַּח יְהוֹיָדָע הַכֹּהֵן אֲרוֹן אֶחָד וַיִּקֹּב חֹר בְּדַלְתּוֹ וַיִּתֵּן
אֹתוֹ אֵצֶל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ בַּיָּמִין בְּבוֹא־אִישׁ בֵּית יְהוָה וְנָתְנוּ־שָׁמָּה
הַכֹּהֲנִים שֹׁמְרֵי הַסַּף אֶת־כָּל־הַכֶּסֶף הַמּוּבָא בֵּית־יְהוָה

11 וַיְהִי כִּרְאוֹתָם כִּי־רַב הַכֶּסֶף בָּאָרוֹן
וַיַּעַל סֹפֵר הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל
~~וַיָּצֹרוּ וַיִּמְנוּ אֶת־הַכֶּסֶף הַנִּמְצָא בֵּית־יְהוָה~~
12 וְנָתְנוּ אֶת־הַכֶּסֶף הַמְּתֻכָּן
~~עַל־יַד[י] עֹשֵׂי הַמְּלָאכָה הַ[מ]פְקִדִים~~ בֵּית יְהוָה
~~וַיּוֹצִיאֻהוּ לְחָרָשֵׁי הָעֵין וְלַבֹּנִים הָעֹשִׂים~~ בֵּית יְהוָה
13 ~~וְלַגֹּדְרִים וּלְחֹצְבֵי הָאֶבֶן וְלִקְנוֹת עֵצִים וְאַבְנֵי מַחְצֵב~~
~~לְחַזֵּק אֶת־בֶּדֶק־בֵּית יְהוָה וּלְכֹל אֲשֶׁר־יֵצֵא עַל־הַבַּיִת~~
~~לְחַזְּקָה~~

14 ~~אַךְ לֹא יֵעָשֶׂה בֵּית יְהוָה סִפּוֹת כֶּסֶף מְזַמְּרוֹת מִזְרָקוֹת~~
~~חֲצֹצְרוֹת כָּל־כְּלִי זָהָב וּכְלִי־כֶסֶף מִן־הַכֶּסֶף הַמּוּבָא~~
~~בֵּית־יְהוָה~~
15 ~~כִּי־לְעֹשֵׂי הַמְּלָאכָה יִתְּנֻהוּ וְחִזְּקוּ־בוֹ אֶת־בֵּית יְהוָה~~
16 ~~וְלֹא יְחַשְּׁבוּ אֶת־הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר יִתְּנוּ אֶת־הַכֶּסֶף עַל־יָדָם~~
~~לָתֵת לְעֹשֵׂי הַמְּלָאכָה כִּי בֶאֱמֻנָה הֵם עֹשִׂים~~ 17 ~~כֶּסֶף אָשָׁם~~
~~וְכֶסֶף חַטָּאוֹת לֹא יוּבָא בֵּית יְהוָה לַכֹּהֲנִים יִהְיוּ~~ 18 ~~אָז~~
~~יַעֲלֶה חֲזָאֵל מֶלֶךְ אֲרָם~~
~~וַיִּלָּחֶם עַל־גַּת וַיִּלְכְּדָהּ וַיָּשֶׂם חֲזָאֵל פָּנָיו לַעֲלוֹת~~
~~עַל־יְרוּשָׁלִָם~~
19 ~~וַיִּקַּח יְהוֹאָשׁ מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה~~
~~אֵת כָּל־הַקָּדָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־הִקְדִּישׁוּ יְהוֹשָׁפָט וִיהוֹרָם וַאֲחַזְיָהוּ~~
~~אֲבֹתָיו מַלְכֵי יְהוּדָה וְאֶת קָדָשָׁיו וְאֵת כָּל־הַזָּהָב הַנִּמְצָא~~
~~בְּאֹצְרוֹת בֵּית־יְהוָה וּבֵית הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּשְׁלַח לַחֲזָאֵל מֶלֶךְ אֲרָם~~
~~וַיַּעַל מֵעַל יְרוּשָׁלִָם~~ 20 ~~וַיְהִי דִּבְרֵי יוֹאָשׁ וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה~~
~~הֲלוֹא־הֵם~~
כְּתוּבִים עַל־סֵפֶר דִּבְרֵי הַיָּמִים לְמַלְכֵי יְהוּדָה

עָלָיו עֲבָדָיו בִּדְמֵי בְּנֵי יְהוֹיָדָע הַכֹּהֵן וַיַּהַרְגֻהוּ עַל־מִטָּתוֹ וַיָּמֹת	[21] ~~וַיָּקֻמוּ~~ עֲבָדָיו וַיִּקְשְׁרוּ־קֶשֶׁר וַיַּכּוּ אֶת־יוֹאָשׁ בֵּית מִלֹּא ~~הִירֵד סִלָּא~~
וַיִּקְבְּרֻהוּ בְּעִיר דָּוִיד	[22] וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אֹתוֹ ~~עִם־אֲבֹתָיו~~ בְּעִיר דָּוִד]
וְלֹא קְבָרֻהוּ בְּקִבְרוֹת הַמְּלָכִים	
[26] וְאֵלֶּה הַמִּתְקַשְּׁרִים עָלָיו	
זָבָד בֶּן־שִׁמְעָת הָעַמּוֹנִית וִיהוֹזָבָד בֶּן־שִׁמְרִית הַמּוֹאֲבִית	[22] ~~וַיִּזְבָּד~~ בֶּן־שִׁמְעָת וִיהוֹזָבָד בֶּן־שֹׁמֵר ~~עֲבָדָיו הִכֻּהוּ וַיָּמָת~~
[27] וּבָנָיו וְ/יִרְב הַמַּשָּׂא עָלָיו וְיִסּוֹד בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים הִנָּם	וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אֹתוֹ ~~עִם־אֲבֹתָיו~~ בְּעִיר דָּוִד
כְּתוּבִים עַל־מִדְרַשׁ סֵפֶר הַמְּלָכִים	[20] כְּתוּבִים עַל־סֵפֶר]
וַיִּמְלֹךְ אֲמַצְיָהוּ בְנוֹ תַּחְתָּיו	וַיִּמְלֹךְ אֲמַצְיָה בְנוֹ תַּחְתָּיו

Many details in the source text were against the Chronicler's theological and other conceptions, but especially the basic development of the events as described in 2Kgs 12 would have been impossible for him. According to 2Kgs 12, king Joash was a good king, because Jehoiada, the priest, had taught him, and consequently Joash took interest in the temple and restored it. Except for the high places, which are a recurrent sin of all good and evil kings of Judah till King Hezekiah, king Joash is not told to have done anything wrong. At the end of the reign, however, he had to give all the holy things from the temple as well as the gold of the temple and of the palace to Hazael the Aramean king. This was done in order to save Jerusalem from an imminent attack by the Arameans. The author of 2Kgs 12 does not appear to put the blame on the king, for the event is described rather neutrally as a necessary action to save Jerusalem from a possible destruction.

For the Chronicler the temple was the center of theology and giving its holy items and treasures to the Arameans would have been a total catastrophe and sign of Yahweh's anger and punishment.[19] In view of the Chronicler's concepts of divine justice and just retribution, there was an evident contradiction between the goodness of Joash and the robbing of the temple. The course and development of events as described in 2Kgs 12 would hardly have been possible, and this is probably the main reason why the entire passage had to be effectively rewritten. Because the contradiction was too severe, small changes, like in many other passages, would not have solved the problem that a good king caused a total catastrophe to the temple.

The differences between the passages are so extensive that it is possible to draw attention only to the most illustrative cases. In most of the changes in 2Chr 24, the influence of the theology of the Chronicler is evident. The beginning of Joash's reign as described in 2Kgs 12 is followed rather closely in 2Chr 24, but the reference

[19] The centrality of the temple in the Chronicler's theology is evident. Cf. most commentaries.

to the relative chronology with Israel (2Kgs 12:2aα) is typically omitted. A more interesting and, for the rest of the passage, crucial change deals with the role of Jehoiada. According to 2Kgs 12:3, Joash was a good king all the days his life (כל־ימיו), because Jehoiada had taught him. The Chronicler omitted a small section of this sentence that changed the whole idea. According to the Chronicler, Joash was a good king all the days *of king Jehoiada* (כל־ימי יהוידע).

When Jehoiada's goodness was restricted to the time that Jehoiada lived, the Chronicler could make other changes that explained the contradiction between the king's goodness and the restoration of the temple on the one hand and the catastrophe on the other. In his account, Joash's reign is divided between two different periods, divided by Jehoiada's death. The temple is restored during the time that Jehoiada lived, whereas the time after his death is characterized by sin and punishment. The idea of Jehoiada's death is added into the Chronicler's account (v. 15-16), followed by several other insertions: Immediately after Jehoiada died, Joash listens to the leaders of Judah (v. 17), which then leads to the abandonment of the temple and the worship of the Asherim and idols (v. 18). The prophets sent by Yahweh (v. 19-20) are ignored and finally Joash orders Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, to be stoned to death (v. 21-22). The words of the dying Zechariah function as the bridge from the sins to the ensuing catastrophe: "May Yahweh see and avenge" (v. 22). The attack of the Arameans is described in the following verse. The additional material in verses 15-22 serves the Chronicler's broader conception that a catastrophe is always a punishment for sins. These verses explain how the goodness was turned into evilness, and they are imperative in the Chronicler's attempt to transform the story to correspond with his theological conceptions.

Although it is probable that most or all of the insertion in verses 17-22 are more or less inventions of the Chronicler, he was not entirely free to create the whole story. 2Kgs 12 is the starting point, which, although rejected, is the basis to which the Chronicler had to react and on which he also built his own story. He kept the order of the events and was to some extent bound by the general events described in the source. At the same time he was free to rewrite practically all the details and thoroughly change the course of events.

The Chronist's position is an interesting mix of constraints set by the source text and freedom to create new material based on his own conceptions of what must

have happened, but it is not easy to fully comprehend the core of his position. He evidently could not deny many of the events described in 2Kgs 12 and he was also convinced that the general development of events as described in 2Kgs 12 is reliable. Perhaps we are dealing with 'facts' generally acknowledged by the Chronicler's community that could not be changed without endangering the credibility of the new text.[20] But the Chronicler was not bound by the source text only because of external or societal pressure. In many other passages the Chronicler regarded 1-2Kings as an authoritative and reliable text, which he would follow word-for-word as long as there were no theological or ideological problems. In Chr 24 this was not the case of Joash and the reasons for omitting, adding, inventing and rewriting are ideological/theological, as we have seen.

A closer looks at one part of the passage demonstrates how the Chronicler preserved the general idea, but omitted and rewrote the entire passage. A central theme in both versions is the restoration of the temple. The king decided to restore the temple, but a financial contribution of the people was needed as well. The priests or Levites were responsible for collecting the money, but there was a problem with this. The priests or Levites were accused of neglecting their task, so that the king had to place a chest where the people who visited the temple should put money in. In both versions the temple is finally restored.

According to 2Kgs 12:5-6, the money should be collected from the people in order to repair the breaches of the temple. One receives the impression that it is a one time event. The Chronicler's version, however, implies that there should have been an annual payment or even a tax for the repairs (מִדֵּי שָׁנָה בְּשָׁנָה) and that Moses had ordered such a payment (מַשְׂאַת מֹשֶׁה).[21] Also the restoration is assumed to have been a much bigger issue in the Chronicler's version. In 2Kgs 12 only the breaches had to be repaired (וְהֵם יְחַזְּקוּ אֶת־בֶּדֶק הַבַּיִת), but by omitting the reference to the breaches the Chronicler implied that the whole temple had to be repaired (לְחַזֵּק אֶת־בֵּית אֱלֹהֵיכֶם, v. 5, 12) or even renewed (לְחַדֵּשׁ בֵּית יְהוָה, v. 12). The Chronicler had changed a

[20] See Ehud Ben Zvi, Shifting the Gaze: Historiographic Constraints in Chronicles and their Implications, 2006, 82-85.

[21] It is not clear which passage in the Pentateuch is meant, if any. Ex 32:5-29 refers to the gifts that the Israelites gave for the construction of the tabernacle, but they are clearly voluntary gifts and it is a one time event.

description of reparation of breaches during Joash's reign into an implicit message that the temple should be renewed every year and that Moses in fact had ordered the Israelites to pay.

2Chr 24	2Kgs 12
[4] וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי־כֵן הָיָה עִם־לֵב יוֹאָשׁ לְחַדֵּשׁ אֶת־בֵּית יְהוָה	[5] ~~וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹאָשׁ אֶל־הַכֹּהֲנִים כֹּל כֶּסֶף~~ ~~הַקָּדָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־יוּבָא בֵּית־יְהוָה כֶּסֶף עוֹבֵר אִישׁ כֶּסֶף~~ ~~נַפְשׁוֹת עֶרְכּוֹ כָּל־כֶּסֶף אֲשֶׁר יַעֲלֶה עַל לֵב־אִישׁ לְהָבִיא~~ ~~בֵּית יְהוָה~~ [6] ~~יִקְחוּ לָהֶם הַכֹּהֲנִים אִישׁ מֵאֵת מַכָּרוֹ וְהֵם~~ ~~יְחַזְּקוּ אֶת־בֶּדֶק הַבַּיִת לְכֹל אֲשֶׁר־יִמָּצֵא שָׁם בֶּדֶק~~ [7] ~~וַיְהִי~~ ~~בִּשְׁנַת עֶשְׂרִים וְשָׁלֹשׁ שָׁנָה לַמֶּלֶךְ יְהוֹאָשׁ לֹא־חִזְּקוּ~~ ~~הַכֹּהֲנִים אֶת־בֶּדֶק הַבָּיִת~~ [8] ~~וַיִּקְרָא הַמֶּלֶךְ יְהוֹאָשׁ לִיהוֹיָדָע~~ הַכֹּהֵן ~~וְלַכֹּהֲנִים~~ ~~וַיֹּאמֶר~~ אֲלֵהֶם מְדוּעַ ~~אֵינְכֶם מְחַזְּקִים אֶת־בֶּדֶק הַבַּיִת וְעַתָּה אַל־תִּקְחוּ־כֶסֶף~~ ~~מֵאֵת מַכְּרֵיכֶם כִּי־לְבֶדֶק הַבַּיִת תִּתְּנֵהוּ~~
[5] וַיְקַבֵּץ אֶת־הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם צְאוּ לְעָרֵי יְהוּדָה וְקַבְּצוּ מִכָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל כֶּסֶף לְחַזֵּק אֶת־בֵּית אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מִדֵּי שָׁנָה בְּשָׁנָה וְאַתֶּם תְּמַהֲרוּ לַדָּבָר וְלֹא מִהֲרוּ הַלְוִיִּם [6] וַיִּקְרָא הַמֶּלֶךְ לִיהוֹיָדָע הָרֹאשׁ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מַדּוּעַ לֹא־דָרַשְׁתָּ עַל־הַלְוִיִּם לְהָבִיא מִיהוּדָה וּמִירוּשָׁלַם אֶת־מַשְׂאַת מֹשֶׁה עֶבֶד־יְהוָה וְהַקָּהָל לְיִשְׂרָאֵל לְאֹהֶל הָעֵדוּת	

The Aramean intrusion is changed in a similar way. The general idea that the Arameans threatened Judah and eventually received a substantial booty is preserved, but practically all the details were rewritten. In 2Kgs 12:18-19, king Joash pays a tribute to the Arameans in order to save Jerusalem. The king is portrayed as a prisoner of the events, who was forced to empty the entire treasury and the temple, but Jerusalem was saved and the Arameans did not attack Jerusalem. In the Chronicler's version of the intrusion, the Arameans attack Joash, Jerusalem is conquered, all the leaders are killed and the booty is taken to Damascus (24:23). The Chronicler wanted to stress that even thought the Aramean army consisted of only couple of men (בִּמְצָעַר אֲנָשִׁים) it prevailed over the huge Judean army (חַיִל לָרֹב מְאֹד), because Yahweh wanted to punish the Judeans. According to the Chronicler, Joash was also wounded in the attack. After the Arameans had left, Joash's servants conspired and killed him (24:25). The idea of conspiracy was again taken from 2Kgs 12, but in a rewritten form. Whereas 2Kgs 12:21 gives no reason for the conspiracy, in the Chronicler' account it is the murder of Jehoiada's son.[22] As the final punishment, the king was not buried in the tombs of the kings (ולא קברהו בקברות המלכים). Here the Chronicler again contradicted his source, according to which he was buried with his fathers

[22] Speculating about the historical context in the 9th century BCE, one could easily see that a king who is forced to empty the entire state and temple treasury and give it to a foreign king would put himself into a very difficult position and cause substantial economical difficulties and eventually unrest.

(עִם־אֲבֹתָיו). Note that the Chronicler omitted all references to the robbing of the temple and the palace as well. He just refers to the booty in general (**וכל־שללם**). Especially the idea that the Arameans took the temple treasury may have been difficult if not impossible for the Chronicler to adopt, because it was Yahweh's punishment for Joash. Most of the catastrophes described in the Chronicler's account befell on Joash.

Because of the preservation of most of the themes and general events of 2Kgs 12, the Chronicler was in some way convinced that they really took place. At the same time he was convinced that practically everything occurred in another way. He did not invent the past freely, but the result is practically a free invention of many events and most of the details in the events that he found in the source. The Chronicler was very probably convinced that his own view of the events was correct.

Word-for-Word Rendering of the Source Text

In many parts of Chronicles, the author followed his source text in 1-2Kings word-for-word. There are several sections where the source text is replicated without any major changes. An example from 2Kgs 14/2Chr 25 is rather typical of many passages. Most of the text was taken from 1-2Kings but there are occasional expansions, omissions and slight changes.

2Chr 25	2Kgs 14
[20] וְלֹא־שָׁמַע אֲמַצְיָהוּ	[11] וְלֹא־שָׁמַע אֲמַצְיָהוּ
כִּי מֵהָאֱלֹהִים הִיא לְמַעַן תִּתָּם בְּיָד	
כִּי דָרְשׁוּ אֶת אֱלֹהֵי אֱדוֹם	
[21] וַיַּעַל יוֹאָשׁ מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּתְרָאוּ פָנִים הוּא וַאֲמַצְיָהוּ מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה בְּבֵית שֶׁמֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר לִיהוּדָה [22] וַיִּנָּגֶף יְהוּדָה לִפְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיָּנֻסוּ אִישׁ לְאָהָלָיו	וַיַּעַל יְהוֹאָשׁ מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּתְרָאוּ פָנִים הוּא וַאֲמַצְיָהוּ מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה בְּבֵית שֶׁמֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר לִיהוּדָה [12] וַיִּנָּגֶף יְהוּדָה לִפְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיָּנֻסוּ אִישׁ לְאָהֳל[י]ו
[23] וְאֶת אֲמַצְיָהוּ מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה בֶּן־יוֹאָשׁ בֶּן־יְהוֹאָחָז תָּפַשׂ יוֹאָשׁ מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּבֵית שָׁמֶשׁ וַיְבִיאֵהוּ יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם וַיִּפְרֹץ בְּחוֹמַת יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם מִשַּׁעַר אֶפְרַיִם עַד־שַׁעַר הַפִּנָּה אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת אַמָּה [24] וְכָל־הַזָּהָב וְהַכֶּסֶף	וְאֶת אֲמַצְיָהוּ מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה בֶּן־יוֹאָשׁ בֶּן־אֲחַזְיָהוּ תָּפְשׂוּ יְהוֹאָשׁ מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּבֵית שֶׁמֶשׁ וַיָּבֹאוּ [וַיָּבֹא] יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם וַיִּפְרֹץ בְּחוֹמַת יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם בְּשַׁעַר אֶפְרַיִם עַד־שַׁעַר הַפִּנָּה אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת אַמָּה [14] וְלָקַח ~~אֶת~~־כָּל־הַזָּהָב וְהַכֶּסֶף
וְאֶת כָּל־הַכֵּלִים הַנִּמְצְאִים בְּבֵית־הָאֱלֹהִים עִם־עֹבֵד אֱדוֹם וְאֶת־אֹצְרוֹת בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ וְאֶת בְּנֵי הַתַּעֲרֻבוֹת וַיָּשָׁב שֹׁמְרוֹנָה	וְאֶת כָּל־הַכֵּלִים הַנִּמְצְאִים בֵּית־יְהוָה וּבְאֹצְרוֹת בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ וְאֶת בְּנֵי הַתַּעֲרֻבוֹת וַיָּשָׁב שֹׁמְרוֹנָה

The faithful rendering of the text in many passages implies that the Chronicler's attitude towards his source text was careful and that he did not deviate from the source text easily. The author of Chronicles took the story of 1-2Kings as the starting point, and in most cases there is an evident theological or ideological reason for not following the source text. Many of the deviations can be traced to a small number of commonly acknowledged theological themes important for the Chronicler.[23] When the Chronicler deviated from 1-2Kings by expansions, he nearly always followed the order of events in 1-2Kings and after the larger expansions returned to the text of 1-2Kings. Even in many expansions, radical changes and digressions, 1-2Kings was the basis to which the Chronicler reacted (for example 2Kgs 12/2Chr 24), and the resulting text was an amalgamation of themes from 1-2Kings and his own theological ideas.

The rigorous use of 1-2Kings implies that this text was influential and even authoritative for the Chronicler. Although we are far from unchangeable divine authority, the Chronicler regarded 1-2Kings as a generally reliable document for Israel's past. For the Chronicler 1-2Kings was the authoritative text for Israel's past and history. One could characterize 1-2Kings as being historically authoritative for the Chronicler, but, because of the radical changes in theologically problematical issues, not theologically authoritative or having divine authority.[24]

It is also significant that the Chronicler rarely provided a free rendering of the source text. He either followed it rigorously or provided a very different version of the events. Apart from minor changes or clarifications, there are only a very few changes which do not have an ideological or theological background. For example, the Chronicler rarely expressed the same idea by using other synonymous words or sentences. Since several changes had taken place in Hebrew between the time of writing of 1-2Kings and 1-2Chr, it is evident that it was not the Chronicler's aim to update the language. There is no evidence that the Chronicler wanted to paraphrase the older text. Unless there was a theological reason, the starting point seems to have been to preserve the older text. The careful rendering of the source text indicates that the Chronicler regarded it to possess considerable authority, but, what is more

[23] Such as the Temple, priestly interests, divine retribution, evilness of the Northern Kingdom, a connection of a Judean king with Israel's dynasty.

[24] This distinction is necessary because of the word authoritative is often used without specifying what exactly was meant. It is probable that there were different levels and spheres of authority that the ancient readers regarded the texts to possess.

important, this kind of methodology is very reminiscent of what is usually assumed of redactors or editors of the Hebrew Bible, who adopted the older text very carefully and took it as the basis of the new redaction, unless there was a theological or ideological reason to update it.

Expansions

Although the source text was followed in many parts, there are constant expansions. The expansions are of different size, ranging from minor clarifications (for example of names 2Chr 21:5) to major expansions of entire passages (e.g., 2Chr 21:10b-19). Some of the expansions may be based on other sources (e.g., 2Chr 21:2-3), but in most cases they were evidently caused by something in 1-2Kings which required an improvement, comment or clarification. In some cases, a single detail in the source text may have caused several and large expansions. For example, Jehoram's connection with Ahab sparked several additions, which are probably Chronicler's own inventions without any basis in any source (2Chr 21:10aβ*-19).[25] There are also some issues and themes that were recurrently added to the text. For example the involvement of the priests and Levites was added into many passages.[26] In some cases they are just added as additional actors because the Chronicler (or a later editor of the Chronicles) generally assumed them to have a larger role in society. In some cases, they replaced the original actors of the older text. At the background is the Chronicler's notion that the priests had a more central role than what the source text told. For example, the foreign mercenaries of 2Kgs 11:4 (כרי ורצים) were replaced by priests and Levites as the main participants and supporters of Jehoiada's rebellion:

2Chr 23:1	2Kgs 11:4
וּבַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁבִעִית הִתְחַזֵּק יְהוֹיָדָע	[4] וּבַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁבִיעִית שָׁלַח יְהוֹיָדָע
וַיִּקַּח אֶת־שָׂרֵי הַמֵּאוֹת	וַיִּקַּח אֶת־שָׂרֵי הַמֵּא[י]ות
לְעֲזַרְיָהוּ בֶן־יְרֹחָם וְלִישְׁמָעֵאל בֶּן־יְהוֹחָנָן וְלַעֲזַרְיָהוּ	~~לַכְּרִי וְלָרָצִים~~

[25] Here again it should be stressed that the Chronicler was probably convinced of the actuality of the events he invented. They are an amalgamation and consequence of the source text that was interpreted through his own ideological and theological conceptions.

[26] Many of these plusses may be further additions to the Chronicler's text. Thus for example, Georg Steins, *Die Chronik als kanonisches Abschlussphänomen : Studien zur Entstehung und Theologie von 1/2 Chronik*, Beltz: Weinheim, 1995, 415-439. For example, in Ezra-Nehemiah most, perhaps all, references to the Levites are later additions to the composition. Levitical editors added the involvement of the priests and Levites in the events.

בֶּן־עֹבֵד וְאֶת־מַעֲשֵׂיָהוּ בֶּן־עֲדָיָהוּ וְאֶת־אֱלִישָׁפָט
בֶּן־זִכְרִי עָמְוֹ בַּבְּרִית [2] וַיֶּסְבּוּ בִּיהוּדָה וַיְקַבְּצוּ
אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם מִכָּל־עָרֵי יְהוּדָה וְרָאשֵׁי הָאָבוֹת לְיִשְׂרָאֵל

Theological problems regularly caused the Chronist to expand the text, but the methods of expanding the text differ significantly. In many cases the source text did not contain any parallel for the expansion. The expansion may be an event that the Chronicler believed must have occurred. This is the reason for many of the expansions in the passages describing the reigns of Jehoram's and Joash. For example, Jehoram was made a more evil king by expansions which contain stereotypical sins found in other parts of 1-2Kings, whereas his punishment is described in the most terrible terms that can be imagined. Since Jehoram was married to the daughter of Ahab, he must have committed the same sins as Ahab and must have been punished severely by Yahweh.

On the other hand, there are expansions where the source text had only a slight theological problem and a couple of words were added to improve the text. Such expansions are often found in texts which are otherwise followed rather closely, for example 2Kgs 8:19. The idea that Judah was saved because of David was changed so that the reason for saving Judah was ultimately the covenant that Yahweh had made with David. David's righteousness as the reason was changed to that of Yahweh, who kept his covenant. The idea in 2Kgs 8:19 that David's righteousness saved Judah seemed to have been problematic in the Chronicler's theology.

2Kgs 8:19	2Chr 21:7
וְלֹא־אָבָה יְהוָה לְהַשְׁחִית אֶת־יְהוּדָה לְמַעַן דָּוִד ~~עַבְדּוֹ~~	וְלֹא־אָבָה יְהוָה לְהַשְׁחִית אֶת־בֵּית דָּוִיד לְמַעַן הַבְּרִית אֲשֶׁר כָּרַת לְדָוִיד

Rewriting

There are many examples where the Chronicler rewrote the source text. In some cases he rewrote individual words only (e.g., 2Chr 23:8), whereas in others entire passages were rewritten to the extent that only some words of the source text were preserved (2Chr 24). When entire passages were rewritten, it is only the general theme, order of events and the occasional use of parallel words which reveal that 2Kgs was used as the starting point. This is the case for example in 2Chr 23:1-10 and 2Chr 24:1-27. In the latter passage, rewriting is much more extensive than in 23:1-10, where more of the older text was preserved.

The method and rules of rewriting are difficult to identify very exactly, but it seems probable that a major theological problem in the source text and especially in its general development of events seems to have been a reason for rewriting. Regarding the conservative attitude of the Chronicler in many passages to preserve the source text very carefully, it seems fair to assume that he would resort to rewriting only if the source contained too many theological problems that expansions only would not have solved the theological problems.

In view of what is usually assumed of the redactor's methods towards the source text, rewriting is clearly more common and extensive in Chronicles. If Chronicles is a witness to the editorial processes of Second Temple Judaism, much more radical reshaping of older traditions has to be assumed.

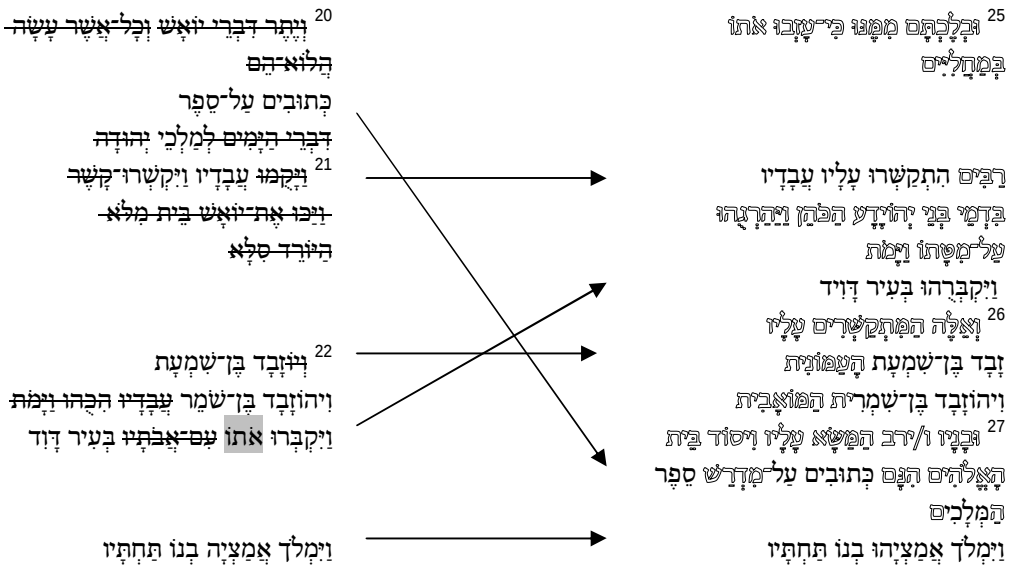
Omissions

The most radical changes to the source text were the omissions. Omissions are often connected to rewritings, but in a pure omission the text was completely left out without any parallel in the new composition. There are many possibilities look at the omissions. They range from the omissions of individual words (2Kgs 11:4 – 2Chr 23:1; 2Kgs 8:24 – 2Chr 21:20) to large omissions of entire passages. The clearest of large omissions is that of almost all stories concerning the Northern Kingdom. The history of what the Chronicler regarded as the apostate Israel was completely left out. One could characterize such omissions as intentional systemic omissions. On the other hand, there are omissions where the Chronicler did not agree with some detail, theme or course of events in the source text, and omitted it. For example, the robbing of the temple treasury was omitted as theologically problematical. The leading idea behind a text being omitted seems to be a theological difficulty. Most omissions can be connected to a contradiction with what is generally known about the Chronicler's theology.

Reorganization

The Chronicler also reorganized parts of the source text so that in his account the order of events may differ. However, in 2Chr 21-25//2Kgs 8-14 only a limited number of texts were relocated. 1Kgs 22:51 was located in a very different context than in 2Chr, but most of the material between 1Kgs 22:51 and 2Kgs 8:16 was omitted in the Chronicler's account in any case. In some cases, the relocation of texts is connected to a duplication of a text. 2Kgs 8:17 was duplicated so that it is found in 2Chr 21:5 and 21:20.

An illustrative example of a text where sentences were relocated is 2Kgs 12:20-22 vs. 2Chr 24:25-27. The example is partly disturbed by rewritings and omissions, but shows that the Chronicler did not shun from reorganizing the older text very freely if he deemed it theologically necessary.



Discussion

Although much of the text was radically changed, in most passages the Chronicler followed his source very closely. He could adopt the older text verse after verse without making any significant changes (2Chr 21:5-10a; 23:7-18). He is effectively copying much of the older text word-for-word. In these sections his method of using 1-2Kings does not differ from a copyist-editor, who made an occasional change, but who took almost every word from the source text. If one would only compare 2Kgs 8:17-22 and 2Chr 21:5-10, for example, one could easily be lead to assume that we are dealing with two only slightly deviating versions of the same composition.

In view of the passages where the source is followed very closely, the sudden change to radical rewritings and omissions may first seem surprising. It is as if a different mode was taken from one passage to another. One could even be led to assume that a different author took over. However, when the changes are seen in the light of the Chronicler's theology, it becomes clear that the changes were caused by theological or ideological problems in the source text. Theological interests and motives overran the Chronicler's otherwise conservative stand towards the source text. That the technique of using the source text could be changed by the same author because of theological reasons is significant. If one assumes that the Chronicler's position is representative of the ancient editors', redactors' or scribes' technique of

using the older text, one would have to take into consideration that scribes who used older sources may have been simultaneously conservative and free depending on the passage and themes that were being used.

One usually assumes that the redactors used the older text very carefully, but resorted to additions when it was theologically necessary. The Chronicler's position towards his source in 1-2Kings would be well in line with such an assumption (for example, 2Kgs 8:16-24 and 2Chr 21:1-20). In such passages, the Chronicler's ise of the source is very similar to what the view one has of the redactor's techniques. However, Chronicles shows that in some passages the text was changed more radically. The question is whether the Chronicler's occasionally radical use of the source is typical of redactions in the early Second Temple Period or whether the more traditional position where the source text was not changed is more probable. The problem with the latter position is that, to my knowledge, it has never been proven in scientific discussion or analysis, and it is not attested in texts where an author is using a source. The Chronicles therefore provides evidence to assume that radical changes have to be considered as a real and potential possibility when we consider the techniques of scribes who older sources to form a new composition and edition.

If the Chronicler is understood as a typical redactor, the implications of the empirical evidence for understanding the work of redactors in the Second Temple Judaism are significant. One usually assumes that the redactions did not rewrite and omit older texts and that they primarily edited it by expansions.[27] In view of the Chronicles, this position would be untenable and the pressure has recently increased from the observations made in many Qumranic texts. It is highly problematic that one has assumed *a priori* that expansions are the only method of reshaping older texts. It is not possible to discuss the reasons for this *a priori* assumption here, but if this position can be shown to be incorrect, the implications for understanding the birth of many texts in the Hebrew Bible are considerable. Especially problematical this is for traditional exegesis (Literary and redaction criticism), which is methodologically based on the assumption that the texts were only expanded.

[27] For example, Christoph Levin, *Das Alte Testament*, C. H. Beck: München, 2001, 25: "Es wurde in der Tat nichts davongetan: Der gegebene Text blieb in aller Regel unverändert und wurde jedenfalls nicht gekürzt; doch hinzugetan wurde laufend und in groβem Umfang." See also Christoph Levin, *The Old Testament*, Princeton University Press: Princeton & Oxford, 2005, 27: "until about the end of the Persian era … nothing was taken away. The given text remained unchanged; at least it was not abridged. Nevertheless it was continually added to, and extensively so." Levin's position is very typical although it is very difficult to find any references to this issue in traditional exegesis.

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2Kings 2: Scrutinizing a "Prophetic Succession"

I. Introduction

The biblical stories about the prophet Elisha appear as a cycle of diverse narrative material (1Kgs 19:19-21, 2Kgs 2:1-8:15 [minus 3:1-3], 9:1-3, 13:20-21]). These stories are integrated sometimes more sometimes less tightly into the deuteronomistic notes on the kings Joram (852-841 BCE), Jehu (841-814 BCE), Jehoahaz (814-798 BCE), and Jehoash (798-782 BCE). Most of the anecdotes about Elisha appear to be loosely woven together. Almost none follows as a clear consequence of the previous story. Contradictions therefore occur, as might be expected. Hence, one aim of my dissertation is to reconstruct the growth of the Elisha cycle and to explore how and when the stories became connected with the Elijah stories and at what point in history they made their way into the Books of Kings.

One crucial chapter for the quest for the connection between the two prophetical figures is 2Kgs 2. The story about Elijah's ascension marks the transition between the Elijah and Elisha cycle. Elisha has been mentioned only once before that chapter and interestingly there is not a single reference to Elijah in the Elisha cycle after 2Kgs 2.

This chapter can easily be defined from the surrounding chapters due to the headline in 2Kgs 2:1 and the beginning of the deuteronomistic introductory résumé for Jehoram of Israel in 2Kgs 3:1. The chapter 2Kgs 2 itself consists of three stories, which are separated by their different protagonists, different localization and independent story arcs. 2Kgs 2:1-18 tells the story of Elijah's ascension and Elisha's succession. The accounts in 2:19-22 and 2:23-25 are short miracle stories depicting how Elisha heals a spring and how he punishes a group of children that had mocked him before. In this paper these three accounts will be scrutinized separately before conclusions will be drawn for the entire chapter. At first the tensions and doublets within the chapter will be subject to literary critical and redaction historical examination in order to trace the literary growth of the chapter.

Following, 2Kgs 2 will be compared to the other succession story in 1Kgs 19. Finally, conclusions will be drawn concerning the question of prophetic succession and the literary function of 2Kgs 2.

II. Literary Critical and Redaction Historical Observations

2Kgs 2:1-18

In the ascension story the reader notices numerous literary tensions and breaks which have caused scholars to come up with many different redaction historical reconstructions. For me, the manifold reconstruction attempts alone are a sign of a complex text growth, which will be investigated in the following – beginning with the literary tensions.

Initially, the introduction in 2:1 is rather unusual for an Old Testament story. It already summarizes the climax of the following narrative and in some respect spoils the ending of the story. Additionally, a clear tension can already be found herein. According to v. 11 Elijah is taken away by fiery chariots and horses only and without explicit intervention of Yahweh, whereas v. 1 first names Yahweh as the subject of the action and the storm – without mentioning fiery chariots and horses.[1] Furthermore, the storm in v. 1 is determined and therefore assumed as a known feature, although it here appears for the first time in the story and throughout the entire Books of Kings.

Therefore, the headline in 2:1 gives the impression that it is secondary to the original narration in 2Kgs 2 and serves primarily as an editorial link connecting the story of Elijah's ascension with the surrounding chapters. It is likely that the idea of the ascension in the whirlwind from v. 11b was picked up by the redactor who formulated the introduction in v. 1a. Since the idea of the ascension of Elijah in the whirlwind in v. 11b does not include Yahweh, it seems as if v. 1a above all aims to theologize the process of ascension by introducing Yahweh's will.

A further striking tension can be found in the descriptions about how the ascension took place. In vv. 9-10 the root לקח (passive) describes how Elijah was taken away from Elisha (אלקח מעמך / לקח מאתך). The verb remains without subject here. In v. 3 and v. 5, however, Yahweh is the subject (לקח active)

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[1] Cf. 2Kgs 6:15-17, the fiery horses and chariot here are the insertion of a later redactor. Cf. SCHMITT, A., Entrückung – Aufnahme – Himmelfahrt. Untersuchungen zu einem Vorstellungsbereich im Alten Testament, FzB 10, Würzburg 1973, 93-97; LEHNART, B., Prophet und König im Nordreich Israel, VT.S 96, Leiden 2003, 375. Cf. Ps 68:18; Isa 66:15; Ezek 1:15-21; Hab 3:8; Zech 14:5; 2Kgs 23:11.

of Elijah's removal. In this account the procedure is visualized as Elijah being taken away "over your [Elisha's] head" (2x יהוה לקח את אדניך מעל ראשך).[2] In v. 1 and v. 11, however, the process is described with the root עלה (v. 1 in Hifil and Yahweh as subject; v. 11 in Qal with Elisha as subject).

After Elijah and Elisha are separated by the fiery chariots and horses in v. 12, it is noted that Elisha sees this event. Shortly after that in the same verse it is stated that Elisha could see Elijah no more. The insertion of the particle עוד in v.12 on the final text's stage causes the reader to perceive that Elisha initially had *still* seen Elijah (this *still* has no equivalent in the Hebrew text, only the reader inserts it unconsciously), whereas later on he could see him *no more*. The reader would not expect a note about the fact that Elisha saw the process of separation and ascension into heaven unless the importance of seeing it had been emphasized previously as it had happened in v. 10. The note that Elisha could no longer see Elijah in v. 10 then again seems quite natural and fits in organically with the act of separating the two prophets.

A further detail strengthens the assumption that there is an editorial seam also between vv. 11 and 12. While v. 11 speaks of סוסים (horses), the phrase in v. 12 interestingly contains the term פרשים (steed / horsemen), even though the final text gives the impression that the sight of the fiery *horses* from v. 11 has motivated Elisha to his exclamation. The fact that v. 12 does not speak of horses could be an indication that this appellation has been used for Elijah secondarily at this point and originally derived from the Elisha tradition. The title could serve as an editorial clip used in order to tie the Elijah and Elisha tradition firmly together. By placing the same statement that marked Elisha's death in 2Kgs 13:14 also at the end of the Elijah story the redactor aimed to connect the two traditions tightly. Since the rest of the semantics of this exclamation does not fit effortlessly into the context of 2Kgs 2:12 either, and since the mentioned characteristics correspond better to the figure of Elisha rather than Elijah, I assume that the exclamation was originally used in 2Kgs 13:14 and from there made its way subsequently into 2Kgs 2.[3]

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2 Cf. SCHMITT, H. C., Elisa. Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zur vorklassischen nordisraelitischen Prophetie, Gütersloh 1972, 104.

3 It has been stated by many scholars that Elisha's connection to the royal court and his involvement in battles and wars on the side of Israel would let this appellation suit Elisha much better than Elijah. Cf. GUNKEL, H., Geschichten von Elisa. Meisterwerke hebräischer Erzählkunst I, Berlin 1925, 12; WÜRTHWEIN, E., Die Bücher der Könige. 1. Kön. 17 – 2. Kön. 25, ATD 11,2, Göttingen 1984, 275; SCHMITT, Elisa, 103f; HENTSCHEL, G., 1 Könige, NEB 10, Würzburg 1984, 10 et al.

Particularly difficult to understand are the events which took place before the ascension. The tour which leads Elijah and Elisha to the different "discipleships" in Bethel and Jericho seems peculiar to the reader. Remarkable is the formulaic language in vv. 2-6. At first sight the verses appear as a collection of doublets (2x הידעת כי היום יהוה לקח את אדניך מעל ראשך; 3x חי יהוה וחי נפשך אם אעזבך). This oath in vv. 2, 4, and 6 has above all another parallel outside of the ascension story in 2Kgs 4:30 (חי יהוה וחי נפשך אם אעזבך).[4] Moreover, a remarkable accumulation of Yahweh's name can be found in vv. 2-6 (8 occurrences in 5 verses). Because of the observed tensions and the extraordinary language in vv. 2-6, these verses differ significantly from the surrounding text and can be identified as secondary extensions. A reason for mentioning these particular discipleships of Bethel and Jericho is not given in the story. The various occurrences of Yahweh's name, however, indicate that these verses also have a theological aim and try to point out that Elijah's ascension was Yahweh's will.

Also later in the chapter there occur other tensions and doublets, such as in v. 14, where Elisha's bash on the water is mentioned twice. Between the two references we find the call to "Yahweh, the God of Elijah". Delicate in this context is the phrase (אף־הוא),[5] which in my opinion is an insertion aiming to give the impression that the success of the second bash is due to the intervention of Yahweh. This extension has a similar theologizing tendency as vv. 2-6. In addition, it also works with the literary device of a rhetorical question like v. 3 and v. 5 and therefore probably derives from the same redactor. Again, here we can find resemblances to the work of the theologizing redaction in 2Kgs 4:31-34. Here and there it is the second attempt after a prayer to Yahweh that leads to the success of the miracle.

Furthermore, vv. 14a and 13a are – apart from the introductory verb – doublets. Verse 14a picks up the root לקח from v. 8a. The parallelism of vv. 13b//14 and vv. 7b//8 is probably a deliberate compositional parallelization of Elisha and Elijah in order to express that the spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha and enables him to work the same miracles as Elijah had worked before.

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4 In 2Kgs 4:30 the oath derives from a later redactor's hand and has a clearly theologizing intention. This redactor inserts through the oath and some other extensions the name of Yahweh into the story of the healing of the Shunamite's son and hereby gives it the touch of a resurrection worked by Yahweh.

5 Cf. SCHMITT, Entrückung, 49-53. Schmitt tries to find text critical explanations for these difficulties. To me the Greek text tradition in this case, however, gives no indication on the original Hebrew text, but shows how the various Greek translators obviously had difficulties themselves in understanding and translating the doublet and the אף־הוא. This assessment is in line with Wever's statement concerning the translation in IKgs 22 – 2Kgs 25 LXX: "[...] this is a wooden translation – and almost slavish word-for-word rendering of the Hebrew." WEVERS, J. W., Principles of Interpretation guiding the fourth Translator of the Book of the Kingdoms (3 K. 22:1 – 4 K. 25:30), CBQ 14 (1952), 40-56, 55.

Moreover, between v. 15 and v. 16 there appears another editorial interface, as the following observations will show. While the בני־הנביאים in vv. 3 and 5 are well aware that Elijah will soon be removed, in vv. 16-18 they seem to have no idea what happened to Elijah and suspect that he is still in the surrounding area. Equally contradictory is their acknowledgment of Elisha's power in v. 15 and their request to search for Elijah in v. 16.

Although according to v. 7 there are a total of 50 prophets accompanying Elijah and Elisha on their way to the river Jordan, v. 16 speaks of 50 strong men *among* the disciples of the prophet which suggests a larger total number.

In addition, the use of the term רוח differs. While v. 15 speaks of the spirit of Elijah (רוח fem.) which rests on Elisha, v. 16 mentions the spirit of Yahweh (רוח mask.) which could have carried away Elijah.[6]

While v. 15 concludes the story arc which had been opened and developed in v. 1, 3, 5, 9 with the confirmation that the spirit of Elijah now rests on Elisha, v. 16 opens a new story arc raising the question about the whereabouts of Elijah.

These observations suggest that we find a subsequent extension of the initial ascension narrative in vv. 16-18.[7] This extension is likely to be independent from the extension in vv. 2-6 and in my opinion younger because the prophets in vv. 2-6 were well aware of Elijah's ascension.

From my point of view, there is a moral tendency in the expansion in vv. 16-18, the purpose of which is to accuse the prophets' lack of faith and their lack of comprehension of what happened. Herein we can find a certain thematic relation to the redactional extension concerning Gehasi's greed in 2Kgs 5.[8] At the same time, this scene aims to take all the doubts about Elijah's ascension from the readers, too. The addition emphasizes the fact that Elijah really has been removed, thus can be found no more on earth.[9]

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6 Cf. HENTSCHEL, 2Könige, 8. He understands רוח in this respect rather as a kind of storm. Cf. 1Kgs 18:12a.

7 Cf. GUNKEL, Geschichten, 13; WÜRTHWEIN, Könige II, 274, 276; SCHMITT, Elisa, 105f; FRITZ, V., Das erste Buch der Könige, ZBK 10,1, Zürich 1996, 12-14; SCHMITT, Entrückung, 66f, 70f; STIPP, H.-J., Elischa – Propheten – Gottesmänner, ATSAT 24, St. Ottilien 1987, 45. For a different conclusion cf. ROFÉ, The Prophetical Stories: The Narratives about the Prophets in the Hebrew Bible, Their Literary Types and History, Jerusalem 1988, 47.

8 Cf. SCHMITT, Elisa, 129f.

9 Interestingly, herein we find (apart from all other parallels between the Elijah/Elisha cycles and the New Testaments account on Jesus' miracles) another parallel to the narrations about Jesus' empty tomb in the New Testament gospels. This analogy may hint that the extension in 2Kgs 2:16-18 could also be determined and motivated by a certain stage of Elijah piety.

Due to the observations made above, the initial layer of the ascension story can be found in 2Kgs 2:1b(+ויהי from 1a), 7-11, 12b-14 (except ויאמר איה יהוה אלהי אליהו אף־הוא ויכה את־המים), 15 – in the following referred to as 2Kgs 2:1-15*. This original ascension story concludes with the acknowledgment of Elisha's power by the sons of the prophets. The sons of the prophets serve in this respect as the chorus in a Greek tragedy, explaining and interpreting to the reader in a final e*xodos* what has happened in the preceding story.[10] In this case, the parting of the River Jordan by Elisha is interpreted as evidence that the spirit of Elijah now rests on Elisha. The ascension story in its original design intends to depict Elisha as the rightful and powerful successor of Elijah and thus reaches its aim in v. 15. This target had already been prepared in v. 9 when Elisha formulated his wish for the share of Elijah's spirit.

The original ascension story has consecutively been revised in two stages. At first, a theologically motivated redactor inserted the conclusive head line in v. 1 as well as vv. 2-6 and the prayer to Yahweh in v. 14. We find several traces of this redactor all over the Elisha cycle mostly inserting Yahweh as the causer of the miracles performed by Elisha – e.g. by introducing prayers into the plot.[11] This redaction apparently aims to adjust the less theologically steeped Elisha stories to the highly theologically emphasized figure of Elijah.

It is likely that the same redactor inserted the oath formula from 2Kgs 13:14 in 2Kgs 2:12 in order to tie the Elijah and Elisha cycles closer together by granting a common feature to the two stories' endings.

Finally, a later redaction expands the story by adding vv. 16-18. This redaction seems to have a moral tendency and a certain interest in the sons of the prophet. The expansion points out the faithlessness of the disciples concerning Elijah's ascension into heaven and also aims to antagonize the readers' disbelief. In this moral motivation lies an analogy to the expansion about Gehasi's greed in 2 Kgs

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10 Interestingly, all over the Elijah and Elisha cycle several times the goal of the different story arcs is marked by story characters formulating the central theological message at the end of the narrative (on behalf of the readers). Cf. the widow's statement after Elijah healed her son in IKgs 17:24 ("Now I know that you are indeed a man of God"); Naaman's confession in 2Kgs 5:15 ("Now I know that there is no God except in Israel"), the exclamation of the people in 2Kgs 18:39 ("Yahweh is God, Yahweh is God"), and the acclamation of Jehu as king by his friends ("Jehu is king") in 2Kgs 9:13.

11 Cf. 2Kgs 4:1aβ, 27bβ, 30a, 33, 43bα, 44b; 2Kgs 5:4-8, 11-13, 15a; 2Kgs 6:15b-18 (selective insertions), etc. Another example for a simple redactional insertion of Yahweh is חץ תשועה ליהוה in 2Kgs 13:17b. Cf. K. OTT, Die prophetischen Analogiehandlungen im Alten Testament, BWANT 185, Stuttgart 2009, 41; The higher intensity of theological reflection in the Elijah miracles is according to Würthwein the work of the deuteronomistic redaction that converted Elijah's miracles in Yahweh's miracles carried out by Elijah. E. Cf. WÜRTHWEIN, Könige II, 367f.

5:15b, 16, 19b-27. It is very probable that both of these moral expansions originate from the same redactor.[12]

From the analysis of the main characters and their share in the action as well as from the analysis of the story's narrative aim, the ascension story in 2Kgs 2 has to be understood as part of the Elisha tradition rather than the Elijah tradition.[13] Another detail within the story supports this assumption. The partly cloudy phrase ויהי־נא פי־שנים ברוחך אלי in v. 9b has caused scholars numerous attempts explaining the exact meaning of these words in this context. Many scholars refer in their explanations to Dtn 21:17 according to which two thirds of the heritage are designated for the firstborn.[14] Perhaps the author of 2Kgs 2, however, plays deliberately with the ambiguity of the term פי שנים and has at the same time also the "double share" in mind. He takes into account that Elisha has of firstborn-like relationship towards Elijah but is also aware that Elisha's miraculous deeds in the following will exceed those of Elijah. To me this explanation makes a lot of sense because the author of the ascension story already knows most of Elisha's miracles[15] and therefore knows that they are superior in number and impact to those of Elijah. Apparently, the ancient reader also seems to have understood the phrase in 2Kgs 2,9b in this way as can be seen in Sir 48:12.[16]

From the literary historical point of view this interpretation is another small hint supporting the overall assumption in my dissertation and in many other scholars' works that the miracle stories about Elisha are among the oldest and the succession stories among the youngest parts of the Elijah and Elisha cycle.[17] With the request for a double share of Elijah's spirit the author might have wanted to explain the imbalance of abilities between master and student. This imbalance had in my opinion only occurred because Elijah and Elisha had been put into the relationship of master and student (or predecessor and successor) at a certain point during the redactional work on the Books of Kings.

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12 The concept of the spirit of Yahweh which can carry away people also occurs in 1Kgs 18:12; cf. further Ez 3:12, 14; 8:3; 11:1, 24; 43:5.

13 Cf. GUNKEL, Geschichten, 15; SCHMITT, Entrückung, 131f; furthermore, many of the literary references and similarities with other parts of the Elisha tradition support this observation.

14 Cf. NOTH, M., Die Ursprünge des Alten Israels im Lichte neuer Quellen, Opladen 1961, 20; WÜRTHWEIN, Könige II, 275 et. al.

15 It has been pointed out in my first paper contributed to the OTSEM meeting in Goettingen 2009 that the short miracle stories in 2Kgs 4 and 2Kgs 6 belong to the oldest nucleus of the Elisha cycle.

16 Sir 48:12 (NRSV.A): When Elijah was enveloped in the whirlwind, Elisha was filled with his spirit. He performed twice as many signs, and marvels with every utterance of his mouth. Never in his lifetime did he tremble before any ruler, nor could anyone intimidate him at all.

17 Cf. SCHMITT, Elischa, 107; WÜRTHWEIN, Könige II, 273f; OTTO, Jehu, 261f.

Another interesting feature is the geographic information (Gilgal, Bethel, Jericho, Jordan) presented in vv. 1-6. In 2Kgs 2 there is no explanation given for the particular assembly of locations nor is it obvious to the reader why Elisha visits these places at all. The only fact that is interesting and striking about these particular places is that they will all occur in Elisha's miracles in the following chapters (Gilgal in 2Kgs 4:38; Bet-El in 2Kgs 2:23; Jordan in 2Kgs 6:2, 4; Jericho reconstructed in 2:19-22).[18] Based on my considerations on the genesis of the entire Elisha cycle it seems likely that the locations and the unusual itinerary which they form in 2Kgs 2 could draw a kind of map of the miracles of Elisha in advance.

Furthermore, it is obvious that the composition of 2Kgs likes to evoke resemblances to the succession of two other great figures in the Hebrew Bible – Moses and Joshua. Clearly, the parting of the Jordan first by Elijah and later by his successor Elisha reminds the reader of the parting of the Red Sea by Moses in Ex 14 and the parting of the Jordan by Joshua in Josh 3. Moreover, Elijah disappears from the face of the earth east of the River Jordan analogically to Moses' death east of the Jordan.

Clearly the ancient authors and redactors deliberately placed these and further references and allusions within the composition of 2Kgs 2. Three further remarkable examples of intertextuality I would like to mention in this context. The parting of the river and the passage of the Ark of the Covenant carried by the twelve priests in Josh 3:7-17 leads to the construction of the twelve stones (cf. Josh 4:1-5:1) – which then become the stone circle of Gilgal (cf. Josh 4:20). Moreover, the land which makes barren refers to Joshua's curse on Jericho (cf. Josh 6:26) which takes effect in 1Kgs 16:34. Finally, in Num 27:20 Moses is also asked to give a share of his gift (in this case his authority – הוד) to his successor Joshua.

Two other texts associated with the "prophetic succession" between Elijah and Elisha should also be taken into consideration – 1Kgs 19:19-21 and 1Kgs 19:16f.

The three verses 1Kgs 19:19-21 report very densely about the calling of Elisha by Elijah. This calling, however, is very different from the calling of most of the other prophets in the OT. Instead of a verbal assignment Elijah passes by on Elisha's field and employs Elisha by throwing his mantle over the farmer. Apart from the unique imagery of the mantle many more aspects in this short narrative remain cloudy and tensions can be found.

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[18] Cf. SCHMITT, Entrückung, 75, 139. See below for some further suggestions concerning the itinerary in 2Kgs 2:25.

Firstly, in V. 19a we find only a very loose connection to the preceding story (וילך משם „and he went from there“).[19] While in 1Kgs 19:16f Elijah was given the task of anointing Elisha (there is no sign of a mantle in 1Kgs 19:16f), in 1Kgs 19:19-21 he only throws his mantle. The mantle as a garment of a prophet can also be found by Ahijah the Shilonite (1Kgs 11:29) but with a different Hebrew term (שַׂלְמָה). The term אדרת, however, for the mantle of a prophet can only be found in the ascension story in 2Kgs 2 and in Zech 13:4. Although Elijah did not introduce himself and did not explain the meaning of the mantle to Elisha, the farmer seems to know immediately what has happened to him although this act is unique for the entire OT.

Interestingly, Elijah won't carry out a single one of the three tasks given to him in 1Kgs 19:15-18. This observation, the loose connection to the theophany at Mount Horeb, and the semantics of 1Kgs 19:15-18 indicate that these verses are a late addition to chapter 19.[20] The three tasks seem to be editorially prefixed to the story of Elijah and Elisha serving as a late editorial twine to tie the different parts of the Elijah and Elisha cycle together with the story of Jehu's putsch in order to form the entire complex of 1Kgs 17 – 2Kgs 13.[21] Certainly, this reconstruction bears some weaknesses such as the problem why a later redactor would not take into account that no anointing of a prophet had taken place in the following chapters. On the other hand a reconstruction that operated vice versa had to deal with the same problem of inconsistency. In the suggested reconstruction, however, the idea of anointment may have occurred theologically important to the redactor so that he wanted to apply it also to the instructions for the prophet's succession.

Taking a closer look at the topic of the prophetic succession, the episode in 1Kgs 19:19-21 forms, strictly speaking, a doublet to 2Kgs 2:1-15*. Both episodes explain how Elisha was made the successor of Elijah. Both are connected only through the keyword אדרת but apart from that do not refer to each other. In this case it is also difficult to base the decision on the very few literary critical facts. Hence, probabilities with regard to the stories' contents have to be taken into consideration.[22] Since 2Kgs 2 does not refer to Elisha's calling in 1Kgs 19:19-21 and the keyword אדרת is the only connection between both texts, it is likely that 2Kgs 2 existed before 1Kgs 19:19-21 was created.[23] While the ascension gives an explanation why Elijah is seen no more after 2Kgs 2 the succession

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19 Cf. 2Kgs 2:23, 25.

20 Cf. WÜRTHWEIN, Könige II, 231; OTTO, Jehu, 193.

21 Hence, 1Kgs 19:15-18 appears as the youngest layer of redactional work in the Elijah and Elisha cycle.

22 Therefore, many commentaries avoid the question of literary relations between the two succession texts in 1Kgs 19 and 2 Kgs 2 entirely.

23 Cf. GRAY, Kings, 472: „The independence of the two traditions is indicated by the fact that the present passage [II Kön 2] ignores the passage in I K. 19 (…)."

story in 1Kgs 19 lacks an explanation for that. Moreover, the ascension story gives an explanation why the farmer Elisha is suddenly capable of performing miracles. Nevertheless, the actual intention of the story in 1Kgs 19 remains cloudy.
Finally, based on few literary critical facts alone it remains difficult to decide on the relationship of 1Kgs 19 and 2Kgs 2. The suggested reconstructions shall therefore serve as a base for further discussion.

2Kgs 2:19-22

In this short story we find the motive of personal distress that is brought to Elisha for the first time within the Elisha cycle. The men of the town turn to Elisha because they believe he could find a remedy for the disease causing spring by using his special talents and thus allow a future life in the city.
Apart from that, the story is similar in structure and length to the short miracle episodes in chapter 4 (e.g. 4:38-41) and chapter 6 (e.g. 6:1-7*). The episode consists of four verses only and gets by with very few protagonists who (except for Elisha) remain unnamed and uncharacterized. They are depicted only in their function for the story. The story arc is opened by a problem that will be resolved by the end of the story through Elisha's supernatural intervention.
The story is lacking, however, a genuine introduction. It begins with the speech of the men of the unspecified city. Yet, the position of the story implies that this must involve the city of Jericho since Elijah's ascension took part in the vicinity (v.1-18).
Würthwein concludes that the introduction of this small miracle episode has been incorporated during the insertion of the ascension story and that v. 18aβ once stood before 2Kgs 2:19 and had to have formed the original introduction.[24]
In the present beginning of the story in v. 19 the opening speech of the men is formulated in the plural (ויאמרו אנשי העיר). The possessive suffix in the addition (כאשר אדני ראה), however, is formulated in the singular. This suffix of the 1st person singular could be implicitly interpreted to a particular speaker, who yet had not been highlighted through the introduction of speech.
Loosely inserted is the messenger's formula in v. 21. The introduction of speech (ויאמר) and the subsequent verb in the 1st person singular (רפאתי) suggest that it originally may have been Elisha's

[24] Cf. WÜRTHWEIN, Könige II, 277.

speech. The form ויאמר occurs as an introduction to a messenger's formula only in very few cases in the Old Testament. Except from the verbatim phrase of the Chronicler, all other occurrences can be found in the Books of Kings.[25]

Furthermore, v. 22 reviews the accomplished miracle and Elisha's – and not Yahweh's – words. This tension and the loose connection of the messenger formula imply that the messenger formula is most likely a theologizing expansion. Without the messenger formula, the healing order appears quite organically as Elisha's speech.[26]

The issue of how to read the verb form רפאתי in v. 21 has been discussed by scholars several times.[27] In my judgment, the consonants only suggest a form of the verb רפא (to heal). If the grammatically incorrect punctuation in v. 21 and the retrospect in v. 22 potentially also allude to the verb רפה (to soften) in a midrashic manner,[28] remains unclear and has no effect on the primary meaning of the verse.[29]

At first sight the phrase "until this day" in v. 22 appears like an etiology. Since, however, there is no reference to the specific spring or its exact location and no renaming of it is taking place, it is in my opinion no etiology in a narrower sense.[30]

Interestingly, the term צלחית in v. 20 is a *hapax legomenon* in the Old Testament. According to Rendsburg the more common term for "bowl" in the Old Testament is צלחת,[31] whereas צלחית is commonly found in Tannaitic texts.[32]

Less obvious than the resemblances to Moses in the ascension story in 2Kgs 2:1b-15* but also striking is the fact that even the assembly of stories in 2Kgs 2 seems to copy the sequence of the exodus story deliberately. The first short miracle episode that is told about Elijah after the parting of the Jordan is the healing of the disease causing spring by throwing salt into the water. Interestingly, the first miracle that Moses had to perform for the grumbling Israelites after he had led them

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25 Cf. 1Kgs 20:13f, 28; 22:11; 2Kgs 2:21; 3:16, and 2Chr 18:10//1Kgs 22:11.

26 Cf. LEHNART, Prophet, 379. WÜRTHWEIN, Könige II, 277 votes differently and concludes in spite of the tension that v. 22b is also secondary. Unfortunately, this decision remains unsubstantiated. Cf. 2Kgs 4:17; 5:14; 6:18; 8:2.

27 Cf. WÜRTHWEIN, Könige II, 277f; FRITZ, 2. Könige, 15; LEHNART, Prophet, 379, et. al.

28 Cf. SPERBER, D., Weak Waters, ZAW 82 (1970), 114-116.

29 Although at this point the perfect form is used in my opinion a present tense translation is appropriate. The perfect here was chosen to express that the mere use of the word also meant the immediate completion of the action. Cf. EHRLICH, Randglossen, 282.

30 Cf. FRITZ, 2. Könige, 15.

31 Cf. 2Kgs 21:13; 2Chr 35:13; Prov 19:24; 26:15.

32 Cf. RENDSBURG, Israelian Hebrew, 82f.

through the parted Red Sea was the healing of the spring in Marah. The author of 2Kgs 2 seems to arrange these episodes willfully according to the sequence in the exodus story and therefore places 2Kgs 2:1-15* before the first short miracles.[33] He likely took the two short miracle episodes (2Kgs 2:19-22, 23-25) from the older collection of short miracle episodes about Elisha and placed them into their present location and sequence. Additionally, this sequence was supposed to give proof that Elijah's spirit now rested on Elisha and gave him the power to perform miracles.[34]
From these observations it seems apparent that the author of 2Kgs 2 intended to pattern Elijah very much like Moses – the ideal of all prophets – and as a result designed Elisha as the type of successor represented by Joshua.[35] The author of 2Kgs 2 was presumably inspired by the message of Dtn 18:18.[36]

2Kgs 2:23-25

This miracle is again told in a short, episodic narrative, but this time it is a punishment miracle containing a moral tendency. The introduction in 2Kgs 2:23 connects this episode loosely to the previous story. The phrase ויעל משם does not give exact information on where Elisha started his way. The event, however, is clearly located in Bet-El.
The proclamation of the curse *in the name of Yahweh* in v. 24aβ is after what we have seen in the previous episode probably the insertion of a later (theologizing) redactor.
The number 42 appears in v. 24 for the first time in the brief episode and has no obvious connection to the previously told story, so one can assume that this number was chosen because of analogies with other Old Testament passages in which "42" appears as a death figure.[37]

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33 Additionally to the analogies in content, we find the same semantics for the process of throwing וישלך (in 2Kgs 2:21 and Ex 15:25) and the same use of the root רפא (in 2Kgs 2:21 and Ex 15:26).

34 Cf. LONG, B. O., 2 Kings, The Forms of the Old Testament Literature 10, Grand Rapids 1991, 21.

35 Cf. SCHMITT, Entrückung 134-137; CARROL, The Elijah-Elisha Sagas: Some Remarks on Prophetic Succession in Ancient Israel, in: D. E. Orton (Ed.), Prophecy in the Hebrew Bible, Leiden 2000, 56-71, 56f.

36 Cf. KRATZ, R. G., Die Propheten Israels, München 2003, 30; CARROLL, Prophetic Succession, 57.

37 Cf. Jdg 12:6; 2Kgs 10:12-14; Ezr 2:24//Neh 7:28. According to Herrmann, the figure 42 in the Old Testament refers to the number of judge deities from the Egyptian Book of the Dead in front of which the deceased had to account for their deeds; cf. HERRMANN, J., Die Zahl zweiundvierzig im AT, OLZ 13 (1910), 150-152; LEVIN, C., Der Sturz der Königin Atalja. Ein Kapitel zur Geschichte Judas im 9. Jh. v. Chr., SBS 105, Stuttgart 1982, 87.

A very elaborate discussion arose concerning the itinerary in 2Kgs 2.[38] Most of the interpretations see the inverted landmarks of Elijah's way (1Kgs 17-19) collected in the mentioned locations in 2Kgs 2. Unfortunately, this explanation only works under the condition of some redactional changes which can not be proven.[39] Elisha's return to Samaria (he had not been to Samaria in the preceding chapters) in v. 25b for instance does not fit into the picture of the inverted ways. To me, v. 25b rather creates a connection to 2Kgs 3:1 whereas V. 25a seems to prepare 2Kgs 4:8ff. Similarly the different locations mentioned in 2Kgs 2:2-6 seem to allude to the different locations within the Elisha cycle. To me, it therefore seems very probable that the author and the redactors of 2Kgs 2 gave a kind of a future prospect or an itinerary about the different locations on Elisha's future journey in the first place.

The episode in 2Kgs 2:23-25 seems apart from the redactional additions in V. 25 and the insertion of Yahweh in v. 24aβ consistent. Nevertheless, one semantic tension remains. Although small boys (נערים קטנים) mock Elisha in v. 23, in v. 24 the bear kills 42 children (ילדים). The different terms could indicate that Elisha was mocked only by boys but children of both sexes were killed by the bears. Since there is no other sign of literary tensions between these verses and the content does not suggest obvious reasons for a redactional intervention, I do not attach importance to this semantic tension.

III. Conclusion:

From the results of the analysis the conclusion can be drawn that 2Kgs 2 is among the youngest parts of the Elijah and Elisha tradition. Many of the motives from 2Kgs 2 show that big parts of the Elisha cycle already existed when the ascension story was created. As has been pointed out above, the oath in 2Kgs 2:12 (**אבי אבי רכב ישׂראל ופרשׁיו**) had its origin in the story about Elisha's death in 2Kgs 13 and was editorially inserted at the end of the Elijah story in order to adjust both figures to each other. The itinerary in 2Kgs 2:2-5 and 2:25 alludes to the various stories in the following chapters of the Elisha cycle and seem to sketch in advance where Elisha's ways will take him and the reader.

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38 Cf. WÜRTHWEIN, Könige II, 278; SCHMITT, Elisa, 77; STIPP, Elischa, 351; LEHNART, Prophet, 380.

39 Cf. LUNDBORN, J. R., Elijah's Chariot Ride, JJS 24 (1973), 39-50, 41f.; STIPP, Elischa, 56f.

The chapter 2Kgs 2 mainly serves as a redactional joint between the Elijah and the Elisha cycle. It forms the main connection between two formally independent characters. The very few passages where Elijah and Elisha interact or appear together are an indicator for that, just as much as the fact that Elisha was not mentioned before 1Kgs 19 and Elijah does not appear after 2Kgs 2.

Hence, the prophetic succession that 2Kgs 2 depicts can be assessed as a literary construction rather than a historical account. The chapter clearly aims to connect two formerly independent traditions at a comparatively late stage in the genesis of the Books of Kings.
Moreover, in 2Kgs 2 there are various references to the succession between Moses and Joshua. Above all references, there is also an interesting similarity in the sequence of stories. The author of 2Kgs 2 deliberately adjusted the sequence of these stories to the sequence of the exodus stories in Ex 14f. The fact that the tradition of Moses (including his death), Joshua and the Exodus had already been woven together at the time when 2Kgs 2 came into being, also indicates that the ascension of Elijah is among the younger texts in the Books of Kings.
Also for redaction historical reasons 2Kgs 2 can be assessed a key chapter in the Elijah and Elisha cycle. It shows, for instance, traces of the similar moral redaction that we can also find at a very late stage of 2Kgs 5. Furthermore, there are traces of the same theologizing redaction which has worked over many Elisha stories in order to bring Yahweh into the context of the Elisha cycle.
Finally, the unique ending that was given to Elijah's character in 2Kgs 2 provided the basis for the significantly higher impact on the Jewish and Christian religion history that Elijah had compared to Elisha.

James Patrick
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Criteria for Assessing Intratextuality in Concentric Narratives

[PAPER PRESENTED TO OTSEM 2010]

1.1 Intratextuality

Intertextuality has become a standard feature of New Testament scholarship, especially as regards quotations of texts from the Hebrew Bible by first century authors. This is also being explored for various texts in the Old Testament,[1] although controversy over relative dating of books can make this more of a challenge. This paper, however, concerns not INTERtextuality but INTRAtextuality, that is, the deliberate juxtaposition of two separate texts within the same literary work in order to add meaning to both. At the level of clauses or lines, this mutuality and shared meaning has commonly been termed 'parallelism', and has been recognised as the primary distinguishing feature of Hebrew poetry for more than two centuries. At the level of paragraphs, scenes, or episodes, this intratextuality has only really come into its own as a tool for scholarly analysis since the development of literary and rhetorical criticism in the late 1960's and onwards.

Even so, scholars had been aware of parallelism between episodes in earlier periods, and this recognition prompted some to look for larger structures governing chapters, sections or even whole books of the Bible. Intratextuality was the analytical key they used to unlock the arrangement of verses or episodes previously judged to be unconnected. The human mind is programmed to find meaning in the similarity between different objects, for example in language, art, music or dance, so the enthusiasm with which some scholars applied certain intertextual patterns to different texts is understandable. However, the appearance of meaning in the arrangement of objects does not prove that this arrangement was deliberate, the result of intelligent artistic activity, and in many cases intratextual patterns were 'discovered' in texts where arguably they had never been 'hidden'.

One of the most popular of these patterns was the symmetrical arrangement of paralleled episodes between the paired first and last episodes, the inverted order of the second half of the structure causing the whole literary unit to achieve a satisfying closure. This inverted parallel pattern was given the name 'chiasmus' after the Greek letter 'X' (*chi*), to indicate the cross-over between A – B and B' – A' in a four-membered unit. A variation of the pattern recognised the possibility of odd-numbered inversion as well, where the two halves of the structure are connected by a central unparalleled episode, thus resulting in an A-B-C-B'-A' structure. The central episode therefore attracts a greater emphasis than the other episodes, enabling the interpreter to recognise in it the author's primary focus across the whole unit. Even so, the term 'chiasmus' continued to be used for this structure also, despite its inadequacy for structures of more than four elements, perhaps because its tenuous connection with Classical Graeco-Roman rhetoric of late antiquity gave the technique a greater scholarly credibility.

Unfortunately, the combination of a lack of caution in identifying patterns, a lack of clarity in distinguishing different types of pattern, and a lack of demonstrable theoretical foundations for ancient authors to use these patterns, resulted in a widespread scepticism about 'chiasm' and 'chiastic' structures on the part of mainstream biblical scholarship. Over the last few decades, some rhetorical analysts and literary critics have started to set the discipline on a firmer footing.[2] Yet with no abatement of enthusiasm elsewhere in applying the various patterns to biblical literature, we are much in need of agreed definitions and practicable criteria to rein in this powerful but untamed exegetical tool. My own particular interest is in the odd-numbered pattern of inverted parallelism, and especially as it applies to the book of Samuel, and the following proposal of definition and criteria form part of an extended discussion of the theoretical foundations of this pattern in my doctoral thesis.

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[1] E.g. Strazicich, (2007).

[2] Of particular note are Parunak (1981, 1982), Meynet (1998) and Walsh (2001).

1.2 Definition of Concentrism

Once the principle of intratextuality between episodes has been established, an even-numbered structure of 'inverted parallelism' (A-B--B'-A') can be expanded through the introduction of more pairs of episodes even at a large scale. Even so, however large the inverted parallelism, the degree of emphasis placed on the central pair of episodes will be less than in an odd-numbered structure with an unparalleled central episode (A-B-A'). For the sake of clarity, we would therefore use the term 'direct parallelism' for the (A-B-C--A'-B'-C') form, retain the term 'inverted parallelism' for the even-numbered (A-B-C--C'-B'-A') form, and suggest the term 'concentrism' for the odd-numbered (A-B-C-*D*-C'-B'-A') form of at least five episodes.[3]

The value of the term 'concentrism' is its inherent emphasis on the 'central' episode of the structure, which is the defining feature of the odd-numbered inverted parallelism form, and the feature which contains the greatest significance for interpretation of the whole passage. Large-scale inverted parallelisms do carry exegetical value in the parallels between paired episodes, but they lack the interpretative key at the centre, the keystone that holds the arch in place.[4]

To define the structure that will be our focus in the rest of this paper, the concentrism is composed of three essential elements: (1) a base pair, (2) symmetrical inverted slopes, and (3) a central unparalleled episode.[5] The two outermost episodes taken as a pair serve as either (i) the primary context within which the central message is understood, or (ii) the 'before and after' situations changed by the central turning point.[6] Once the outermost *inclusio* has been identified, the concentrism is established by the observation of symmetrical inverted slopes made up of a series of distinct episodes leading from the first towards the central episode and then back again towards the final episode. Every episode is paired with its parallel episode on the opposite slope, ascent paralleling descent.[7] The parallelism between each pair of episodes (including the base pair) must be demonstrated with the use of the seven criteria for verifying intratextuality outlined below.[8]

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[3] Meynet's glossary of rhetorical terms (1998, p. 376; cf. p. 199) distinguishes between 'chiasm' (even-numbered inverted parallelism) and 'concentrism' (odd-numbered inverted parallelism), despite apparently confusing the two types in the main body of his text (e.g. pp. 233, 236, 240-41), and his use of these terms is followed by Walsh (2001, p. 13) among others. My reason for requiring a minimum of five episodes for the designation of true 'concentrism' is that a concentrism by definition must have not only a base pair and central episode but also symmetrical inverted slopes, hence the need for at least two paired episodes around the centre. At the smallest level, an A-B-A' form could be spoken of as a concentric tristich, but at larger levels it is simply an *inclusio* around a central passage.

[4] Thomson's broader definition of 'chiasmus' as essentially "bilateral symmetry of four or more elements about a central axis" deliberately allows for both odd- and even-numbered structures, in order to reflect "the consensus of current opinion" (1995, pp. 25-26). He claims that Breck's insistence [1987, p. 71; 1994, pp. 18-19] on the importance of the unique central element, the pivotal theme, "does not appear to have found support" (1995, p. 26, n. 73), and this may indeed be the case for the majority of 'chiastic' studies. It is nevertheless clear that for those scholars whose rhetorical criticism prioritises exegetical value over simple aesthetic interest, the concentric 'pivot pattern' is undoubtedly the more important of the two patterns.

[5] As a general rhetorical technique, a 'concentrism' may be composed of clauses, poetic lines, sentences, etc., but as this paper focuses on concentric narratives, the most suitable generic term for the rhetorical units of the structure is 'episode'.

[6] Welch dutifully reports the similar suggestions of others in the Hebrew Poetry Group of the Society of Biblical Literature in the 1980's that "the extremes may be as important as, if not more significant, than the center of a chiasm". Welch himself agrees instead with Lund, however, who "ranked the extremes second only to the center in importance" (1999, p. 174).

[7] Man (1984, 151-52) cites Miesner, Di Marco and Talbert to make the point that the pairedness of the pairs is essential to discerning the meaning of each individual episode.

[8] Breck (1994, p. 3) claimed that the burden of proof ought to lie with those who reject a proposed chiastic structure, but Welch is surely more reasonable in insisting along with the vast majority of scholars that "A burden of persuasion rests on any person describing a passage as chiastic" (1999, p.

Finally, when one has shown beyond reasonable doubt that every episode has its equal and opposite parallel, one arrives at the central, unparalleled episode. This episode is deliberately set apart from every other episode in the passage in order to receive maximum emphasis, and signifies either (i) the primary message of that whole concentrism,[9] or (ii) the turning point of that whole narrative.[10] The central episode must be of sufficient theological, ethical, or narratory weight and explanatory power to serve as the key for the whole concentrism,[11] and the central episode is to be interpreted primarily in conjunction with the *inclusio* of paired extremities that provide its context.[12] Without this exegetical centrality, the identification of a concentrism will fail to convince.[13] Furthermore, once the symmetry of the two slopes has been shown and the centre identified, it should be possible to recognise how the central episode adds a further significance to each of the responding episodes on the descending slope when compared with their opposite episodes on the ascent, in line with Kugel's observation of the way the 'second' element in Hebrew parallelism completes the thought expressed through the pair ("A, and what is more, B").[14]

1.3 Criteria

My criteria for assessing intratextuality between the paired episodes on the ascent and descent have been derived from those proposed by Richard Hays in his important book on intertextuality and allusion to the Old Testament in New Testament texts – *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*.[15] My seven criteria are as follows:

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159). Even so, my proposed criteria may equally be used to disprove concentric arrangements of a passage, as I will attempt for the book of Ruth, below.

[9] The only scholar I have found who questions the 'Presupposition that Centre is Important' [*sic*] is M. J. Boda ('Chiasmus in Ubiquity', p. 58); he claims the support of Clines (1984. p. 193 [not 192, *pace* Boda]), but neglects to quote Clines' important proviso ("This may be correct, but...") that precedes his appropriate reminder of the limits of our present knowledge about Hebrew poetry.

[10] Welch's tenth criterion 'Centrality' notes that "Inverting is the essence of chiasmus, so the clearer the reversal at the center point, the stronger the chiasticity of the passage" (1999, p. 165).

[11] Cf. Blomberg (1989) p. 7.

[12] This is either because the base pair provides the setting for the message epitomised by the central episode, or else because the base pair gives the 'before and after' situations for which the turning point is to be found at the centre. Walsh (2001, p. 14) notes that "Sometimes, in a concentric pattern, there is an explicit or implicit link between these outermost subunits and the central one."

[13] I have not made this one of my seven criteria, because without a suitable centre a proposed passage cannot be 'concentric' by definition, regardless of the cumulative proof of paralleled episodes.

[14] Kugel (1981) p. 58. This further significance of the episodes in the descending slope was already recognised by Bailey (1976, p. 50), who speaks of a "crucial new element that resolves or completes the first half". Walsh (2001, pp. 11, 14) notes that the entire 'panel' or 'sequence' of episodes before the centre can also be recognised as a process that is being paralleled and perhaps inverted in its opposite sequence.

[15] Hays (1989) 29-32. Many others have proposed assorted criteria for assessing 'chiastic' structures, a few of whom are worth noting for their analytical compilation of criteria. Welch (1999, pp. 161-67) offered fifteen criteria that are helpful individually but lack careful logical arrangement. Boda (1996, pp. 56-58) carefully classified thirteen 'errors in the rhetorical analysis of chiasmus', showing that it is easier to recognise negative 'pitfalls' than to propose positive, validating criteria for true structures. Thomson (1995, pp. 27, 28-33) discussed six characteristics (rephrasing some of Lund's seven 'laws') and then seven 'requirements and constraints' (three and four respectively) for identifying 'chiasmus', although with self-confessed 'hesitation', and 'deliberately vague'. The most helpful list of detailed criteria, however, is the collection of nine proposed by Blomberg (1989, pp. 5-7), which has been adopted without adjustment by others such as Brouwer (2001, pp. 38-44), Siew (2005, pp. 209-212) and Heil (2007, pp. 13-14), discounting the limited criticisms from Porter and Reed (1998, pp. 219-20). Even so, proposals to date have tended to confuse the theoretical principles behind the 'concentrism' technique, the features of its precise definition, and the criteria by which one might assess a particular example of the structure. In this thesis I have tried to distinguish these carefully, taking into account as many of the numerous observations or criticisms made of 'chiasmus' from the last hundred years or so as possible. A small selection of these will be cited in the following explanation of my seven criteria.

(1) ***Balance***. When dealing with intratextuality within a single synchronic document, Hays' first criterion *Availability* is largely meaningless. However we might apply the principle underlying this criteria (the plausibility of intertextuality, independent of its interpretation) to the matter of *Balance*; that is, if the author was intending to construct a concentrism, it is reasonable to assume that he would take care to account for every episode of his text, ensuring that each distinct episode be balanced with another. It goes without saying that unit delimitation, especially in narrative texts, is often an imprecise art, and transitional techniques between episodes further blur distinct boundaries, but even so, this must not be used as an excuse for sloppy scholarship or forced misreadings.[16] Balance must be demonstrated in number and position of episodes (every episode paired with a single corresponding episode at the equivalent place on the opposite slope)[17] and approximate length of paired episodes.[18] Imbalance of any type must either be acknowledged as an inconsistency undermining the proposal, or justified by plausible appeal to authorial intent, for which Volume of parallel elements may be decisive.[19]

(2) ***Volume***. This is a very important criterion, and although Hays focuses on 'echoes' of earlier texts and quotations of small verses or clauses, the recognition of intratextual 'reverberations' between parallel segments in a single document also depends at first on the amount and variety of links between the two. Smaller episodes may have not much more than verbal parallelism, including word pairs,[20] word play, or comparable semantic constructions,[21] and at this level one may notice many different techniques of parallelism in use that are identified in standard discussions of parallelism within Hebrew poetry.[22] Larger episodes usually also contain simple verbal parallels, but they are likely to include more complex conceptual parallels involving typical narrative features of genre, characters and activities,[23] quite possibly corresponding to 'natural' developments in the

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[16] Transitional techniques and unit delimitation are discussed elsewhere in the methodology section of my thesis. Thomson (1995, p. 214) clarifies the need for appropriate boundaries of the structure, and suggests the rule that a concentrism "will not break the flow of syntax".

[17] See 'Balance' in Welch (1999, pp. 165-66). Watson effectively disqualifies appealing to textual emendation as an excuse for imbalance of number or position (1981, p. 137), requiring that convincing macro-chiasm involve a whole stretch of text rather than just parts.

[18] Cf. Thomson (1995) p. 27; Boda (1996) pp. 56-57. Even so, Blomberg's seventh criteria (1989, p. 7) requires that the outline should divide the text at natural breaks, which carries the additional recognition that literary composition is not mathematics; an author is somewhat bound by the constraints of good ('natural') writing to complete a particular episode satisfactorily even if that affects the precision of Balance of Length between paralleled episodes.

[19] Walsh (2001, p. 11) explains that "the looser the equivalence in length, the stronger must be other connective elements to support the correspondence." As regards deliberate asymmetry, Parunak (1981, pp. 166-68) and Tanner (1992, p. 148) recognise that in addition to the central climax, asymmetrical elements in the structure can also emphasise particular passages. Walsh (2001, p. 8) helpfully points out that "The clearer the fundamental symmetry and the more obtrusive the disturbance, the more the asymmetrical element draws a reader's attention."

[20] Cf. Klaus (1999) pp. 261-72; Watson (1986) pp. 128-44.

[21] Berlin (1985, p. 1992) further classifies the linguistic (i.e. verbal) parallelism into grammatical, lexical, phonological and syntactical parallels. Walsh (2001, pp. 8-10) also has an excellent discussion of verbal parallelism, in which he discusses phonemic repetition, aurally or orthographically similar words or forms, word order, and even length and complexity of sentences. Watson (1981, p. 137) is by no means alone in assigning greater importance to verbal parallels than subjective 'headings', for which see footnote 29 and also my criterion 'Integrity', but see footnote 23 below for other scholars who consider conceptual parallels superior to verbal parallels.

[22] Cf. Watson (1986) pp. 46-55, 114-59; Gillingham (1994) pp. 23-28, 78-82); Nel (1992, p. 138).

[23] Walsh (2001, p. 10) explains that while repeated elements can theoretically be of any size, "the smaller the repeated element, the more limited the unit it can organize... It is on larger levels of organization, therefore, that thematic or conceptual repetition becomes more decisive." Cf. Butterworth (1992) p. 59); Thomson (1995) pp. 41-42). Berlin (1985, p. 1992) subdivides the second category of poetic parallelism, semantic (i.e. conceptual), into catchwords, themes, concepts, ideas, and

narrative plot.[24] It is important, therefore, that both verbal and conceptual parallels be identified,[25] and the more there are, the more likely the intentionality behind them.[26] When identifying paralleled elements, one must be aware that '***non-conformists***', examples of these elements that appear elsewhere in the concentrism outside the selected pair of episodes, have the potential to disqualify that particular parallel and thus undermine the concentrism.[27] Furthermore, interpreters can often select quite insignificant or common elements within units of text in order to demonstrate intratextuality, hence my third criterion.

(3) ***Weight***. Hays' criterion of *Recurrence* relies on the author's allusions elsewhere in his writing to the same source text, but if we are assuming a concentric structure, each episode will usually have only one other episode that was particularly intended to resonate with it. An alternative criterion, drawing out what Hays mentions about those passages the author considered to have been of particular importance, could be termed *Weight*. In the case of parallels between episodes at equivalent points on the two slopes of a concentrism, the more important the elements being paralleled are within one or the other or both of the units, the more likely the intentionality behind the parallel.[28] This criterion goes some way towards avoiding the commonly criticised problem with many proposed chiastic structures of arbitrary summary statements or 'headings' assigned to episodes,[29] selecting rather minor features of each episode to compare, rather than their primary meaning. A related objection often raised about concentrisms may be illustrated with the idiomatic scenario of unmentioned '***elephants*** in the room', that is, elements of one episode that are clearly very prominent and yet lack any parallel in the supposedly

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content.

[24] Tanner (1992, p. 148) notes that paralleling may be simple (i.e. repetitions of words or phrases), or complex, for which he notes that "often the paralleling elements can be ascertained only by abstracting the plot development". Walsh (2001, p. 8) further explains that "structural units are often thematic units (like paragraphs in English prose) or dramatic ones (like scenes). To the degree that symmetrical patterning enables us to discern the extent and limits of a literary unit it can provide clues to the thematic structure of the passage." Hence there is no problem in principle with recognising the concentric arrangement of both structure and plot as coextensive and mutually reinforcing; an author might be expected to construct his plot as a conscious concentrism [*pace* Boda (1996, p. 57 and n. 2 – 'Methodological Isolation') et al.].

[25] Cf. Blomberg (1989) p. 6); Walsh (2001), p. 10.

[26] Cf. Thomson (1995) p. 33; Welch (1999) p. 163-64 ['Density']; Blomberg (1989) pp. 6-7.

[27] Cf. Blomberg (1989) p. 7; Thomson (1995) p. 41; Boda (1996) p. 57; Welch (1999) p. 164 ['Mavericks']. Klaus (1999, pp. 260-61) carefully analyses the varieties of Non-conformists found in his chosen 'pivot patterns' (concentrisms), and justifies the imperfections by appealing to Accumulation and particularly to Weight. The vast majority of Non-conformist verbal parallels he identifies are clearly lacking in inherent Weight, making their use elsewhere in the structure unremarkable; weighty Non-conformists are more noteworthy when looking to falsify a concentrism.

[28] Blomberg's fourth criterion (1989, p. 6) reads, "The verbal parallelism should involve central or dominant imagery or terminology, not peripheral or trivial language." Butterworth (1992, p. 60) suggests, "Whole phrases are the most likely to be used to establish structure. Rare words, words used in characteristic ways, clusters of related words, are also likely to be used with a particular purpose." Welch (1999, p. 164) makes this his seventh criterion, 'Dominance', as regards "nouns, verbs, and distinctive phrases".

[29] Thomson (1995, pp. 30-31) discourages 'chiasmus by headings', noting that "The problem associated with headings is that, by definition, they must be both theologically and interpretatively selective. The key question is how well the chosen heading reflects the *author's* focus of interest rather than the *commentator's*." [emphasis his] His solution is to work only with passages small enough that the words themselves may be laid out graphically to represent the structure. Yet in his conclusion (p. 215) he admits that "in practice it might be argued that, when the basis of comparison of two elements relies on *content* rather than on *form*, the ensuing description of the relevant content of the element results in an implicit assignation of a 'heading' to that element. This having been said, however, the need for careful exegesis of the individual elements is not reduced." See also Boda (1996, p. 57) – 'Arbitrary Labelling'.

equivalent episode.[30] The interpreter must deal faithfully with the whole episode and justify any such 'missing' parallels, or else the paralleling of these episodes will lose credibility. It must be noted here, though, that in a genuine concentrism, recognising the equivalent position of two seemingly unrelated episodes within a concentrism may well reveal parallels that appear insignificant but on closer inspection demonstrate the true authorial intention behind the inclusion of one or the other or both units; thus the 'elephants' are put into proper perspective.[31]

(4) ***Trademarks.*** Viewing parallelism between a pair of episodes in the context of the overall concentrism serves to reinforce what otherwise might seem an overly 'light' parallel according to our third criterion. It is important to identify precisely how two episodes are paralleled, and in the process one should begin to recognise certain techniques of parallelism that are frequently used in the concentrism, whether that be word play, character comparison, theological emphasis, or narrative equivalence.[32] In this way one might be able to build up a 'profile' of the author, so to speak, in terms of his particular interests as shown in consistent compositional activity.[33] A very important reinforcement that can be noted at this stage is what I call '***miniatures***', that is, the presence of small-scale rhetorical structures, and particularly concentrisms, within an individual episode of the overarching concentrism.[34] Not only are these usually easier to identify through verbal parallels, and when identified can themselves indicate the primary message or concept of that episode, but they are evidence that the author did use concentrism as a compositional technique.[35] Obviously, the more pairs of episodes there are in a structure, the easier it becomes to 'recognise' compositional trademarks, and therefore we might argue that the ***accumulation*** of paired episodes in a concentrism has the potential indirectly to strengthen the argument for its existence.[36]

Compositional techniques are perhaps more objectively quantifiable, but discerning the accumulated significance of these parallels moves us into the more subjective realm of interpretation, which characterises the remaining three criteria. As Hays notes, "This test begins to move beyond simple identification of echoes to the problem of how to interpret them." He calls his fourth criterion *Thematic Coherence*, referring to how well an allusion fits into the overall line of argument the author is developing. We might say, then, that if the significance of the parallels between two episodes is consistent with the meaning of other parallels elsewhere in the concentrism, and gains added significance from the central episode, this may be adequate reason for the author's selection of these particular features to connect otherwise seemingly unrelated episodes.[37] *Trademarks*, therefore, refers to 'trademark' compositional techniques of parallelism and also to 'trademark' messages expressed through those parallels, the latter being an important aspect of the fifth criterion, Integrity.

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[30] Cf. Butterworth (1992) p. 59; Boda (1996) p. 57; Welch (1981) p. 13.

[31] As Blomberg (1989, p. 6) recognises, "Ancient writers often employed key terms as catchwords to link passages together, although the material they considered central does not always match modern preconceptions of what is important."

[32] Butterworth (1992, p. 60) argues that "Techniques discovered in several different passages may be regarded as more secure than those found only once or twice."

[33] Knowledge of the author's trademark parallel features will thus strengthen the argument that an otherwise less 'weighty' element in a pair of episodes is actually the author's primary focus.

[34] Cf. Welch (1981) p. 13.

[35] Cf. Boda (1996) p. 57; Welch (1999) pp. 166-67.

[36] Of course, a number of weakly paralleled episodes will hardly add to the credibility of the structure, and the larger the structure is, the harder it is to construct in the first place. Accumulation is more an indication of the relative expertise of the author, provided the parallels meet our second and third criteria adequately. Cf. Blomberg (1989) pp. 6-7; Welch (1999) pp. 163.

[37] Welch (1981, p. 13) notes that "Key words, echoes, and balancing should be distinct and should serve defined purposes within the structure."

(5) ***Integrity***. The original criterion of *Historical Plausibility* in Hays' list was intended to guard against readings that reflect modern sensibilities rather than what would have plausibly been intended by the author and understood by his original audience. The messages discovered through intertextuality should fit within the historical period in which the text was composed.[38] In a concentrism, the intratextual messages must similarly be plausible within the historical period of composition evident from the text.

Dating the letters of Paul, however, is generally far easier than dating Old Testament documents, for which dates may be proposed that are several hundred years apart. Historical plausibility is therefore not merely a matter of avoiding modern sensibilities, but also dependent on accurate assessment of the date of composition.[39] Two relatively objective methods of dating Old Testament texts involve surface-level features of the text. The first is identification of the latest time period spoken of within the document as the likely period of composition,[40] or at least its *terminus post quem*.[41] It is therefore essential that the complete extent of the original document be established through literary analysis before one tries to identify the latest historical reference.[42] The second is analysis of any comments by the narrator that indicate the *terminus ante quem*, that is, a message that can only have been valid within a certain temporary historical situation.[43] Debates over dating are complicated by the perceived relevance of ancient stories and texts to later audiences, evident in the canonical process itself. The re-use of an ancient document in subsequent centuries, however, exposes scholarship to the danger of misreading a text by detaching it from its original context, as if one were to interpret the Epistle to the Romans as not only relevant to, but having been written during the reign of Constantine. Speculation about the metaphorical significance of ancient stories to later generations, in order to arrive at an alternative date of composition for these stories, can sometimes bear a certain similarity to the excesses of the allegorical approaches of Philo and Origen.

Concentric structures that have been suitably verified in a text can effectively serve as a third reliable method of dating the text, due to their unusual exegetical value for conveying the message of the author. Just as explicit comments by the narrator can be distinguished from the events being narrated and then situated within specific temporary historical situations, so also can the messages expressed by concentric emphasis and parallelism. These sub-surface or structural features, however, are not self-evidently present to the extent that comments by the narrator are. They must therefore be shown to be in conformity with the evidence of the surface-level features as regards both dating and message, before they can be accepted as genuine evidence of authorial intent. For this reason, I have focused this criterion on the 'integrity' between surface meaning and

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[38] By way of example, he warns against "readings that turn Paul into (say) a Lutheran" (1989, p. 30).

[39] Hays makes the further observation (1989, p. 30) that even when we are confident of the approximate date of composition, this test "necessarily requires hypothetical constructs of what might have been intended and grasped by particular first-century figures". He also acknowledges that an author "might have written things that were not readily intelligible to his actual hearers".

[40] For example, Jehoiachin's release from prison mentioned at the end of Kings and Jeremiah.

[41] For example, Psalm 78 mentions the destruction of Shiloh in Ephraim and God's choice of Jerusalem and David's tribe, Judah, so the psalm could not therefore have been composed prior to David's conquest of Jerusalem. Determination of the *terminus ante quem* is less straightforward, but Jerusalem's contrast with Shiloh rather than Samaria does support a composition not long after the *terminus post quem*, that is, within a century of the latest historical feature referred to in the text.

[42] For example, if the book of Judges is understood as part of the same composition as Kings (i.e. the 'Deuteronomistic History'), its latest historical reference will not be Samson but Jehoiachin. The frequent scholarly appeal to source material or editorial glosses, however, moves the discussion away from the limitations of extant manuscripts into the realm of unfalsifiable hypotheses. See Meynet (1998, pp. 177-80) for further elaboration of this point.

[43] A well-known example is the phrase *'ad hayyom hazzeh* ('until this day') that appears about sixty times in the narrative books of Genesis through Chronicles; see e.g. Geoghegan (2006).

structural meaning.[44] In identifying meanings within paralleled episodes, one should be able to recognise these same important authorial messages not only in other structural emphases within the text,[45] but also on the surface of the text, particularly in narratorial comments,[46] or at least to show the plausibility of these messages as belonging to the latest time period to which the document makes reference.[47]

(6) ***Agreement***. This criterion is simply clarifying Hays' expression *History of Interpretation*; other interpreters of the text, both critical and pre-critical, should have recognised many if not most of the parallels identified – originality, particularly regarding popular books or passages, ought to arouse suspicion.[48] While generations of scholars will have noticed parallels between different episodes, it is the synthesis of all of them into a complete concentrism that can be an original contribution.[49] Alternatively, it may be the messages communicated through the parallels that find agreement in wider scholarship, even if the parallels themselves had not been noted previously – agreement of exegesis as distinct from intratextuality.[50] It is worth making the same observation Hays does that while the reinforcing of a parallel with reference to other scholars can serve as a possible restraint against arbitrariness, this criterion "should rarely be used as a negative test to exclude proposed [parallels] that commend themselves on other grounds".[51] Once identified, a concentrism can be used to uncover many more parallels previously unnoticed, though this should not be used as an excuse.[52] The more uncorroborated parallels are identified,

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[44] As deSilva (2008, p. 369) wisely insists, "We need to keep the *text*, and not the *pattern*, foremost before our eyes."

[45] Consistency of structural 'message' throughout the literary piece is the final step proposed by Butterworth (1992, p. 61): "Investigate the unit under discussion in its context, to check that any proposed structure is consistent with the relationships that its members have with features elsewhere in the book or section of a book."

[46] Thomson (1995, p. 43) notes in his discussion of 'chiasmus as an exegetical tool', "It is obvious that a given chiasmus is only one rhetorical unit in a larger context. Particularly if a new focus of interest is suggested as a result of the exegesis of the chiasmus, it is important to see how this relates to the remainder of the epistle." Klaus (1999, p. 273) raises the question of whether an editor might structure source material that had been narrated by others, thus distinguishing between the 'narrator' and the 'editor'. However, it seems self-evident that a later compiler (or better 'secondary author') will be in agreement with an earlier narrator's presentation of the material if he includes it unchanged, unless it is made suitably clear to the audience that the earlier author is not being quoted with approval [see Patrick (2010, pp. 50-51)]. For that reason, we might treat any narratorial comments in a text as reliable indication of the final author's intent, which we might also expect to recognise in the overall literary structure of the document.

[47] It is surprising how few rhetorical analysts and scholars of 'chiasmus' have given any thought to this criterion; this may perhaps be due to an insufficient interest in the exegetical value of concentrism, or to a lack of attention to the purpose of the entire literary document within which the rhetorical structure has been identified, as Klaus (1999, p. 277) acknowledges.

[48] Cf. Blomberg (1989) pp. 5-6; Thomson (1995) p. 222.

[49] Blomberg (1989, pp. 19-20) explains that "with most chiastic outlines, most of the building blocks have been observed by different people at different times; what has been lacking was for someone to recognize the whole and construct a synthesis."

[50] Butterworth (1992, p. 60) urges those proposing concentrisms to "Consider the conclusions of scholars in various branches of OT research – especially those who have not been primarily concerned with structure – and compare conclusions concerning the overall meaning and emphasis of the unit."

[51] Thomson (1995, pp. 222-23) also warns against overplaying the criterion of Agreement: "It could obviously be countered that there are as many instances when commentators *fail* to make such a linkage, and many occasions when they make links that are not accommodated within the chiastic pattern." The burgeoning quantity of biblical scholarship makes it ever more likely both that scholars will have suggested alternative comparisons between texts, and that the one proposing concentrism has simply not yet stumbled upon those scholars who have recognised the same parallels.

[52] Thomson (1995, pp. 216, 223-24) illustrates the circularity of using exegesis first to help determine the pattern, and second to produce new insights on the basis of a well-founded pattern. He praises 'chiasmus' for its unique potential to produce "new, and hitherto unsuspected, exegetical insights", but

the more likely it is that the creativity lies not with the author but with the interpreter.[53] If previous scholars have not agreed with the parallels being found, it is less likely that future scholars will agree.

(7) ***Satisfaction***. Similarly, this final criterion from the list Hays proposed can be appropriated directly into our criteria for discerning intratextuality in concentrisms. As Hays notes, one must avoid the affective fallacy and interpretative circularity in expressing this criterion. However it is indeed "the most important test", though least quantifiable, because it is in effect an appeal to "the experience of a contemporary community of competent readers".[54] Not only should the parallels between each pair of episodes be satisfying to other readers both lay and scholarly,[55] but the effect that the central message has on the entire structure and each individual parallel should commend itself to the discernment of others.[56] Hays asks whether, "when [the interpreter] beckons us to listen, we do hear faint music reverberating around us". C.S. Lewis describes similarly the way in which, when an interpretative key is found for a particular text, one begins to see everything else by its light.[57] The proposed concentrism should show superior explanatory power when compared with all other compositional **alternatives**,[58] not only the standard scholarly outlines of the text, but especially other concentric analyses.[59]

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without care this may drift into subjective 'reader-response' analysis of the type entertainingly warned against by Barton (1996, pp. 228-31).

[53] This is effectively a call for diligence and breadth of reading on the part of the scholar proposing the structure.

[54] Welch's fifteenth and final criterion, therefore, is 'Aesthetics' (1999, p. 167); "Finally, there is room for subjective appreciation. Computers alone cannot identify chiasmus… human readers must judge an author's artistic success".

[55] As Butterworth notes (1992, p. 59), "There may be other reasons for repetition [of the same word or root];" if such alternative explanations are regularly suggesting themselves to the thoughtful reader, the satisfaction with the overall presentation will be greatly reduced.

[56] Welch (1999, p. 167) mentions further aesthetic factors to consider: "the author's fluency with the form; consistency in sustaining the structure, balance, and harmony; pliability at the turning point (which yet does not draw undue attention to itself); and meaningful applications of the form that do not resort to subtleties so obscure as to be esoteric or awkward."

[57] "There then comes to you a person, saying, 'Here is a new bit of the manuscript that I found; it is the central passage of that symphony, or the central chapter of that novel. The text is incomplete without it. I have got the missing passage which is really the centre of the whole work.' The only thing you could do would be to put this new piece of the manuscript in that central position, and then see how it reacted on the whole of the rest of the work. If it constantly brought out new meanings for the whole of the rest of the work, if it made you notice things in the rest of the work which you had not noticed before, then I think you would decide that it was authentic." from *The Grand Miracle*; accessed via Ward (2008) ix.

[58] Cf. Butterworth (1992) p. 59; Welch (1999) p. 163. Blomberg (1989, p. 5), however, makes this his first criterion: "There must be a problem in perceiving the structure of the text in question, which more conventional outlines fail to resolve… If a more straightforward structure can adequately account for the textual data, recourse to less obvious arrangements of the material would seem, at the very least, to risk obscuring what was already clear." While this is undoubtedly wise advice to those setting out to find concentrism (an inherently risky business), satisfaction with current outlines is no less subjective for having widespread support; advances in scholarship depend upon individuals who have seen something they believe everyone else ought to see too. DeSilva (2008, p. 345 n. 3) might therefore be indulging in idealism when he tries to 'impress upon' "analysts disposed to search for macro-chiasmi" the need to be "actively seeking out alternatives to their own conclusions as a means of testing the same".

[59] *Pace* Breck (1994, pp. 196-98) and others. The very definition of concentrism requires that the central element of the structure hold the primary interpretative key to the entire literary unit, so if other concentric proposals situate the centre elsewhere, the meaning of the entire work changes. Slight reworking of the precise delimitation of episodes should be expected as the structural proposal is refined, but the concentrism stands or falls on the persuasive force of the centre.

Although those who offer criteria often make the qualification that a proposal need not meet every one to be valid,[60] I would argue that every one of these seven criteria must be met for a genuine deliberate parallel to exist between two paired episodes, and therefore for the concentrism to be verified.[61] One may not necessarily address each criterion in detail or in order, but all must be demonstrable in one way or another, or their absence easily explicable:[62]

(1) *Balance*: The two episodes being considered should be paralleled with each other alone, at an equivalent position on each slope, and be of a similar length.
(2) *Volume*: There should be multiple parallels between the two episodes, both verbal and conceptual, with paralleled elements that do not feature regularly at other points in the concentrism.
(3) *Weight*: The parallels should be between weighty elements in each episode rather than inconsequential details, preferably between elements that are themselves emphasised rhetorically within the episode, and the interpreter must not avoid other significant features of the text that may indicate a different explanation for the arrangement.
(4) *Trademarks*: The type of parallels at work should be specified, in order to build up a 'profile' of trademark techniques of the author, and also trademark messages communicated through the parallels; miniature examples of concentrism should be noted in support of the use of this technique at an architectonic level, and the larger the structure the more expert the author.
(5) *Integrity*: Messages communicated through parallelism between episodes should be consistent with that of the whole structure, which should complement those in other structures elsewhere in the document in question. They should also be recognised on the surface of the text, particularly in narratorial comments, or at least it should be possible to show the plausibility of these messages as belonging to the latest time period to which the document makes reference.
(6) *Agreement*: The vast majority of parallels being proposed for the concentrism, or at least the messages communicated by these parallels, should be able to be reinforced with reference to other critical and pre-critical scholars.
(7) *Satisfaction*: The parallels between each pair of episodes should be satisfying to other readers both lay and scholarly, and the effect that the central message has on the entire structure and each individual parallel should commend itself to the discernment of others; if alternative structures or compositional explanations have been proposed, this particular concentric pattern will need to be seen to have superior explanatory power.

With any work of literature, it would be naïve to assume that a single interpreter could fully account for the complexity and artistry involved in its composition. Nevertheless, the case for a fundamentally concentric structure governing the proposed passage or book must be able to be established 'beyond reasonable doubt' using these criteria, for the proposal to stand.

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[60] For example, Blomberg (1989, p. 7) recognises, "These nine criteria are seldom fulfilled in toto even by well-established chiastic structures, so it would seem these controls might actually be too rigid. But granted that some exceptions should be permitted, the more of these criteria which a given hypothesis fails to meet, the more sceptical a reception it deserves. Conversely, a hypothesis which fulfills most or all of the nine stands a strong chance of reflecting the actual structure of the text in question.

[61] Scholer and Snodgrass (1992, p. xxi) observe that "Even those persons who discuss criteria for identifying chiasmus often make unjustified identifications of chiasmus", citing Clark (1975) and Welch (1981) as examples. I trust that my analyses will not fall foul of my own criteria, but even if this does seem to be the case, it is more important that rigorous criteria be established in the field of 'chiastic' studies and rhetorical analysis.

[62] Thomson (1995, p. 32, emphasis his) makes the point that "The validity of a chiasmus depends on the *cumulative impact* of a number of criteria."

1.4 Stages of Assessment Using the Criteria

It is suggested that these criteria naturally progress through four stages in the process of assessment, as befits their cumulative force. [1] The necessary start to such a process is to set out the structure being proposed, identifying the distinct rhetorical units being arranged, so that it is possible to recognise both the overall concentric character of the proposal and to note the presence or absence of Balance. Imbalances should be noted at this stage, even if their justification does not appear until the second or third stage. [2] The second stage involves the careful demonstration of the Volume and Weight of the intratextuality in each pair of episodes in turn, starting with the outermost pair that forms the beginning and end of the overall rhetorical unit, and working inwards to the unparalleled centre. Non-conformists and Elephants ought to be acknowledged and explained, although explanation might rely on evidence from the next stage. [3] The third stage has the interpreter assemble the author's Trademark techniques of intratextuality and also begin therefore to explain their exegetical significance. The messages of each pair of episodes ought to reinforce the centrality of the middle episode in the context of the beginning and end, and the Integrity between this overall message and the explicit 'surface' comments of the author should be clear. As Agreement can apply to either the intratextual parallels or the exegesis of their meaning, or preferably both, appeal to other scholars should be made throughout the second and third stages respectively. [4] Finally in the fourth stage, the proposal as a whole must engender a greater Satisfaction on the part of informed readers than alternative structures or presentations of the text's purpose. One may find it easier to outline these (inadequate) alternatives before embarking on one's own proposal, but the conclusion should not shy away from standing the new proposal up in the midst of the others to show it to be head and shoulders above the rest. A critique of a concentrism proposal, on the other hand, should be able to point at the end of the assessment to more convincing and satisfying alternatives.

2. Application of the Criteria to the Book of Ruth

It is inevitable that the growth of literary criticism within biblical scholarship will result in divergent analyses of the dominant structural arrangement of each book. The seven criteria outlined above have therefore been designed expressly for the purpose of assessing proposals of concentrism, rather than inverted or direct parallelism. Different concentric proposals will tend to identify different central episodes, and consequently match up different pairs of episodes, and there will also be disagreement over the precise definition of rhetorical units (episodes). It is necessary, therefore, to select only one concentric proposal to assess at a time, and then either accept, modify or discard it according to how well it meets the criteria.

The book of Ruth has been analysed by different scholars (or sometimes the same!) as either an inverted parallelism or a concentrism, so for the purpose of this study we will select one particular scholar's concentric proposal, namely that of David A. Dorsey in his book *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis – Malachi*.[63] Others who have also proposed concentric structure in Ruth are Tischler, Wilson, Luter and Rigsby, Hongisto, and in some ways Radday,[64] but Dorsey's proposal is both of manageable length and consistent enough to warrant its use for this paper.

Dorsey's 'overall layout' of the book of Ruth is outlined by him into seven episodes (as with most of his concentric analyses of biblical books) as follows:

[63] Dorsey (1999) pp. 121-28.

[64] Tischler (1993) pp. 151-64; Wilson (1997) pp. 137-46; Luter & Rigsby (1996) pp. 15-28; Hongisto (1985) p. 23; Radday (1981) pp. 71-76 (esp. 75-76).

11.9 The Book of Ruth

a **introduction: devastation of Naomi's family** (1:1-5)
* Naomi's family is lost; Elimelech's line is ended
* Ruth's tragic marriage to Naomi's son; he is sickly and dies; no children
* both of Naomi's sons die
* past events set the stage for the story
* economy of words

b **two of Naomi's relatives deliberate about whether to support her** (1:6-19a)
* both initially agree
* one turns back when marriage is mentioned
* one chooses to stay with Naomi, in an admirable speech
* a blessing is uttered for Ruth
* decision to support Naomi means that Ruth will probably not remarry

c **return to Bethlehem in emptiness and hopelessness** (1:19b-22)
* setting: "at the beginning of the barley harvest"
* surprised question of identity: "is this Naomi?"
* "I left full, but Yahweh has brought me back empty (*rêqām*)"
* Naomi and Ruth come into (*bw'*) Bethlehem in despair

d **TURNING POINT: meeting of Ruth and Boaz** (2:1-23)

c' **Ruth's appeal at the threshing floor and her return to Bethlehem in fullness and hope** (3:1-18)
* setting: when the people were "winnowing barley"
* surprised question of identity: "who are you?"
* Ruth left empty; she returns with six measures of barley: "you must not go back empty-handed (*rêqām*)" (3:17)
* Ruth comes into (*bw'*) Bethlehem with good news and hope

b' **two of Naomi's relatives deliberate whether to support Naomi** (4:1-12)
* both initially agree
* one turns back when marriage is mentioned
* one chooses to help Naomi, in an admirable speech
* a blessing is uttered for Ruth
* decision to support Naomi means that Ruth will be remarried

a' **conclusion: restoration of Naomi's family** (4:13-21) [sic]
* Naomi's family is restored; Elimelech's line is raised up again
* Ruth's happy marriage to Naomi's relative; he is wealthy and robust (note etiologies of names); they are blessed with a son
* "your daughter-in-law … is more to you than seven sons!"
* future events provide broader significance of story
* economy of words

2.1 Assessment of Balance

The structure is evidently concentric according to our definition, with the central episode providing the 'turning point of the entire story'; Dorsey explains that from the point that Ruth and Boaz meet, the lives of Naomi and Ruth are 'filled with ever-increasing hope' (p. 127). The introduction describes the problem of the story and the conclusion resolves this problem, by means of the relationship initiated in the central episode. In terms of Balance, there is a precise correspondence in terms of number and position of episodes, without any textual emendations proposed or asymmetrical episodes. However, Balance of length immediately presents a problem for this proposal, connected with his decisions about divisions between different episodes. The [a/a'] pair of episodes is of roughly equivalent length, as is the [b/b'] pair, but [c] is only fifty-four words long (1:19b-22) whereas [c'] comprises an entire chapter (3:1-18). Dorsey recognises that the first of these episodes is rather more 'brief' than the second, but appeals for support to the intratextual parallels between the two: "there appear to be several intentional editorial touches that create points of correspondence between the two otherwise dissimilar units" (p. 127). Hence we move to the second and third criteria.

2.2 Assessment of Intratextuality (Volume and Weight)

In the [a/a'] pair there is indeed an unusual 'economy of words', although one might argue that the speech of the women in 4:14-15 and 4:17 is not so 'economic' but more typical of the narrative in the rest of the book. The parallel of 'past' and 'future' events sets the story in context, but arguably this would be necessary for the story even if it did not have a concentric form, and the highlighting of the audience's historical distance in 4:7 is a potential Non-conformist. It is true that Naomi is said to have borne a son, which parallels her loss of a son, but Non-conformists are found in Naomi's speech in 1:11-12 and implied in Boaz's expectation of children for Mahlon from Ruth in 4:5 and 4:10, unless these are treated as

Trademark parallels found also in [b/b']. The names of Boaz and Mahlon clearly signify opposites, as is confirmed in their relative virility, and although these names are not confined to this pair of episodes, there does seem to be a special emphasis on naming in [a'] (4:14, 17; but cf. 4:11 and 1:20-21, perhaps indicating a pairing of [c] and [b']?). Dorsey's explanation neglects to emphasise specific verbal parallels beyond 'sons', but he might have strengthened his case by noting the clear contrasted settings of Moab in 1:1-5 and 'Israel' (rather than Judah – cf. 4:11) in 4:14 and implied by the reference to 'David' in verses 17 and 22. Perhaps the weight of this paralleled setting tips the scales in favour of Dorsey's division of episodes here, and Porten has pointed also to a possible parallel between 'ten years of death in Moab' and 'ten generations of birth in Israel', which may justify treating 4:13-17 and 4:18-21 as a single 'episode'.[65]

In the [b/b'] pair, the primary emphasis of both 1:6-19a and 4:1-12 does seem to be on two relatives of Naomi who must choose whether or not to help Naomi, although this could probably be better expressed as 'whether or not to reinforce existing kinship ties', because there is no particular service offered to Naomi in [b] (cf. 1:16-17). Dorsey highlights 'marriage' as the cause of the first of each pair of relatives turning back, but this is not the primary focus; in each case their 'initial agreement' is actually a narrative device for highlighting the personal cost accepted by the other relative in order to show *hesed* to Naomi (cf. 3:10) – Ruth forsakes marriage, and Boaz forsakes inheritance. The description of the speeches by Ruth or Boaz as 'admirable' is too subjective a parallel, as the author does not describe anyone being 'impressed' by either their actions or their words; as the audience we recognise the cost of their decisions, but this is not referred to in either speech, 1:16-17 or 4:9-10. Neither are the blessings on Ruth in each section particularly paralleled, because the motivation for the blessing in 4:11 is not Ruth's character but her marriage to Boaz, and also because of the Non-conformist blessings on Ruth in 2:12 and 3:10, and on Boaz in 2:19 and 20. Dorsey mistakenly attributes Ruth's blessing in [b'] to "the women of Bethlehem", who don't actually bless the LORD (not Ruth) until 4:14; perhaps this reveals some uncertainty about his inclusion of 4:13-17 in [a']? Nevertheless, the primary conceptual parallels between [b] and [b'] are strong enough to bear the Weight of intratextuality, and had he decided to consider Volume, he might have referred to the important word pair [*zqn/n'rh*] (1:12; 4:12), and perhaps also [*lyn/byt*] (1:16; 4:11; but cf. 3:13) and [*'ammî*] (1:16; 4:4). However, an Elephant that seems to have been neglected is the 'witnessing' of Boaz by 'the elders and all the people' in the entrance of Bethlehem (4:9-12), paralleling the response of 'all the city' as Naomi enters Bethlehem (1:19-22); in both cases this completes the intended action of the main character in the episode (1:7; 3:13). In neither case do the observers interact with Ruth herself, deliberately contrasting with the emphasis on Boaz identifying Ruth outside the city in 2:5-7 and 3:9 (cf. 2:15-16; 3:14).

It is in the [c/c'] pair that we find Dorsey's identification of intratextuality most uncertain. Three out of the four paralleled elements have weighty Non-conformists elsewhere: The settings 'at the beginning of barley harvest' and when Boaz 'winnows barley at the threshing floor' (1:22; 3:2) are not nearly as similar as the paralleled activities of reaping and gleaning barley (2:2-23) and winnowing and guarding barley (3:2-7; a different word is used in 2:17). 1:22 does no more than set the subsequent events of the book in close temporal proximity to the arrival of the women in Bethlehem. The 'surprised questions of identity' (1:19; 3:9) are not the only such questions; Boaz's question in 2:5 actually parallels the question about Ruth's identity in 3:9 much more closely than 1:19. Similarly, the 'coming into' Bethlehem of Naomi and Ruth in 1:22 is not nearly as similar to Ruth's entrance into Bethlehem in 3:15 as is Ruth's solo entrance in 2:18. The only unique and weighty verbal parallel between [c] and [c'] is the use of the adjective 'empty(-handed)' (1:21; 3:17). Even so, in the second instance it is Ruth, not Naomi, who is no longer empty-handed, just as it is Ruth not Naomi who is satiated in 2:14 and 18. It seems the intent of the author is rather to parallel Ruth's fullness before Naomi in 2:18 and in 3:17, in order to point to Ruth as the means of Naomi's eventual

[65] Porten (1978) p. 23.

restoration to fullness at the conclusion of the story. Dorsey appealed to the Weight of the paralleled elements between [c] and [c'] to justify the imbalance of length, but these parallels have each been disqualified on account of weighty Non-conformists in [d], suggesting that [d] and [c'] should be paired instead.

2.3 Assessment of Agreement

Dorsey is not unaware of the 'obvious' match between chapters 2 and 3, and explains this alternative with a whole paragraph and even an alternative six-part inverted parallel arrangement of the book, but nevertheless prefers his concentric structure for three reasons. The first is that he believes 1:19b-22 to be too distinctly defined as a separate episode to function as "simply the conclusion of the episode of 1:6-19a". The second is that his proposal involves "a more conventional seven-part symmetric scheme". The third is that his arrangement identifying 2:1-23 as the central episode seems to be strengthened by recognising the meeting of Boaz and Ruth as "the story's unmistakable turning point".

Regarding his first point, Dorsey identifies four shifts that set apart 1:19b and following as a distinct episode from 1:6-19a – "location (from Moab to Bethlehem)", "character (from the three widows to Naomi, Ruth, and the people of Bethlehem)", "time", and "topic".[66] Undoubtedly all of these types of shift do indicate the start of a new scene. In any collection of episodes that makes up a single literary work there will be varying degrees of continuity and disjunction between adjacent scenes and episodes, but for the sake of defining new episodes of the rhetorical structure we are looking for major divisions rather than minor ones. Various scholars have written on the subject of unit delimitation, but for our present purposes we will select two of the most important techniques an author may use to distinguish episodes. The first is the introduction of 'background' sentences that do not begin with the VAYYIQTOL construction,[67] and the second is transition sentences that describe the passing of time.[68] 1:19 uses neither of these major disjunctive techniques, instead completing the journey from Moab to Judah that began in 1:7 with a final scene as the women enter Bethlehem. If we were to use instead just the four general shifts that Dorsey identifies, we might similarly separate off 2:18-23 as a distinct episode, because the location shifts from the field to Naomi's house, the characters shift from Ruth, Boaz and the reapers to Ruth and Naomi alone, the time shifts (journeying from the field into the city), and the topic shifts from Ruth's successful gleaning to the identity of Boaz. Therefore Dorsey's insistence that 1:19b-22 be marked off as a "separate unit" is not justified.

As for the "obvious appeal" of an analysis containing seven parts rather than six, it is not the mere identification of a seven-part concentrism that causes Satisfaction, but rather the correct discernment of the arrangement that makes best sense of a specific piece of literature and enables better exegesis of its purpose. Concentric structure does enable an author to put greater emphasis on a particular episode as of primary significance for the overall work, but there were many other patterns available to the ancient storyteller that might convey his or her purpose equally effectively.

Dorsey's third argument focuses on the Satisfaction of the overall structure as focused on the first meeting of Boaz and Ruth, contained within 2:1-23. As this is the culmination of the

[66] Dorsey (1999) p. 122.

[67] For example, the *kî* clause in 1:6b creates a disjunction in narrative flow between verses 6 and 7, thereby completing 1:1-6 with an *inclusio* of 'famine > bread', and likewise 1:7-22 with an *inclusio* of 'departed > returned'. 2:1 begins with "And to Naomi…" rather than a VAYYIQTOL verb, as also 4:1 begins with "And Boaz…".

[68] For example, 2:23 summarises the remainder of the barley and wheat harvest in a single sentence, concluding with "And she lived with her mother-in-law." The following episode is therefore in the context of winnowing rather than reaping. 1:4c also summarises the passing of time, but 1:1-6 is a short and terse description of the historical background to the following story set at the time of the harvest and so 1:5-6 is unlikely to function as a distinct episode. 4:13 describes in a single rapid sentence a period of at least nine months, setting apart what follows from the events of the harvest that take up the majority of the book.

analysis of the book's message as revealed by the structure, we ought first to consider the Trademark intratextual techniques and the Integrity of its message with the surface comments.

2.4 Assessment of Exegesis (Trademarks and Integrity)

Collating Dorsey's identified parallels, the author's Trademarks apparently include a few narratorial techniques such as economy of words or 'etiologies of names' [a/a']; settings such as in [c/c']; activities by or towards the characters such as blessings, 'admirable speeches' [b/b'], questions, or even the common verb 'entering' [c/c']; reversal of characters' experiences such as Naomi's bereavement [a/a'] or Ruth's entrance to Bethlehem in emptiness [c/c']; or simple re-use of a traditional theme such as two relatives deliberating about supporting a third [b/b']. He summarises the purpose behind the intratextuality of each pair of episodes, and behind the structure as a whole, as being "to highlight the change of fortunes and the new hope that began with the story's turning point". In effect, he sees it as no more than a simple folktale with one big problem at the start that must somehow be solved by the end. That is of course possible, but hardly a satisfying exegesis of the book's primary purpose, particularly as it gives no explanation for the evident surface interest of the author in the connection of this particular couple and of the son they raise up for Naomi, with King David (4:17-22), falling foul of the criterion of Integrity.

As for the 'turning point' in 2:1-23, while it is true that without Boaz meeting Ruth it is unlikely that Naomi would have ended up with an heir to inherit her husband's property, this meeting was by no means the only 'turning point' of the story. Dorsey claims that "Up to this point the narrative has been heavy with hopelessness and destitution. After the meeting, the narrative exudes hope." Yet his explanation of the internal progression of 3:1-18 and also of 4:1-12 in each case includes a deliberate building of tension in the audience – we do not know beforehand how Boaz will respond to Ruth's proposal, nor how the closer kinsman will respond to the offer of Ruth with Elimelech's property. Surely this suspense and "threat to the hoped-for marriage of Ruth and Boaz" undermines the meeting of Ruth and Boaz as the 'obvious' turning point of the story. Although he does not even describe Alternative concentrism proposals, let alone defend his own as superior to them, others have thought it reasonable to place the 'turning point' elsewhere. For example, Radday views the centre to be the end of chapter 2 and beginning of chapter 3 where "Naomi takes the matter into her own hands", because the author's intended theological message is that God does in fact bring about His will through human initiative.[69] This would seem to be at very least a more worthy centre for the book's theological message than the one chosen by Dorsey, who defines its purpose as "to be an uplifting story, designed to encourage and inspire the audience" to imitate Ruth and Boaz whose "admirable qualities" determined the success of their meeting.

2.5 Assessment of Satisfaction

Dorsey appeals at the start of his analysis (footnote 1) to the Agreement of other scholars -- Tischler throughout and Wilson in most details – however, in his third footnote he also lists six scholars advocating alternative analyses, without explanation, and then at the end of his own analysis he admits that a six-part inverted parallelism arrangement (1:6-22 with 4:1-12; 2:1-23 with 3:1-18) would be "a legitimate alternative". He himself "tentatively" favours the seven-part analysis, though this will hardly inspire confidence or Satisfaction with his proposal on the part of fellow scholars. I personally find the six-part inverted parallelism arrangement to be far more satisfying than Dorsey's concentrism, and would suggest that Porten's proposed analysis offers a further level of detail and clarity to Dorsey's inverted parallelism.[70] I would slightly adjust their episode divisions in light of the above analysis, as follows: [A (1:1-6)] – [B (1:7-18) + C (1:19-22)] – [D (2:1-3) + E (2:4-16) + F (2:17-23)] – [D' (3:1-5) + E' (3:6-15) + F' (3:16-18)] – [B' (4:1-8) + C' (4:9-12)] – [A' (4:13-22)]. Here is not the place,

[69] Radday (1981) p. 76; Luter & Rigsby associate this centre with Boaz rather than Naomi (1996, pp. 16-17).

[70] Porten (1978) p. 23; cf. also Bertman (1965) p. 167; Bar-Efrat (1980) 156-57.

however, to advocate my own exegesis of the intratextuality contained in the resultant structure, especially as it is not even concentric.

My assessment of Dorsey's concentrism proposal for the book of Ruth using my seven criteria identified even with the first criterion of Balance an imbalance in the relative lengths of the two episodes 1:19b-22 and 3:1-18. On closer analysis this pair was also found to be lacking in intratextual parallels of sufficient Volume or Weight, whereas it was relatively straightforward to recognise that several of the identified Non-conformists were found instead in 2:1-23. This supported the alternative parallel between chapters 2 and 3 which Dorsey himself admitted "is far better [a match] than that between the threshing-floor story and the story of Naomi's and Ruth's arrival in Bethlehem in 1:19b-22". In the assessment of Volume and Weight in Dorsey's [b/b'] pair of episodes, an 'Elephant' was identified in 4:1-12 that lacked a parallel in 1:6-19a. Its equivalent was located instead in 1:19b-22, suggesting that 1:6-19a and 1:19b-22 might be better grouped together as a single episode paralleling 4:1-12. This would then support the six-part inverted parallelism arrangement of the book, and also even out the Balance of length throughout the structure. Dorsey's identification of 4:13-22 as a united episode paralleling 1:1-5 was found to have additional unnoticed intratextual elements supporting his delimitation, although we later found reason to adjust the latter episode's boundary slightly to include verse 6. As for the assessment of Trademarks and Integrity, the length of the overall structure did not allow the accumulation of a detailed profile of the author's techniques of intratextuality nor of the resulting messages. However, even the limited exegetical significance Dorsey drew from the pairing of episodes and from the location of the turning point in 2:1-23 were found to be simplistic and inadequate, failing to display sufficient Integrity with surface interests such as King David, and of insufficient theological weight to serve as the central focus of the book. Although Agreement with two other scholars was claimed in passing, Dorsey failed to defend his own proposal even against the inverted parallelism alternative he himself acknowledged, let alone against other suggestions of concentrism. He therefore comprehensively failed to meet the ultimate criterion of Satisfaction, at least in the view of the present writer, although elements of his analysis may well serve to improve on others' proposals of an inverted parallelism structure.

It is hoped that the above assessment of one particular proposal of concentrism for a biblical book has demonstrated the value of my seven cumulative criteria in proving or otherwise the presence of concentric intratextuality in biblical narrative. I regret that space prevents me from offering a positive proposal by means of the same criteria for a concentric structure in, for example, 2 Samuel 10 through 12. That shall have to await the conclusion of my doctoral thesis on 'the prophetic structure of 1–2 Samuel'.

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The Levites in Deuterony
Reflections based on Dtn 10 and 18

"Contrary to assumptions sometimes made in the social sciences, there is no such thing as a straight-forward synchronic cross-section, springing unproblematically into view the moment one's argument requires it. A single snapshot, outside time, without a degree of chronological depth, would be lacking in life and therefore in usefulness. […] How can one gauge or comprehend life in progress without enlisting the passage of time as an accomplice?"

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You will not be surprised that again the Levites are the subject of my paper. There is still much to be said! The issue is continually growing and new questions arise while I try to cope with it. Usually it is assumed that in the priestly texts of the Hebrew Bible there is a clear dichotomy of priests as *clerus maior* on the one hand and Levites a *clerus minor* on the other hand, while the dtn-dtr literature speaks of כהנים לויים – whatever the precise meaning and translation and whatever the concrete historical background.

To be precise, the sharp distinction in the priestly writings concerns mainly the book of Numbers (and in a certain way Ezekiel 40-48). The books of Exodus and Leviticus hardly mention Levites, except of one all cases are later additions to the priestly portions. In Numbers by contrast, Levites "pop up" in virtually every chapter and every story, so that it rather than the preceding book should bear the name "Leviticus". If one adheres to the idea of a *Grundschrift* of the priestly code (P^g) ending in Ex 40 (or Lev 9) then the differentiation between priests and Levites is of no concern until the secondary layers of the priestly code (that is P^s).

My concern however is the second aspect: the כהנים לויים in dtn-dtr terminology. There is a lengthy discussion on this formulation alone, its exact meaning and translation. Though a glimpse into a concordance suffices to show that this phrase is neither typically dtn-dtr nor typically in Deuteronomy. We find it five times in Deuteronomy and two times each in

Jeremiah and *Ezekiel*.[1] Semantically similar are two verses which speak of "the priests, the sons of Levi".[2] But in Deuteronomy there are also 14 verses mentioning "the Levite(s)", and in four instances we hear of the tribe of Levi or Jacob's son Levi.[3] These verses may have expressed similar thoughts in different phases of the redactional history of the book of Deuteronomy, but this hypothesis has to be shown first. Having in mind the small number of occurrences one should not speak of a "formula". Typically in Deuteronomy is rather a multitude of different terms rather than a single "formula".

The terminological variety tempted U. Dahmen to investigate the problem of priests and Levites *in* respectively *based on* Deuteronomy diachronically.[4] The idea does not seem to be new, already A.H.J. Gunneweg analyses the dtn usage of the terms.[5] Unfortunately, his approach sometimes obscures his results. Important and correct observations in the text, which contradict the then valid overall picture of the political and religious history of biblical Israel, are adjusted to that picture by means of *Traditionsgeschichte*. Already the arrangement of the material in pre-Josianic and post-Josianic texts sets the agenda. This leads to occasional *aporiae* and the reader may sense that Gunneweg sometimes intuited things that simply were unthinkable in 1965 and that seem possible today, if not self-evident. Other articles on the Levites in Deuteronomy, especially from the Anglo-Saxon sphere, abandon the diachronical questions almost entirely.[6] Not surprisingly I consider that somewhat one-dimensional and not very helpful as I try to find a solution on what is my central question: How did the internal structure of ancient Israelite and Judaean priesthood develop and how is that reflected in the biblical texts. Hence I appreciate Dahmen's approach.

This paper aims to take up this approach, to amend its conclusions in some instances, and to carefully enlarge upon other literary parts of the Hebrew Bible. Deuteronomy is especially suitable for diachronic approaches because in its terminological variety it can serve as a benchmark for tracking the internal development of the (literary) controversy between priests and Levites. Other textual corpora of the Hebrew Bible – Num, Ezr/Neh and Chr, not to mention the scattered verses in the former and the latter prophets – do not show such a logical

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[1] Dtn 17,9.18; 18,1; 24,8; 27,9; Jer 33,18.21 (one may call these „dtr") and Ez 43,19; 44,15; furthermore some verses in Ezr/Neh and 1/2 Chr in which the text is doubtful, except probably Neh 11,20.

[2] Dtn 21,5; 31,9.

[3] Dtn 10,8f.; 18,1; 27,12; 33,8.

[4] Ulrich Dahmen: Leviten und Priester im Deuteronomium: literarkritische und redaktionsgeschichtliche Studien. BBB 110. Bodenheim 1996.

[5] Antonius H.J. Gunneweg: Leviten und Priester. Hauptlinien der Traditionsbildung und Geschichte des israelitisch-jüdischen Kultpersonals. FRLANT 89. Göttingen 1965.

[6] Vgl. v.a. G. Ernest Wright: The Levites in Deuteronomy. In: VT 4 (1954), 325-330; J.A. Emerton: Priests and Levites in Deuteronomy. An Examination of Dr. G. E. Wright's Theory. In: VT 12 (1962), 129-138; Raymond Abba: Priests and Levites in Deuteronomy. In: VT 27 (1977), 257-267.

and terminological variety and can be correlated and subordinated to the positions of Deuteronomy.

1. Tribe and Ark in Dtn 10:6f.8f.

The reference to the Levites in Dtn 10 is part of the larger context Dtn 9:(1/)7b-10,11. In this speech Moses looks back on the events on Mt Sinai (which is of course Mt Horeb here) addressing Israel in 2nd person plural. Alluding to Ex 32-34 he tells of the tablets of the covenant, their destruction due to the making of the golden calf, his intercession in favour of Aaron, the newly made tablets and their storage in the ark made of acacia wood. The models attempting to explain the different redactional layers of this pericope are of no detailed interest for us today.[7] But there is a broad scholarly consensus that already the *Grundschicht*, the first layer, should be seen as deuteronomistic. A similar consensus exists concerning the exclusion of verses 6f.8f. which in most commentaries are referred to as late and latest glosses [see handout].[8] While Dtn 10:1-5 tells of Moses making the new tablets and depositing them in the ark, in v. 6f. we read of an itinerary similar to Num 30:30-33 and in its centre a note on Aaron's death and on the priestly succession of his son Eleasar. V. 8 deals with the separation of the tribe of Levi. The intention of this singling out is that the Levites a) carry the Ark of the Covenant, b) stand before the LORD to minister him and c) bless in his name to this day. This serves also as the reason for the following v. 9 which states that Levi therefore "has no portion nor inheritance with his brethren" – i.e. the other tribes of Israel – because "the LORD is his inheritance, as the LORD your God promised him". V. 10 flashes back to Moses at the Mountain with God.

According to the current text, especially v. 6f., one must assume that the separation of the tribe of Levi took place in "Jotbathah, an area rich in streams". I think it is almost clear that this is not the original intention. This event obviously belongs to the mountain of God, and the itinerary note v. 6f. is in all likelihood an addition. This addition disturbs the connection of v. 5 and v. 8f., i.e. of the ark and its bearers. The tribe of Levi is now singled out in "an area rich in streams" but meagre in relevance: Jotbathah instead of Mt Sinai is a severe loss of authority – and all this as reward for a circumstantial remark on the priestly succession? The place names of the itinerary correspond only partially with Num 33 and distort the sequence. The scribe who added the gloss may or may not have been a scholarly trained scribe, but he surely

[7] Cf. the superb book of Peter Porzig: Die Lade Jahwes im Alten Testament und in den Texten vom Toten Meer. BZAW 397. Berlin; New York 2009.

[8] Cf. already Martin Noth: Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien. Darmstadt [3]1967, 17 n. 2.

had polemical intentions: “priestly matters” in the narrow sense of the word are in the end more important than “pan-levitical” interests. This is a far-reaching alteration by adding a few words!

But v. 8f. too are a later addition, as mentioned, on occasion of the mentioning of the Ark of the Covenant. As this is (almost) scholarly consensus I will sum up these last stages of the redactional history of Dtn 9f.: In a deuteronomistic text were inscribed a) the separation of the tribe of Levi including the setting of its duties [v. 8f.] and b) later on priestly interests which have a critical stance towards the pan-levitical interests of the following verses [v. 6f.] A priestly reaction and redaction subsequent to a pro-levitical redaction is apparently the endpoint of the textual development. Inasmuch as Dtn 10 for the first time in Deuteronomy mentions Levites it sets the mind of the reader for the whole book and these verses are of importance beyond their immediate context, i.e. in the several shapes of the book of Deuteronomy.

2. Legislation concerning the priests in Dtn 18:1-8

I will skip some chapters of Deuteronomy now and turn to Dtn 18:1-8. The reason is simple: In Dtn 18 we find almost all the dtn variety of terms concerning the Levites in a few verses. Our short reflections on Dtn 10 were just the “preparation” which should enable us to look at the text through the latest stages of redactional developments, while we are now heading for the center of all the (at least my) problems. Many scholars connect the priestly legislation in Dtn 18 with a Josianic Reform and 2 Kgs 22f., and therefore there are whole libraries of literature and of course no consensus. The best is however to have a look at the text itself.

V. 1a establishes the rule that Levitical priests “shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel”. V. 1b formulates that they shall eat or live on the אשי יהוה [the older translation “offerings by fire” is problematic]. The apposition “the whole tribe of Levi” has always been suspicious to literary critics. A slight tension emerges between the singular subject and the plural verb, but this does not necessarily lead to a literary critical operation. Such an operation is compelling only if one considers the conceptual difference between priests that are called “Levitic” and a tribe of Levi – what does the latter say what is not already said by stating “Levitical priests”? – and because the grammatical singular of the tribe is taken up from v. 2 onwards. A problem of its own is the word נחלתו in v. 1. Does the singular suffix refer to “the tribe” or to “the LORD”? Both solutions are problematic, because the tribe does explicitly not have a נחלה and

the LORD's נחלה is the land or the people of Israel. Today we may set aside that problem as its possible solutions are not related to my general question.

However, it is obvious that from v. 2 on the singular of apposition "the whole tribe of Levi" is taken up and v. 2 therefore belongs to a secondary layer with respect to the basic layer of v. 1. In V. 3 the perspective changes. We hear of legal entitlements of the priests to the people concerning animal sacrifices. The first part of the verse speaks of priests in general while the second part takes the individual into consideration (with a *we-qatal*-phrase in 3rd person singular). The issue of the following v. 4 are (annual?) tributes, yet unlike v. 3 the hearer/reader is addressed in 2nd person singular and there is – by the suffixed preposition לו – a reference back to a 3rd person singular. In the present text this probably refers to the priest of v. 3. The non-personal wording of v. 3 and the formal introduction as a legal text (וזה יהיה משפט הכהנים) lead most scholars to the conclusion that v. 3 (often also v. 4) is seen as an old rule and therefore pre-dtn. Indeed the covenant code is introduced by ואלה המשפטים [Ex 21:1] and the legal portions in Deuteronomy by אלה החקים והמשפטים [Dtn 12:1; admittedly A. Rofe holds Dtn 11:30 as the introduction]. Other scholars tend to see similarities to the deuteronomic introduction of single laws as Dtn 15:2 or 19:4: וזה דבר השמטה\הרצח [without direct legal context 1 Kgs 9:15 וזה דבר המס]. The closest parallel however is 1 Sam 8:11 זה יהיה משפט המלך which should be a most effective danger sign for everybody who wants to prove the old age of v. 3 relying solely on stylistic considerations. If the junction of v. 3 and v. 4 is noted but tagged with a question mark, the reasons for that uncertainty are clear: There is a difference in style (3rd person address vs. 2nd person address) and in issue (onetime vs. annual tributes). This suffices for me to assume a literary critical cut. I will return to that aspect later.

In v. 5 the idea is shaped that a "3rd person singular" of all the tribes of Israel is chosen to minister the LORD. The identity of that "3rd person singular" is however unclear. Concerning the present text surely a reference to the nearest noun is intended, that is the priest of v. 3. But the phrase "of all your tribes" [address in 2nd person singular] suggests a connection to the addendum in v. 1. Commonly v. 5 together with v. 2 are believed to be the work of the redactor of v. 1.[9] The disadvantage of this solution is apparent: That redaction is virtually laid as a circle around v. 3 which disturbs the internal references. The alternative[10] is to drop מכל שבטיך in v. 5. Then v. 5 would originally not refer to v. 1 but to the priest of v. 3. But there is no textual reason for that operation and the question arises what that gloss aimed at. The few who were bothered by answering that question – and not answering it is a misuse of literary

[9] Cf. already Julius Wellhausen: Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels. [6]1927, 136 n. 1.

[10] Represented by Udo Rüterswörden: Von der politischen Gemeinschaft zur Gemeinde. Studien zu Dt 16,18-18,22. BBB 65. Frankfurt/M. 1987.; and Schaper, op. cit.

criticism – stated that this gloss created a reference to v. 1f. But that leads to the same shortcomings as the former solution, because a reference back across v. 3 is implausible. I will return to that problem. It is however possible that v. 5b in contrast to v. 5a points to a single person, that is the priest of v. 3, and therefore may belong to a later redaction that strengthens or even creates a reference to v. 3!

Commonly accepted is the observation that the masoretic *s^{e}tuma* mark between v. 5 and v. 6 designates a new topic. How to define that topic depends on where the apodosis of this casuistic legal proposition begins. Starting in v. 8 it would speak about the supply of the Levites at the temple.[11] Starting in v. 7 it addresses the access right of the Levites *to* the temple respectively their rights of duty *at* the temple.[12] In both cases the centralisation of the cult is only implicitly stated but not claimed. This claim could only be understood if v. 6a would be the protasis and v. 6b the apodosis ("then he may come"), but v. 6a actually lacks a real condition and therefore cannot be seen as the protasis. According to Dahmen, syntactical reasons – the apodosis follows a multi-chained protasis by a break in the syntactical pattern – speak in favour of v. 8 as purpose of the legal regulation. My short remarks may suffice to show the difficulties of all approaches that rest their theories concerning a Josianic reform upon a certain interpretation of Dtn 18,6-8 as does J. Schaper.[13] In respect of our literary critical question there emerges almost nothing from v. 6-8 except that Levites acting in the cult are presumed, which is important for the relation to v. 1.

According to A.H.J. Gunneweg v. 6-8 do not contribute anything beyond what is already stated in v. 1-5 and therefore they should be considered primary against the beginning of the chapter. For him the "old nucleuses of tradition" consist of v. 3f. and 6f. Hence Gunneweg disagrees with the majority of scholars that regard only the glosses in v. 1 as well as v. 2 and v. 5 as additions to an otherwise coherent *Grundschicht*. Even more conservative is J. Schaper assuming only a few glosses in the respective verses.

U. Dahmen tries a different solution, and is followed by E. Otto and R. Achenbach [Schaper lists also Th. Rudnig among the scholars who accepted Dahmen's position, but Rudnig never stated anything concerning Dtn 18:6-8]. He too sees v. 3f. as an old pre-dtn sacrificial tariff which was framed by v. 1* (with question mark!) and v. 5 in the dtn *Grundschicht*. But Dahmen is uncertain whether to assign the attribute "levitical" in v. 1 to an addition (cf. Rüterswörden pointing to Dtn 17:9). But as he himself puts it there is no reason for that

[11] Rodney K. Duke: The Portion of the Levite: Another Reading of Deuteronomy 18:6-8. In: JBL 106 (1987), 193-201, which is followed by Dahmen.

[12] That is the classical solution since Wellhausen.

[13] Joachim Schaper: Priester und Leviten im achämenidischen Juda: Studien zur Kult- und Sozialgeschichte Israels in persischer Zeit. FAT 31. Tübingen 2000.

concerning literary criticism. Much younger, and that is the new idea of Dahmen, could be v. 6-8. Yet in his argumentation he again abandons the level of literary criticism and resorts to linguistic-statistic analysis. I am going to quote some of his arguments in order to show their persuasive power: The phrase הלוי מאחד שעריך in v. 6 deviates from the usual הלוי בשעריך. The "usual phrase" is however dispersed on different literary layers, what makes that "observation" obsolete. The rephrasing is however matter-of-factly imperative: The Levite simply comes "*from* any of your gates", he cannot come "*in* the gate". Likewise there is, according to Dahmen, a tendency of "totalization". This relates to the use of the "remarkable" word כל. I regard this kind of argumentation as unrewarding. More serious is the observation that there are otherwise no cultic Levites in Deuteronomy. But this alone is not reason enough to exclude the only passage possibly mentioning them. One instead has to ask, why Deuteronomy should speak of Levites in the cult at the central sanctuary on several occasions – and in the gates of course there cannot exist any form of cultic activity. Moreover one should bear in mind that for the rest of Deuteronomy the Levites always occur in the lists of the *personae miserae* in context of the feasts of Israel which I consider at least cultic context, though admittedly "faded". However, there are no textually immanent criteria that suggest a internal relative chronology with v. 6-8 belonging to a later hand than the rest of the passage. And there is another striking point: Dahmen misses a priestly reaction to that impressive pro-levitical addition (v. 6-8) to the priestly legislation as parallel to Dtn 10:6f. [The quest for fresh arguments in Otto or Achenbach is inconclusive.]

The only scholarly consensus we can record so far is the classification of Dtn 18:3(f.) as "pre-dtn sacrificial tariff". I hope to have prepared you well by mentioning all the *aporiae* so that you may accept my conclusions that argue against this solely remaining consensus.

Let us for one moment set aside the idea that v. 3 has to be "old", probably "pre-dtn". Which reasons in the text itself indicate for its priority? I must admit, I can see none! To the contrary, if we abandon v. 3 there is a marvellous junction of v. 4 to v. 2. This connection is broken only by the insertion of v. 3. The reason for that insertion must still be found, but the result is clear: The following statements of v. 4-5 (tributes and election) are no longer related to the whole tribe of Levi but to the priest(s). This tendency is similar to other passages which introduce a social distinction with considerable privileging of the priests. As well as in Dtn 10:6f. the "technique", if I may say so, is rather to disrupt an existing connection by a partially clumsy insertion which sheds a different light on the following verses. Both the tributes (v. 4), the saying about the election and the duties resulting from that (v. 5) are solely connected with the priest(s). [Incidentally in the masoretic text the "blessing", which seems to

be a priestly prerogative is still missing in v. 5. The Samaritanus and Septuagint instead have here a harmonizing addition. In Dtn 10:8 where the whole tribe is concerned LXX uses the rather unusual ἐπεύχομαι (elsewhere only 1 Chr 23:13) instead of εὐλογέω.] The exclusive back reference to the priest by stating "chosen out of all your tribes" is as well significant since the curious concept of "the priests" (not the Levites!) being a tribe gleams at best in late texts as Num 17, the budding of Aaron's rod, and 1 Chr 27:17 where Zadoq is named as "leader over Aaron" besides the heads of the other tribes!

And there is more to it than that: The verse virtually had left no innerbiblical footprints, which would be surprising if it truly was an "old rule". There is but one exception, the affinity to 1 Sam 2:12ff. [s. handout], which has been noted before. Both verses share the unique phrase משפט (מ)את העם which is difficult to translate (at least into German). In addition to that the *figura etymologica* "sacrificing a sacrifice" is peculiar to those verses and has fewer parallels within the rest of the Hebrew Bible than one might expect. This could in sum point to a literary relation of both texts. The doublet of "people" and "those who offer" in Deuteronomy is odd, in 1 Sam organic. The את in 1 Sam is difficult, the מאת probably tries to smooth the text. This is of course weak evidence but it points to 1 Sam as the "donor" text. The משפט here is an integral part of the story, in Deuteronomy it is not. Dtn 18:3 turns the gambling game of 1 Sam 2 into a clear regulation: The priests get the shoulder, the cheeks, and the stomach. There was obviously a need for regulation, but the redactor did not add something new, he just explicated what – in his eyes – was already implicitly stated in the text [and see below for the reception of that part in the Temple Scroll]. Whatever the date of 1 Sam 2:12ff., Dtn 18:3 is younger and in any case the youngest part in Dtn 18:1-8. We can also find the "priestly reaction on the pro-Levitical redaction" which U. Dahmen missed. And furthermore the redactional history of Dtn 18 is rid of some previous problems. As I already hinted at, v. 5b too may originate from the same redactor who concentred the passage on "the priest", may be the high priest as such.

Apart from that we may follow the consensus. Verses 2.4.5a refer to the additional gloss in v. 1 and thus are addenda as well. They regulate the income of the Levitical priests, which are now attributed and understood as "the whole tribe of Levi". These regulations are of course no pure invention. If we take an *Ur-Deuteronomium* as a basis which is (with T. Veijola, R.G. Kratz and others) strictly orientated by the idea of the centralisation of the cult, the reader comes from Dtn 14:23 and 15:19 [see handout]. There we find the crucial keywords that triggered the *Fortschreibung* in Dtn 18: Dtn 14 regulates the annual tithes of "grain, new wine and oil". From Dtn 15 we learn that the firstborn of the flock are sanctified to the LORD, and

therefore shall not be shorn. The fleece belongs to the tribe of Levi. In short, Deuteronomy delivers us all "building material" we need for this redactional layer. It clarifies what the נחלה of Levi consists of. The idea of the election of the tribe (v. 5) may belong to a similar phase in the redactional history of the book of Deuteronomy as that of the separation of the tribe in Dtn 10:8f.

Having stripped off the latest redaction in v. 3.5b and an older one in v. 1*.2.4.5 we are now left with v. 1*.6-8, and there the priority is clear: V. 6-8 are a legal proposition of its own, v. 1* alone would be meaningless, whereas prefixed to v. 6-8 it clarifies the necessity of that legal proposition. *Because* the Levites (v. 6-8) – now called "Levitical priests" (v. 1*) – "do have no portion nor inheritance with Israel" – in fact: must not have – they are supplied by the sanctuary. The former need to regulate the supply of the Levites had become a theological construction. It is a divine commandment, that the Levites/Levitical priests do not have any tribal homeland (=landed property?). This so called *Levitenregel* might originate from here, what gives an answer to Dahmens quite heavy-handed search for a programmatic text of origin. The usual alternatives are a) Num 18:20(-24), b) an original edition of the pericope on Mt Sinai Ex 32-34* or c) an "old religious formula", that is "floating tradition". The latter ones are rightly rejected by Dahmen, because they again open Pandora's Box of *Traditionsgeschichte*. No less problematic is the relation to Num 18, because the story there has a different focus: Num knows the sharp distinction between priests (in the person of Aaron) and Levites and ascribes each group its own נחלה. Furthermore the LORD speaks to Aaron, not to Levi, as stated in Deuteronomy. The search for a reference text which precedes Deuteronomy has to remain without an answer as none of the three mentioned possibilities fits. The *Levitenregel* does not have a reference text, it is theological theory of some dtr redactors.

As core of the priestly legislation remain thus v. 6-8. The regulation for supplying the Levites from outside the sanctuary, which these verses speak of, arises with necessity from the centralisation of the cult. According to R.G. Kratz – and not surprising I agree with him – this passage does not belong to the *Ur-Deuteronomium* but to its *Umfeld*.[14] It might once have followed the regulations concerning jurisdiction in Dtn 17:8-13*. In light of that junction one may speculate if the "Levite in your gates" was originally associated with jurisdiction. But so far this is almost mere speculation and I will not build any further hypotheses on that.

[14] Cf. Reinhard G. Kratz: Die Komposition der erzählenden Bücher des Alten Testaments. Grundwissen der Bibelkritik. Göttingen 2000, 122.

3. „Levitical priests“ and the „Levite in your gates“ in Deuteronomy

The phrase “Levitical priests” in Dtn 18:1 is then too a theological construction found in a redactional layer (already a secondary one!) in Deuteronomy, which further weakens any possible connection with a “Josianic reform”. For reasons of time and space I will not go through all the other occurences but will restrict myself to giving some short hints: Dtn 27:9 belongs most probably to the oldest part of that chapter, but that chapter does not belong to the oldest editions of the book of Deuteronomy. And again there is reason to assume that והכהנים הליים was added by a later redactor. Though the redactional history of Dtn 27 is worth a paper by its own. We may nonetheless record that the Levitical priests have a liturgical-parenetic function. In Dtn 24:8 Levitical priests undertake what is the task of “the priest” according to Lev 14: In case of leprosy they shall “teach” (ירה), and the text reminds us on what happened to Miriam in Num 12. Israel is addressed in the plural and that suggests this verse being part of one of the later redactions. Dtn 17:18 belongs to the law of the king. The Levitical priests appear as the keepers of the Tora. But the law of the king too was not part of a *Ur-Deuteronomium*. Thus remains only Dtn 17:9 within the scope of the reorganization of jurisdiction. The pericope 17,8-13 has undergone several redactions and you will not be surprised that I consider the attribute “Levitical” (together with v. 10b.11) to be redactional. In these verses again the Levitical priests have to teach (ירה) the Tora. All verses containing the phrase “Levitical priests” circle thus around the same issue (and similarly Dtn 31:9 “the priests, the sons of Levi”). Keeping and interpreting the Tora is their task. This is explicitly stated in Moses’ blessing on Levi, and similarly thoughts are expressed in Chr.

Of course our interest is often in the origins which unfortunately remain obscure. If we subtract all the later “overpaintings” (*Übermalungen*) only those verses remain which entrust the “Levite in your gates” to the welfare of Israel. This conclusion is all but new and was seen by Gunneweg and others. The verses in question are Dtn 12:18,19; 14:27,29; 16:11,14. Differentiating with R.G. Kratz even within the *Grundschicht* none of these verses was part of the *Ur-Deuteronomium*. At the earliest a wave of *Fortschreibungen* would have inscribed the care for the Levites into Deuteronomy and listed them among the *personae miserae*. Our passage Dtn 18:6-8 as well could have been part of that setting. Historically we can infer from that no more than the banality that the centralisation of the cult had an impact on the Levites in the countryside, not in Jerusalem! But that impact was not taken into consideration in the *Ur-Deuteronomium* and necessitated some amendments to the dtn law. The connection to 2 Kgs 22f. is more and more weakened and so is any connection to a Josianic reform. However we still do neither know what exactly was the task of the Levites in the countryside nor what

the Levites at the central sanctuary did. To answer these questions we need other (textual) material.

4. Innerbiblical and qumranic reception

Somewhat more illuminating is the look into the reception history of our text, which of course cannot "prove" the previous analysis but may add further evidence for stringency in the development of our texts. According to Num 18 [s. handout] the Levites are commited to Aaron and his sons to serve them, not the LORD. Here the priestly reaction on the dtr programme is palpable! In Num 16:8ff., the latest additions to the Korah- respectively Dathan-Abiram-story, the tone becomes caustic. Taking up the wording about the duties of the tribe of Levi from Dtn 10:8f. Moses asks Korah and his Levitical fellow rebels whether these duties are still not considered privilege enough and whether Korah even seeks priesthood. The mentioned duties apparently do not imply priesthood. On the quiet Moses – or let us say the redactor of Num 16 – changed the wording slightly: The blessing was dropped and "to serve the LORD" was changed into "to serve the congregation". The degradation of the Levites proceeds.

The tax system too is refined in Deuteronomy. The Levites themselves shall offer a tenth of the tithe they received (Num 18:26f) from "the grain of the threshing floor" and from "the fullness of the wine- and olivepress". Further developments of the topic can be found in Neh 10.13, and 2 Chr 30f. The feature in Neh is the "wood offering… as it is written in the law" [Neh 10:35]. Peculiar to 2 Chr is the relation to the Passover under Hezekiah and the inclusion of honey unto the tributes [which should be the case in "a land flowing with milk and honey"]. The reference text is in both cases Dtn 18 through the lens of Num 18.

So far for the innerbiblical reception, but the Dead Sea Scrolls too should be mentioned, and concerning Deuteronomy the Temple Scroll is of importance.[15] In col. 60 we find the paraphrase of Dtn 18. The system of tributes there is defined more precisely, thus honey – compare Neh 10 – is included. But above all the statement about "election" is obviously related to the priests and the mentioned duties include the blessing (ll. 10-11), which was missing in Dtn 18 (MT). Likewise if a Levite comes from any of Israel's cities he shall serve "the ones who stand before me" (ll. 12-14). If the insertion of ישרת into the paraphrase of Dtn 18:7 is not just a textual mistake (stylistically it is however bad Hebrew) it shifts the meaning

[15] See Simone Paganini: »Nicht darfst du zu diesen Wörtern etwas hinzufügen« Die Rezeption des Deuteronomiums in der Tempelrolle: Sprache, Autoren, Hermeneutik. BZAR 11. Wiesbaden 2009.

of Dtn 18 towards Num 18: The Levites serve the LORD only indirectly, but directly they serve the priests.

Another important point touches the systematic application of the "sacrificial tariff" of Dt 18:3. The triad of "shoulder, cheeks, stomach" has no parallels in the Bible and within the Dead Sea Scrolls only in the Temple Scroll, namely during the sacrifices of the annual feasts. The Temple Scroll creates a feast of the firstlings for every element of the triad "grain, new wine and oil" and lists all the tributes to the priests according to a harmonized sacrificial tariff combining Dtn 18:3 with Lev 3f. and 7-9.

5. Conclusions

Let us come back to our starting point, the Levites. In my opinion Dtn 18:1-8 is a key text for understanding the literary development of one of the most important issues in the emerging biblical literature. If you accept my analysis there is 1) an *Ur-Deuteronomium* without explicitly mentioning Levites; 2) an early version of Deuteronomy which lists the Levites within the *personae miserae* and tries to regulate their material supply; 3) an already dtr Dtn which speaks of "Levitical Priests"; 4) a late dtr Dtn which broadens the idea of "Levitical priests" to "the tribe of Levi" and focuses on keeping the covenant tablets and interpreting the Thora; and 5) a priestly revised Dtn. These literary strata could in my view serve as further criteria for a redactional critical study of the whole book of Deuteronomy. Simultaneously 5) one can draw cross connections from the late and post dtr portions to Num. And finally 6) there are tendencies of reception in the Temple Scroll which seamlessly attach to innerbiblical developments.

These observations concur with the working hypothesis of our joint Göttingen & Haifa DFG-Project "The reception of the book of Genesis in the Dead Sea Scrolls", an idea that was also outlined by Charlotte Hempel at the IOSOT-congress in Helsinki. I hope that I could show you at least partially the importance of the Dead Sea Scrolls for Hebrew Bible Scholars beyond textual criticism on the one hand, and on the other hand the usefulness of the literary critical approach to the Hebrew Bible for Qumran scholars because it can clarify some of the problems which triggered the production of the Dead Sea texts. There is an urgent need in both disciplines to get into conversation with each other, and there is still a lot to do.

1. Ark and Covenant

Dtn 10:6 וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל נָסְעוּ מִבְּאֵרֹת בְּנֵי־יַעֲקָן מוֹסֵרָה
שָׁם מֵת אַהֲרֹן וַיִּקָּבֵר שָׁם וַיְכַהֵן אֶלְעָזָר בְּנוֹ תַּחְתָּיו׃
10:7 מִשָּׁם נָסְעוּ הַגֻּדְגֹּדָה וּמִן־הַגֻּדְגֹּדָה יָטְבָתָה אֶרֶץ נַחֲלֵי מָיִם׃
10:8 בָּעֵת הַהִוא הִבְדִּיל יְהוָה אֶת־שֵׁבֶט הַלֵּוִי לָשֵׂאת אֶת־אֲרוֹן בְּרִית־יְהוָה
לַעֲמֹד לִפְנֵי יְהוָה לְשָׁרְתוֹ וּלְבָרֵךְ בִּשְׁמוֹ עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה׃
10:9 עַל־כֵּן לֹא־הָיָה לְלֵוִי חֵלֶק וְנַחֲלָה עִם־אֶחָיו
יְהוָה הוּא נַחֲלָתוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לוֹ׃

2. Legislations concerning the priests

Dtn 18:1 לֹא־יִהְיֶה לַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם כָּל־שֵׁבֶט לֵוִי חֵלֶק וְנַחֲלָה עִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל
אִשֵּׁי יְהוָה וְנַחֲלָתוֹ יֹאכֵלוּן׃
18:2 וְנַחֲלָה לֹא־יִהְיֶה־לוֹ בְּקֶרֶב אֶחָיו
יְהוָה הוּא נַחֲלָתוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר־לוֹ׃ ס
18:3 וְזֶה יִהְיֶה מִשְׁפַּט הַכֹּהֲנִים מֵאֵת הָעָם מֵאֵת זֹבְחֵי הַזֶּבַח אִם־שׁוֹר אִם־שֶׂה
וְנָתַן לַכֹּהֵן הַזְּרֹעַ וְהַלְחָיַיִם וְהַקֵּבָה׃
18:4 רֵאשִׁית דְּגָנְךָ תִּירֹשְׁךָ וְיִצְהָרֶךָ וְרֵאשִׁית גֵּז צֹאנְךָ תִּתֶּן־לוֹ׃
18:5 כִּי בוֹ בָּחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִכָּל־שִׁבְטֶיךָ
לַעֲמֹד לְשָׁרֵת בְּשֵׁם־יְהוָה הוּא וּבָנָיו כָּל־הַיָּמִים׃ ס

18:6 וְכִי־יָבֹא הַלֵּוִי מֵאַחַד שְׁעָרֶיךָ מִכָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר־הוּא גָּר שָׁם
וּבָא בְּכָל־אַוַּת נַפְשׁוֹ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְהוָה׃
18:7 וְשֵׁרֵת בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו כְּכָל־אֶחָיו הַלְוִיִּם הָעֹמְדִים שָׁם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה׃
18:8 חֵלֶק כְּחֵלֶק יֹאכֵלוּ לְבַד מִמְכָּרָיו עַל־הָאָבוֹת׃ ס

3. Lateral texts

to Dtn 18,3

1 Sam 2:12 וּבְנֵי עֵלִי בְּנֵי בְלִיָּעַל לֹא יָדְעוּ אֶת־יְהוָה׃
2:13 וּמִשְׁפַּט הַכֹּהֲנִים אֶת־הָעָם
כָּל־אִישׁ זֹבֵחַ זָבַח וּבָא נַעַר הַכֹּהֵן כִּבְשֵׁל הַבָּשָׂר
וְהַמַּזְלֵג שְׁלֹשׁ־הַשִּׁנַּיִם בְּיָדוֹ׃
2:14 וְהִכָּה בַכִּיּוֹר אוֹ בַּדּוּד אוֹ בַקַּלַּחַת אוֹ בַפָּרוּר
כֹּל אֲשֶׁר יַעֲלֶה הַמַּזְלֵג יִקַּח הַכֹּהֵן בּוֹ
כָּכָה יַעֲשׂוּ לְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל הַבָּאִים שָׁם בְּשִׁלֹה׃

to Dtn 18,4

Dtn 14:22 עַשֵּׂר תְּעַשֵּׂר אֵת כָּל־תְּבוּאַת זַרְעֶךָ הַיֹּצֵא הַשָּׂדֶה שָׁנָה שָׁנָה׃
14:23 וְאָכַלְתָּ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר לְשַׁכֵּן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם
מַעְשַׂר דְּגָנְךָ תִּירֹשְׁךָ וְיִצְהָרֶךָ וּבְכֹרֹת בְּקָרְךָ וְצֹאנֶךָ
לְמַעַן תִּלְמַד לְיִרְאָה אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כָּל־הַיָּמִים׃

Dtn 15:19 כָּל־הַבְּכוֹר אֲשֶׁר יִוָּלֵד בִּבְקָרְךָ וּבְצֹאנְךָ הַזָּכָר תַּקְדִּישׁ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
לֹא תַעֲבֹד בִּבְכֹר שׁוֹרֶךָ וְלֹא תָגֹז בְּכוֹר צֹאנֶךָ׃

to Dtn 18,5

Dtn 18:5 LXX ὅτι αὐτὸν ἐξελέξατο κύριος ὁ θεός σου ἐκ πασῶν τῶν φυλῶν σου παρεστάναι **ἔναντι κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ σου** λειτουργεῖν **καὶ εὐλογεῖν** ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ αὐτὸς καὶ οἱ υἱοὶ αὐτοῦ ***ἐν τοῖς υἱοῖς Ισραηλ***

Dtn 10:8 LXX ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ καιρῷ διέστειλεν κύριος τὴν φυλὴν τὴν Λευι αἴρειν τὴν κιβωτὸν τῆς διαθήκης κυρίου παρεστάναι ἔναντι κυρίου λειτουργεῖν καὶ ***ἐπεύχεσθαι*** ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ταύτης

Num 3:6 הַקְרֵב אֶת־מַטֵּה לֵוִי וְהַעֲמַדְתָּ אֹתוֹ לִפְנֵי אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן וְשֵׁרְתוּ אֹתוֹ׃
Num 8:26 וְשֵׁרֵת אֶת־אֶחָיו בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד לִשְׁמֹר מִשְׁמֶרֶת וַעֲבֹדָה לֹא יַעֲבֹד
כָּכָה תַּעֲשֶׂה לַלְוִיִּם בְּמִשְׁמְרֹתָם׃ פ
Num 16:9 הַמְעַט מִכֶּם כִּי־הִבְדִּיל אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶתְכֶם מֵעֲדַת יִשְׂרָאֵל
לְהַקְרִיב אֶתְכֶם אֵלָיו
לַעֲבֹד אֶת־עֲבֹדַת מִשְׁכַּן יְהוָה וְלַעֲמֹד לִפְנֵי הָעֵדָה לְשָׁרְתָם׃
Num 18:2 וְגַם אֶת־אַחֶיךָ מַטֵּה לֵוִי שֵׁבֶט אָבִיךָ הַקְרֵב אִתָּךְ
וְיִלָּווּ עָלֶיךָ וְיָשָׁרְתוּךָ וְאַתָּה וּבָנֶיךָ אִתָּךְ לִפְנֵי אֹהֶל הָעֵדֻת׃

to Dtn 18,4f.: 11QT[a] Kol. 60,6-15 (13-22)

13 *vacat* וללויים מעשר הדגן והתירוש והיצהר אשר
14 הקדישו לי לראישונה והשכם מאת זובחי הזבח והמכס מן
15 השלל ומן הבז ומן הציד לעוף ולחיה ולדגים אחד מן המאה
16 ומבני היונה ומעשר מן הדבש אחד מן החמשים ולכוהנים
17 אחד מן המאה מן בני היונה כי במה בחרתי מן כול שבטיכה
18 לעמוד לפני ולשרת ולברך בשמי הוא וכול בניו כול הימים
19 *vacat* וכי יבוא הלוי מאחד שעריכה מכל ישראל אשר
20 הוא גר שמה בכל אות נפשו אל המקום אשר אבחר לשכן
21 שמי ככל אחיו הלויים ישרת העומדים שמה לפני חלק כחלק
22 יואכלו לבד ממכר על האבות *vacat*

Is the Textual Female in Hos 2 YHWH's Wife?

1. Introduction: Interpretations of the "Marital Metaphor" in Hos 1-3

The first thing that is associated with Hos 1-3 is the key term „marital metaphor". Accordingly, what most interpretations seem to agree on is that already Hos 2:4-15 presents us with a (though adulterous) situation of husband and wife. In this paper, I will argue that nothing that is immediately given in the text shows that Hos 2:4-15 presents any kind of marital relationship, respectively a case of adultery. In other words: in no sense it follows directly from what is "in" the text that the speaker occupies any legal position that would justify his violent actions against the textual female.

What *exactly* to make of that key "marital metaphor" of Hos 1-3 is a matter of scholarly controversy. Some scholars have looked at Hosea's marriage to a harloterous wife (אֵשֶׁת זְנוּנִים) as a metaphor, allegory or sign act that resembles YHWH's relationship to Israel. Others have argued that the marital imagery in Hos 2 might present YHWH and his wife Israel as one that is portrayed in the image of a female personified city. Still others have argued that the marital imagery depicts a divorce of YHWH from a Goddess, like Ashera[1]. And again others have argued that the marital metaphor is shaped according to the biblical idea of covenant[2] or at least resembles such an idea.[3] In this reading the textual female is interpreted as Israel in general (not a city) and seen as YHWH's wife. Finally, some scholars turn away from the theological idea of covenant and focus on legal documents and practices that deal with divorce and adultery as found in ancient Near Eastern and biblical material

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[1] E.g. Whitt, W.D. (1992), "The Divorce of Yahweh and Ashera," SJOT 6/1: 31-67 ; Dijk Hemmes, F. van (1989), "The Imagination of Power and the Power of Imagination. An Intertextual Analysis of Two Biblical Love Songs: The Song of Songs and Hosea 2," *JSOT 44*: 75-88.

[2] A theory raised by Adler, E. (1989), *The Background for the Metaphor of Covenant as Marriage in the Hebrew Bible* (PhD diss., University of California at Berkely). Cf. Abma, R. (1999), *Bonds of Love: Methodic Studies of Prophetic Texts with Marriage Imagery (Isaiah 50:1-3 and 54:1-10, Hosea 1-3, Jeremiah 2-3)* (SSN; Assen: Van Gorcum), 23-24. Fensham, C. (1984), "The Marriage Metaphor in Hosea for the Covenant Relationship between the Lord and His People (Hos 1:2-9," *JNSL 12*: 77-78; Ortlund, R., Jr. (1996), 9, 25. Rallis, I. (1990), "Nuptial Imagery in the Book of Hosea: Israel as the Bride of Yahweh." *St. Vladimir's Theological Quaterly 34*: 197-219.

[3] Cf. e.g. Rudolph, W. (1966), *Hosea* (KAT, 13.1; Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn); And more recently: Baumann, G. (2000), *Liebe und Gewalt. Die Ehe als Metapher für das Verhältnis JHWH-Israel in den Prophetenbüchern* (SBS; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk), 66-73.

in order to historical critically enlighten the relationship between the speaker and the textual female in Hos 2.[4]

In this paper I will focus on those readings that understand "the marital metaphor" as a depiction of YHWH's relationship to Israel: a large majority of the scholars who read Hos 2 in this way highlight the (punitive) educational and at the same time affirmative function of the portrayal of YHWH's and Israel's relationship in Hos 2 and suggest that the notion of a just judgment and the proposal of forgiveness and reunion was well received and found acceptance by the primary readership. The emphasis in these interpretations is on *YHWH's reliable and lasting commitment* that spans over the past and future which establishes an *intense and enduring relationship* with Israel as well as on Israel's reception of Hos 2:4-15 as a deserved and just punishment.[5]

One might argue that the kinds of interpretations just mentioned are theologically rather than historical critically motivated and therefore biased and irrelevant for historical critical biblical reconstructions. Yet, it should be recognized that even scholars who intend to answer purely historical questions by investigating the "real life relations [the text internalizes] and the ideologies that support them,"[6] base their evaluations of the text's meaning on the same kinds of assumptions: dependent on the notion that Hos 2:4ff depicts a marital relationship that is threatened by the woman's adultery, legal material and practices found in extra-biblical and biblical sources are drawn upon to describe the "real life background" of this imagery. Thus, it can be recognized that the idea of a transgression of an institutionalized relationship that justifies the demand for loyalty and the infliction of punishment is maintained. Things only receive a different label: the legally institutionalized relationship that was previously called *covenant* becomes *marriage* and *apostasy* becomes *adultery*. The textual woman remains the "sinner" and the speaker the "righteous master."

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[4] Andersen, F. I. and D. N. Freedman (1980), *Hosea* (AB, 24; Garden City, NY: Doubleday), 127, 219; Kelle, B. E. (2005), *Hosea: Metaphor and Rhetoric in Historical Perspective* (SBLAcBib, 20; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature), 47-97.

[5] Cf. e.g. Abma, R. (1999), "The God of Israel: Engaged and Engaging," Pages 257-58 in Abma, R. *Bonds of Love: Methodic Studies of Prophetic Texts with Marriage Imagery (Isaiah 50:1-3 and 54:1-10, Hosea 1-3, Jeremiah 2-3)*. Assen: Van Gorcum. Ben Zvi, E. (2004), "Observations on the Marital Metaphor of YHWH and Israel in its Ancient Israelite Context. General Considerations and Particular Images in Hos 1.2," JSOT 28.3 (2004): 363-84.

[6] cf. e.g. Kelle (2005), 79.

To sum up: what all readings mentioned so far have in common is that they are depend on the notion that Hos 2:4 presents some kind of marital relationship which serves as legal foundation for the punitive actions described in Hos 2:4-15.

An increased awareness of the difficulty to reconstruct a *uniform covenant theology* in the Hebrew Bible and to find covenant language in the book of Hosea or earlier,[7] have lead to the fact that most scholars now have turned away from describing Hos 2 explicitly in terms of covenant theology. Yet, despite the fact that the images that are drawn upon for comparison have changed, it can nevertheless be recognized that the notion of a pre-existing covenantal/institutionalized relationship between YHWH and Israel (similar to the deuteronomistic idea of covenant which has been frequently compared with Assyrian vassal treaties) still strongly influences almost all current interpretations of the text's content and function. Even those readings that do not explicitly use the term *covenant* and view the metaphor of *husband and wife*-along the lines of hierarchical biblical images such as "ruler-ruled"; "king-subject," "master-servant/slave", "father-child", or "shepherd-flock"[8] exhibit an understanding of the marital metaphor that shares the following characteristics with the conception of "covenant:"[9]

1. the notion of an asymmetric, hierarchical relationship in which one part dominates.
2. The dominant part is seen as the provider.
3. The hegemonic partner demands loyalty and submission.
4. Punishment is executed and expected in case of disobedience.
5. Punishment is accepted as justified by the subordinate partner.

But what in Hos 2 assures us that Israel (as the primary audience of the text!) was supposed to perceive Hos 2:4-15 as a portrayal of a durable relationship between them and YHWH, in which YHWH is seen as provider and as somebody that acts from a position that is grounded in a legitimized relationship that demands loyalty and punishment in case of disobedience?

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[7] Cf. Nicholson, E.W. (1986), *God and his People: Covenant and Theology in the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon). For covenant texts in Hosea see esp. 179-91.
[8] Ben Zvi (2004); cf. Stienstra, N. (1993), *YHWH Is the Husband of His People: Analysis of a Biblical Metaphor with Special Reference to Translation* (Kampen: Kok Pharos), 96.
[9] Cf. Ben Zvi, E. (2004); Baumann, G. (2000) Weems, R.J. (1989), "Gomer : Victim of Violence or Victim of Metaphor," *Semeia* 47: 87-101. Stienstra (1993).

As announced at the beginning, in what follows, I will argue that nothing that is immediately given in the text shows that Hos 2:4-15 presents any kind of marital relationship, respectively a case of adultery. In other words: in no sense it follows directly from what is "in" the text that the speaker occupies any legal position that would justify his violent actions against the textual female.

I will first investigate the textual evidence presented by Hos 2 in detail. Then, I will present my own reading of Hos 2 in its context. My interpretation will show that there is at least one plausible reading of the text according to which the textual female in Hos 2 is *not* YHWH's wife.

An important clarification may be in order: it is not my goal to present my reading as a better or more plausible interpretation that is supposed to *mark as wrong* other readings or *replace* them. By contrast, I will offer my reading *as one of many possible* readings. Staying within the literary context of the text as well as within the frame of what we know about Israelite and ancient Near Eastern law and practice, it is thus my goal to highlight that even under these interpretational constraints there are crucial gaps left open by the text itself.

The reason I consider this important is that I want to point to the fact that - from a meta-analytical perspective – what interpretations necessarily do is to *fill in* these gaps in order to make sense out of the text.

Specifically, it is my hypothesis that every interpretation crucially depends on (though, of course, not only on) the interpreter's extra-textual presuppositions concerning gender issues. In order to highlight how particular assumptions about gender issues influence our reading of the text, I will offer an interpretation that starts from my particular standpoint on gender issues, which is a feminist perspective.

What is a feminist perspective? Starting from a feminist perspective, in my case, means that I assume – unless the text explicitly says otherwise - that textual females are to be considered as *subjects,* i.e. as autonomous, self-sufficient agents.

Thus, I will demonstrate that our assumptions concerning the woman's standing as such autonomous subject influences our interpretation. For example: it matters for the reading of Hos 2:4-15 whether we assume that the implied audience is supposed to identify with the *male* speaker or with the *feminine* personified Israel and it also matters whether we perceive the textual female in Hos 2:4-15 as an *autonomous* female (i.e. a professional prostitute) or a *dependent* woman (i.e. the wife of a man). If we assume that the implied audience is to identify with the male

speaker's perspective and if we assume in addition that he is the husband and therefore according to Israelite law "the master" of the woman, we would interpret the verb זנה as adultery and read the violent actions in Hos 2:4-15 as a legitimate and accepted punishment. If, however, we assume that the implied audience is to identify with the *feminine* personified Israel and in addition assume that her being characterized by signs of whoredom hints to the fact that she is a prostitute (i.e. not an adulteress!), we would understand her as an autonomous female who is not dependent on male custodianship. Therefore, the violent actions would be perceived as somewhat displaced for their lack of legal grounds.

2. The Relationship between YHWH and Israel

Let me, then, start by asking what the text does and does not say.

As mentioned above, I will make the common assumption that the textual woman in Hos 2:4 represents Israel and the speaker represents YHWH.

Let me start by considering the later parts of Hos 2. With regard to marital imagery Hos 2:18, 21-22 (in my view unlike Hos 2:4-15!) clearly uses terminology that belongs to the semantic field of "marriage": Hos 2:18 uses the expression "my husband" which can be understood as a marriage declaration. And vv. 21-22 uses the term ארשׂ (to betroth). With great emphasis on the fact that YHWH is the agent (because he is the speaker that proposes a marital relationship) and neglecting the fact that a proposal requires an answer, it can furthermore be assumed that vv. 21-22 involve the notion of an asymmetric, hierarchical relationship. In addition it can be observed that neither vv. 18 and 21-22 (nor the following vv. 23-25) explicitly refer to a notion of punishment in case of disobedience nor to the previous violent actions. Furthermore, it can be recognized that a relationship under the conditions such as צֶדֶק (righteousness), מִשְׁפָּט (justice), חֶסֶד (lovingkindness), רַחֲמִים (mercy), אֱמוּנָה (faithfulness) is only proposed in vv. 21-22 but not yet finalized. Thus, it cannot be deduced from these verses that the previous violent actions mentioned in Hos 2:4-15 are justified on legal grounds. Thus, starting from Hos 2:16-25 there is no need to assume that the violent and destructive measures described in the previous Hos 2:5-15 are themselves to be understood in terms of a the legal background of a marital relationship.

With regard to the situation of Hos 2:4-15 one must then ask: in what way, if any, does this passage *itself* hint at an already existing marital relationship that would justify punishment in case of transgression?

To be sure, there are some verses in Hos 2:4-15 that are very often read within the frame of a "husband-wife" metaphor: v. 4, for example, has been compared to divorce formulas or marital declarations. Furthermore, v. 9 has been read as referring to an earlier marital relationship between YHWH and the textual female and vv. 10-11 have been interpreted as the image of a husband that is providing for his wife.

But what do we really find in these verses that would hint to a marital relationship as the legal foundation for the described punishment?

In v.4 we find: "for she is not my wife and I'm not her husband." What does this mean? For a long time, scholars had argued that we are dealing with *divorce*. This argument was based on two observations.

First, it had been argued that the verb ריב points to lawsuit as a special juridical setting and, therefore, is to be translated as "to bring charges against", "to argue a case", "to defend a case", or "to plead in favor of", since the verb occurs also in integral court procedures ("to conduct a case").[10] Other scholars, however, have shown that ריב ב does not necessarily point to a juridical setting, but can also refer to a controversy of a more general kind, as the usage of the ריב ב in Gen 31:36 where Jacob takes issue with Laban and disputes the right of Laban to pursue him, and Judg 6:32 shows. Accordingly, the expression can also mean "to contend" or "dispute."[11] In other words: there is no clear indication as to whether ריב ב in Hos 2:4 refers to a juridical setting or a controversy of a general kind. Furthermore, we should consider that it is the children that are called up to ריב ב their mother (not a husband or judge that conducts a lawsuit). This makes it even more questionable that in our context ב

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[10] Cf. HAL 4, p. 1142. See also Boecker, H.J., (1970) *Redeformen des Rechtslebens im Alten Testament*, WMANT 14, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchner, 54. He argues that ריב with preposition ב has the meaning "to bring charges against", to accuse."

[11] See Wacker, M-Th. (1996), *Figuationen des Weiblichen im Hosea-Buch*, HBS 8, Freiburg et al.: Herder, 60 (with n. 7) and 147 n. 25. and Abma, R. (1999). Cf. Blankenbaker, Georg W. (1975), *The Language of Hosea 1-3*. Unpublished PhDiss. Clarmont, 153-54; Andersen, F. I. and D. N. Freedmann (1980), 219ff (contra Wolff, H. W. (^{3}1976), *Dodekapropheton I. Hosea*. BK XIV/1, Neuenkirchen-Vluyn: Neuenkirchener, 37ff.). Already Wünsche, A. (1968), *Der Prophet Hosea übersetzt und erklärt mit Benutzung der Targumim, der jüdischen Ausleger Raschi, Aben Ezra und David Kimchi.* Leipzig, 4 distinguishes between ריב ב ("rechten" = "contend"/ "dispute") and ריב ל ("einen Rechtsstreit führen" = "to conduct a lawsuit").

ריב refers to a divorce. The first argument for the divorce interpretation, thus, doesn't hold ground.

Second, it has been suggested that Hos 2:4cd represents an *official divorce formula.*[12] The argument for this position is based on comparisons with material from Sumerian, Babylonian and Talmudic sources. The punitive measures in v. 5 are, then, attributed to divorce procedures explaining them as "the (customary) penalities that are inflicted on an adulterous wife" after the divorce.[13] The notion of a customary Israelite practice involving death penalty for an adulteress wife (after a divorce) on which Hos 2:5 is supposed to draw, is, however, questionable since there is no evidence that the death penalty mentioned in biblical legal texts has actually been executed. In Gen 38:24, for example, this is clearly *not* the case and in the case of Deut 22:21-24 it appears to be very unlikely, since this law seems to be rather concerned with a wife's and her parents' reputation than with an actual death sentence for an adulteress. Moreover, it is remarkable that references to the stripping of a female all occur with respect to metaphorical rather than with respect to real woman (Isa 47:2-3; Ezek 16:39; Nah 3:5)[14] and therefore can hardly serve as evidence of customary practice in Israelite divorce procedures. Of course, one could argue that texts like Gen 38:24 and Deut 22:21-24 at least prove that the idea of sentencing an adulteress to death was around in Israel – as it was in other legal codes of the ancient Near East. Nevertheless, even if this was the case, it has to be recognized that the legal material in Gen 38:24 and Deut 22:21-24 has little in common with Hos 2:4-5. Hos 2:5 does not mention the traditional death sentence for an adulteress executed through burning or stoning. Yet even if we concede that the idea of a death penalty for adulteresses has been around in general, it remains unclear whether Hos 2:4cd deals with divorce at all. A divorce formula of the type "she is not my wife and I'm not her husband" is neither found in biblical nor extra-biblical material. The divorce formula found in Elephantine documents only presents a formula of the type "I hate (/divorce) my wife x and she shall not be a wife to me".[15] In other words: two "formulas" we

[12] This view is held by e.g. by Cassuto, U. (1973), "The Second chapter of Hosea." Pages 122-23 in U. Cassuto, *Biblical and Oriental Studies* (vol.1; Jerusalem: Magnes), 101-140; 122.
[13] Cassuto, U. (1973), 121.
[14] Cf. Abma, R. (1999), 170.
[15] Whitt, W.D (1992) supports the view that Hos 2:4 draws upon an offical divorce formula with reference to Elephantine documents - in particular Papyrus no. 7 lines 21-22 from the Brooklyn Papyri. See E.G. Kraeling (ed.), *The Brooklyn Museum of Aramaic Papyri: New Documents of the fifth Century B.C. from the Jewish Colony at Elephantine* (Yale University Press: New Haven 1953).

are supposed to compare, which each consist of more than one part, overlap only in the words "not my wife." The key phrase "I hate/divorce" that appears also in Deut 22:13,16; 24:3, and that seems to be crucial for a statement of divorce is completely missing in Hos 2:4. Beyond that, the "formula" "she is not my wife and I'm not her husband" has no parallels in ancient Near Eastern as well as in rabbinic or early Judaic sources (i.e. the Murabba'at divorce letters), since the latter always keep the male and female perspective strictly separated. Overall, then, neither the expression "she is not my wife and I'm not her husband" in v. 4 nor the punitive measures described in v. 5 offer conclusive evidence to the effect that we are dealing with some kind of divorce procedure.

Another, and today probably more common, argument for a marital relationship between the speaker and the textual female in Hos 2:4-15,[16] suggests that the expression "I'm not her husband and she is not my wife" represents the *negation* of an official marital declaration. But, even if we accept that this is the case - despite the fact that the only evidence for a marriage declaration of the type "She is my wife and I'm her husband" is found in the later Brooklyn Papyri from Elephantine[17]- it is still not at all clear what this would imply: the fact that we find the negation of a marriage declaration simply does not answer the question whether the textual female and the male speaker in Hos 2:4 have ever *been* in a marital relationship: to say that x is not married to y clearly does not imply that x and y had been previously married.

Now, of course, while, say, "I am not married to her" does not directly *say* anything about any kind of relationship between the two parties (it is true of most random pairs of people, after all), it's utterance in many contexts might still *pragmatically hint* at some such previous relationship. Why else would the speaker bother to be so explicit in his denial of the existence of such a relationship right now? But, of course, many contexts would make the utterance of, say, "I am not married to her" completely natural and show it as conveying important information while *no* previous marriage is here being denied.

Whether or not we read "for she is not my wife and I'm not her husband" as *pragmatically hinting* at any kind of (previous?) marital relationship is therefore highly dependent on how we read the context of the statement.

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[16] Cf. Abma, R. (1999), Wacker, M-Th. (1996); Rudolph W. (1966).
[17] no. 2 lines 3-4 and no. 7 lines 4.

So let us take a look at how the protagonists and their relationship are characterized in Hos 2:4-15. Let us assume (at least for now) that the male speaker is YHWH. This (preliminary) reading could be justified by the fact that YHWH is introduced and explicitly named in v. 15.[18] At the same we have to keep in mind that he is not *explicitly* introduced as such from the beginning. The identity and status of the textual female in Hos 2:4-15 is even more obscure: first of all, she is introduced as a mother. The plural-suffix hints to the fact that she has several children ("your mother"). It is, however, not stated that the children are the children of the male speaker as well, for they are only attributed to their mother. The relationship between the "textual male" and the textual female remains unclear. The only thing we know is that the speaker *says* that there is no (marital) relationship ("for she is not my wife and I'm not her husband"). The textual female is furthermore characterized by the terms זְנוּנִים ("harlotries"?) and which she shall put away from her face and from between her breasts. The term נַאֲפוּפִים is the only term that could be interpreted as referring to a marital relationship if one puts weight on the fact that it contains the root נאפ. Yet, since this term is a happax legomena it is impossible to determine with any certainty what it really denotes: on the one hand, it might refer to the juridical term "adultery" and therefore to a marital relationship. But, on the other hand, it might also refer to some jewelry customarily worn by prostitutes, which would characterize the textual female as a prostitute (i.e. as independent of any marital relationship). Beyond the fact that it cannot be determined with any certainty that the root פנא in נַאֲפוּפִים factually refers to the juridical issue of adultery, it is furthermore important to note that the roots נאפ and זנה never appear as homonyms in the Hebrew Bible (including Hos 1-3), but rather refer to mutual exclusive circumstances.[19] In other words, there is at least some evidence that makes it questionable whether the term נַאֲפוּפִים in connection with זְנוּנִים can refer to the juridical term "adultery" and thus to a marital relationship.

What we can say for now about the depiction of the textual female in Hos 2:4 is that it is emphasized that she is not the speakers wife, but a mother of several children and somebody that wears attributes related to prostitution (זְנוּנִים). This fits

[18] Also in Hos 1 he is explicitly named and the only one that is granted a direct voice (v.2, 4-5, 6c-7,9).
[19] I will come back to this issue later and show how much effort it takes the author of Jer 2-3 to combine these two terms. For now it is enough to point to the fact that biblical and ancient Near Eastern law clearly treat adultery and prostitution separately and in different ways. Cf. for this and the usage of the terms in Hos 1-3 also Moughtin-Mumby, S. (2008), *Sexual and Marital Metaphors in Hosea, Jeremiah, Isaiah and Ezekiel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 242-44.

the depiction of the textual female as a mother and somebody that is "whoring" in v. 7. Viewing the textual female as an autonomous prostitute rather than a wife is, in addition, supported by the following verses, in which she is characterized as a person that does not live in an exclusive relationship, but has more than one lover who support her with gifts (cf. v. 14). The only way the speaker relates himself to the woman, before he finally proposes to her in vv. 21-22, is that he states that he has given her corn, wine and oil as well as silver and gold. At the same time he describes the woman's reaction as ignorant towards him and his action: she pursues her (other) lovers and forgets about him (v.15; cf. v. 9) and she does not even recognize that he has given her goods (v. 10). Beyond giving her presents (and threatening to take them back), he, for the most part of Hos 2:4-15, primarily relates to her by violent threats against her body, her possessions, her habits and customs: he threatens to strip her naked (v.5), to turn her into a desert and parched land (v.5), to let her die of thirst (v.5), to not have mercy with her children (v.6), to hedge up her ways with thorns (v. 8), to build a wall against her, so that she cannot find her path (v.8), to take away the presents he gave to her (v. 11), to uncover her private parts in the sight of her lovers (v.12), to put an end to all her mirth, her festivals, her new moons, her sabbaths, and all her appointed festivals (v. 13), to lay waste her vines and her fig trees and turn them into wilderness so that the wild animals devour them (v.14). He haunts her (פקד), because she forgets about him (in the face of all the lovers she has). However, it is crucial to remember that all these violent actions are (at least!) *presented* bare of any legal justification (marital relationship, family ties etc.).

Given the fact that v. 4 and the following verses do not explicitly determine the textual woman as YHWH's (former) wife but rather depict a woman that does not live in an exclusive relationship, but has many (male) lovers, it is furthermore, not obvious that the expression "I will go and return to my first man (אִישׁ)" (v.9) refers to a relationship of husband and wife. If we take innerbiblical Israelite law serious, the idea of returning to a marital relationship that has once been divorced must, in fact, be viewed as legal impossibility.[20] In Deut 24:4 this kind of re-marriage is clearly prohibited. Thus, there is no need to assume that the textual female has been in a marital relationship with this "first man." And even if we assumed that the expression "my first man" does hint at a marital relationship, it would remain far from clear

[20] I will come back to this later with regard to Jer 3:1.

whether the expression refers to YHWH: first of all, the speaker in the following verse continues to complain that she has forgotten him. And second, there no single indication in vv. 16-25 that we are dealing with a *re*-marriage, since there are no anaphoric references or particles such as עוֹד (again) or similar expressions that would hint to a revival of a marital relationship. In light of these observations, it is very plausible to understand אִישׁ as a generic term denoting any "man/male person" (not a husband) with whom the prostitute was involved. This could be seen as a stylistic device in order to support the portrayal of an autonomous female that does not consider entering a relationship with the speaker.

To sum up: the text does not give us any information as to whether the term "first man" is to be translated as "husband" or "(generic) man", nor does it give us any direct information as to who this "man" is. Even if we were to ignore Deut 24:4 *as well as* the fact that Hos 2: 4-15 does not explicitly mention one or more marital relationships *and* would focus on the numeral "first (man?/husband?)" *and* connect v. 9 to v. 17, the problem would not be solved. First of all, the numeral "first" connected with the term "husband" would only make sense if there was a second husband. But there is no second husband mentioned in the text, only lovers. Second, although YHWH's hope is expressed that "she will answer (ענה) like in the days of her youth and on the day on which she came up from Egypt," this does not necessarily imply that the speaker in Hos 2:4-15 is Israel's "first husband." To be sure, some kind of previous relationship between YHWH and Israel is in fact stated in v.17. The verb ענה clearly denotes some sort of response. Yet, this imagery does not at all correspond well to the depiction of the relationship between the speaker and the textual female in Hos 2:4-15. Quite the contrary: while some kind of (marital) relationship is stated in Hos 2:17-18, such a relationship is negated in Hos 2:4. While Israel is portrayed as YHWH's bride in Hos 2:18; 21-22, in the previous verses Israel is depicted as a prostitute. While the terms "wilderness" (מִדְבָּר) and "like in the days of your youth" (כִּימֵי נְעוּרֶיהָ) in v.17 are used to describe the place and time of a mutual relationship between YHWH and Israel, the terms "wilderness" (מִדְבָּר) and "the day of birth" (יוֹם הִוָּלְדָהּ) in v. 5 appear in a context that denotes destruction and death caused by one party. While Hos 2:4-15 neglects any kind of marital relationship, the idea of marriage is for the first time proposed in vv. 18; 21-22. Thus, it cannot be taken for granted that vv.17-18 – which contains no anaphoric references to vv.4 and 9 other than the word אִישׁ (!) - refers to the relationship mentioned in Hos 2:4-15.

In addition, the depiction of the speaker in Hos 2:4-15 as someone who provides goods need not be interpreted in terms of a marital relationship, in which the husband is the provider. The text itself mentions not only YHWH, but also the (other) lovers as providers and acknowledges that the woman has her own property. Texts like the Song of Songs furthermore demonstrate that the exchanging of goods, such as wine, oil and grain does not necessarily imply an already existing marriage.

To sum up: Hos 2:4-15 portrays a one-sided "courting" that mainly consists of destructing and violating all which characterizes the textual females identity, habits and possession. In contrast to that, YHWH in Hos 2:16-25 proposes a marital relationship, that draws upon a previous encounter between YHWH and Israel that has been grounded in mutual acceptance. While Israel ignores the speaker of Hos 2:4-15, in Hos 2:16-25 it is said that Israel would recognize *the* YHWH introduced in v.16ff. Overall, then, an institutionalized relationship is proposed only in vv. 18-22, while Hos 2:4-15 contains a destructive and provocative portrayal of YHWH that does not name any legal foundation.

3. Interpreting Hos 2

So, based on these observations here is my reading of Hos 2 (and I'm curious to hear your responses):

Rather than interpreting Hos 2:4-15 as the portrayal of a deserved or justified punishment that is to be understood in its educational function, I suggest that Hos 2:4-15 and 16-25 are not related in a sense of apostasy and reunion. Rather than interpreting Hos 2 as a *univocal* portrayal of YHWH's relationship to Israel, I read the text as presenting two *competing* images of YHWH. In the first image "YHWH" appears as somebody who today we might call a *stalker*. He is depicted as someone that haunts Israel against its will and brings about destruction and violations. The textual female (representing Israel) is portrayed as an independent, unmarried woman and as a prostitute. She does not answer the speaker's courting and favors other lovers instead. The speaker in Hos 2:4-15 undertakes all kinds of measures to prevent her from pursuing her basic habits by violating her and all that constitutes her life. He does this without any legal or institutionalized foundation.

In further support of this interpretation, it is interesting to observe that Jer 2-3, which seems to draw upon topics presented in the book of Hosea, picks up and

counters exactly a view according to which the Israelites understand themselves as innocent, as not having sinned and as, therefore, not deserving the anger. The implied reader's interjection is explicitly quoted when Jer 2:35 addresses its readership directly by saying: "Yet *you say*, because I am innocent/free (נקה), surely his anger shall turn from me […] *you say*, I have not sinned." Furthermore, it is only here (not in Hos 2) that the verb ריב is (re)used in such a way that Judah's (constructed parallel to Israel's) self-perception as being innocent *is* the reason why YHWH pleads against them. In addition, Jer 2 shows an awareness of the necessity to *re-read* and *explain* Hos 2 in terms of divorce and remarriage in order to justify the accusation of apostasy: unlike Hos 2:4, Jer 3 (explicitly) explains that YHWH has divorced Israel. It is *inserted* that YHWH explicitly says "I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce" (Jer 3:8). Thus, the gap in Hos 2:4 is filled.

Moreover, Jer 3:1 pays account to the fact that a reinterpretation of Hos 2 in terms of divorce and remarriage – which (as already mentioned) according to Deut 24:4 is a legal impossibility – requires a further explanation that counters another explicitly quoted interjection that could be made by the implied audience: "*They say*, If a man puts away his wife, and she goes from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted?" In the following the idea that remarriage after a divorce is impossible is relativized and reinterpreted, by rereading Hos 2:4;7;9 and 16-25 in terms of Judah's (former Israel's) great pollution and YHWH's gracefulness. This is achieved by mentioning YHWH's explicit command to Judah to "return again to me" although "you have played the harlot with many lovers."

A further explanation for such a re-interpretation that reads זנה in Hos 2 (and Hos 1) in terms of adultery – and thus within the frame of already existing marital relationship - is required. The re-interpretation proceeds in several steps that gradually replaces and re-interprets זנה: first, unlike in Hos 2:4; 7 and Hos 1:2, the verb נאף instead of זנה is used in order to characterize Israel's behavior in Jer 3:8. The term whoring" (זנה; Jer 3:8) that describes Israel's behavior towards YHWH described in Hos 1:2;2:4,7 is now eliminated and replaced by the term "backsliding." This "backsliding", then, gets explained in terms of a marital relationship (and no longer in terms of "harlotry"). Overall then, the depiction of Israel, portrayed as an autonomous prostitute is *purposefully* and *deliberately turned into* the image of an adulterous wife. This portrayal of a marital relationship, then, gets emphasized again in the same verse

by reinterpreting Hos 2:4ff as speaking about a divorce. In addition Jer 3:8 even more exhibits an awareness of the fact that נהז and נאפ can not simply be understood as denoting one and the same thing, by attributing adultery (נאפ) and harlotry (זנה) to separate cases: as we saw earlier, Jer 3:8 does not simply read "harlotrous Israel committed adultery" but introduces the expression "backsliding Israel" as a bridge. Furthermore, נאפ and זנה are not (immediately) attributed to the same female personifications (נאפ gets attributed to Israel; and זנה to Judah). It is thus clear that before merging (what must have been perceived as) two mutually exclusive cases into homonyms, some further effort had to be made, in order to justify usage such as the one introduced in Jer 3:9. The justification of this merging appears right here where the terms are equated for the first time. Jer 3:9 introduces the idea that נאפ and זנה are to be read as homonyms by creating a bridge that units the two expressions: Judah's "harlotry" is equated with "adultery," by explicitly emphasizing the idea that both females are "defiled" (חנפ).

To sum up, a comparison of Hos 2 with Jer 2-3 shows that great efforts on the part of Jer 2-3 were necessary in order to turn "harlotery" into marital language. There probably are theological reason behind this: Jeremiah goal is to portray the relationship between YHWH and Israel/Judah as if it had always been institutionalized and to counter injections made by a readership that exhibit a different understanding (i.e. one more similar to what gets portrayed in Hos 2).

Supposed that my interpretation so far is correct and Hos 2:4-15 (and Hos 1:2) indeed does not portray an already legitimatized relationship. How is this passage – and the "relationship" of the speaker and the textual woman then to be understood?

For this we have to take a look at the immediate context of Hos 2. In what follows I will argue that we can read Hos 1-3 *as an introduction to Hos 4-9*; an introduction that serves the purpose of attracting the attention of the readership in provocative and unsettling ways and that, thus, prepares the reader to receive the messages that conveyed in the latter passages.

If we take the role assigned to the reader serious, namely to identify with the textual female in Hos 2 (who, after all, personifies Israel) the rhetoric of the text raises suspicion against the portrayal of YHWH in Hos 2:4-15. Hos 2:4-15 then reads as a continuation of the idea that a relationship between YHWH and Israel is nonexistent, an idea already introduced in Hos 1:2 and 3-9*. The implied reader's sympathy, who presumable at first had identified with YHWH's word to Hosea in Hos 1:2, as the text

progresses in Hos 1:3-9 is gradually drawn from YHWH to the textual woman in Hos 1,[21] before Hos 2 in fact characterizes its readership, Israel, as that woman. Regardless of whether the implied readership consisted only of men (or if women where included), the fact that Israel is addressed in the image of a prostitute has to be considered as provocation. Anticipating the role assigned to the readers the text becomes even more provocative, for it first assigns the Israelites the role of a prostitute and then *at the same time* accuses them for the role that has been assigned to her. The next provocation lies in the fact, that she/the Israelites are attacked and maltreated for her/their behavior without any noticeable legal justification. Beyond, the fact that they are insulted by being called "a prostitute" and violently attacked despite a lack of legal justification, the provocation continues when considering that they are attacked for all that is said to be constitutive for their lives: their physical integrity, their property, their children and their cult are threatened (cf. Hos 3:4) without giving any legitimization. The speaker's (illegitimate) destruction in Hos 2:4-15, on the one hand, is furthermore contrasted by the mother in Hos 1:3-9 who gives birth and nurtures her children (while YHWH/Hosea condemns them) and, on the other hand, is contrasted by the depiction of YHWH's generous marital proposal and his merciful behavior towards the children (2:25).

Given this understanding of the text, the question that naturally arises with regard to Hos 2:4-15 is the following: is this the same YHWH that introduces himself in Hos 2:16-25?

Maybe the answer is no. There are at least hints that can be interpreted as pointing to the depiction of an Anti-YHWH that is mistakenly perceived to be YHWH: First of all, we have already seen that Hos 2:4-15 and 16-25 introduces two conflicting images of YHWH. Beyond that, there are differences in style: While the speaker's name is not mentioned explicitly (but hidden until v.15), YHWH's name is mentioned explicitly and immediately in vv. 18; 23. While the textual female in the first part is addressed only in the third person, v. 18 suddenly addresses her directly with "you" (2 p. f sg). While the speaker's action lacks any legal justification in Hos 2:4-15, marital language is introduced in v. 18 in order to propose (not finalize!) an institutionalized, legal relationship. This relationship is depicted as requiring a declaration and commitment from both sides: she will call him "my husband" and he

[21] As Yvonne Cf. Sherwood has argued. Sherwood, Y. (1996), *The Prostitute and the Prophet. Hosea's Marriage in Literary Perspective* (JSOTSup 212; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic), 115-47; 143-47.

in turn will offer her safety and a relationship and life that is grounded in righteousness, justice, steadfast love, mercy and faithfulness. Only then she will really know who *the* (real) YHWH is.

Furthermore, if we accept – as Marie-Theres Wacker has suggested – that the conflict portrayed in Hos 1-3 is not solved in Hos 3 (because the woman that explicitly represents Israel's situation is commanded to remain in waiting position), we will even more find it plausibly that Hos 1-3 serves the purpose of raising provocations that are answered in Hos 4. In this chapter the readership, provoked and unsettled by YHWH's seemingly arbitrary behavior in Hos 2, encounters the answers to its questions: the verb ריב in Hos 4:1 points back to Hos 2:4. The accusations against Israel as well as the description of its misery (described in Hos 2:5-15), now appears in a different light. YHWH suddenly takes – at least to some extent – the side of the Israelites that were attacked in Hos 1-3. Thus, the accusations against Israel that continue in Hos 4-9 are easier to swallow for its readers: in ch. 4 it now becomes *obvious* that it has not been the real YHWH that has caused Israel's distress. The one that is to blame is the YHWH priest (the YHWH priests?) that has rejected his knowledge of the real YHWH as he is presented in Hos 2:21-25 (and 4:1). Instead the priest has presented an image of YHWH that lead Israel into its misery. This misery in Hos 4:2-3 – like in Hos 2:4-15 – is described as unsocial and violent behavior. It furthermore is – like in Hos 2:5 - described by using terms such as "parched land" (cf. 2:5). Like in Hos 2 the image of an unsocial and violent behavior is contrasted with the terms truth (אֱמֶת) and lovingkindness (חֶסֶד) and knowledge of God (דַּעַת אֱלֹהִים) that resemble what YHWH had offered to Israel in Hos 2:21-22. Beyond that, it is explicitly acknowledged by YHWH's voice that nobody (among the Israelites) should blame one another – for it is only (!) the priest(s) that are to be accused in the first place: "It is you that I plead against, priest"[22] (Hos 4:4). Thus, in light of Hos 1-3 (and particularly Hos 2) Israel is now given the chance to recognizes where its misery and the accusations against it originate. The fact that they could not know the real YHWH and are suffering on the basis of a wrong image of YHWH is attributed to the priests (and in the following also to the political leaderships). Overall, then, it is my claim that Hos 1-3 functions as a provocative introduction to make Israel accept the list of accusations uttered in to Hos 4-9, because the are partially given credit for their

[22] Mas. T.: "But your people are like those who plead against the priest."

notion that they are caused to suffer innocently and for the fact that they where right in not wanting to accept the Anti-YHWH –as he is presented in Hos 2:4-15 - but rather wanted to escape from him as stated in Hos 1:2 and 2:4-15. Now that it has been revealed to them that the "YHWH" that has caused destruction and violence is not the real YHWH as introduced in Hos 2:16-25 and Hos 4 and that they suffer because of somebody else (their leadership), the words of judgment in Hos 4-9 – raised in the name of YHWH - are likely to be heard and accepted.

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Reflections of Heuristic Learning in Psalm 73

As a concept, heuristic learning is not much used in biblical text work. Perhaps understandable since the term is quite ambivalent, associated as it is with both divine enlightenment and irrational shortcuts that result in decision biases. Nevertheless, to highlight the process of learning and experience of the "I" in Psalm 73 the term has its qualities, and in this paper I therefore have chosen the following understanding of the term: "The term "heuristic" derives from the old Greek word "heureka" which cheerfully expresses that one has found the solution to a problem. By analogy, the notion of cognitive heuristics ought to refer to those cognitive structures or processes that serve the creative function of knowledge enrichment and productive thinking".[1] When constructing an image of how education worked in ancient Israel, the thought of a silent (or missing) subject of learning has suited the idea of a school-like system in ancient Israel very well. There has been created a picture of how education took place where the teacher has absolute authority and the student is forced into silence.[2] The school debate is perhaps not as lively as it once was, but in its shadow lays a wider range of questions. One of these could be how processes of learning are reflected in the Hebrew Bible - a question I will look more into though the heuristic experiences of the "I" person in psalm 73.

Heuristic learning

In contemporary science of education there has over the last decades been a growing interest towards how education works outside of the institutions. This focus on education is, according to Frank Furedi,[3] a result of the common lack of faith in the schools systems and their ability to educate. Furedi formulates it quite clearly in his book title: *Wasted. Why Education Isn't Educating* (2009), and in his preface he states

[1] Försterling, *Heuristics…* p. 296.
[2] This position is thoroughly described by Crenshaw in his book *Education in Ancient Israel. Across the Deadening Silence* (1998), chapter six: "The Missing Voice", p. 187-203.
[3] Frank Furedi is a professor of sociology at the University of Kent at Canterbury.

that the paradox of education today is "that the more society invests in and expects of education, the less schools and universities demand of students".[4] The focus is turned from the institutions to the individual, the student. By reading Psalm 73 in search of reflections of heuristic learning one might say I try to make the same switch of focus in working with texts in the Hebrew Bible.

Detecting a problem and then to solve it is the essence of heuristic learning. But not only does one need a problem, one also needs a description of a subject of learning relating to the problem. I my view, Psalm 73 reflects both of these perspectives on learning, and in this particular psalm the self-aware student stands out in a remarkable way. The way the "I" person in Psalm 73 informs the reader of her or his experiences relevant to the problem in question, gives us reason to believe we in this particularly text will find reflections of heuristic learning.

Choosing a term like *heuristic learning* and focusing on the individual may risk undermining the importance of vital arenas for learning such as homes, local communities and schools, which all include more people than the individual. Never the less this is not done to undermine the importance of learning as collective phenomena, but rather to highlight the subject of learning in a particular text like Psalm 73. It is done to emphasize that there needs to be an individual space in order to reflect and learn to solve a problem, perhaps particularly problems concerning God.

The subject of learning in Psalm 73

The subject of learning in Psalm 73 is no doubt the "I" person. Sigmund Mowinckel identified the "I" in Psalm 73 as the author without been able to identify the historical person.[5] The key moment in Psalm 73 can for Mowinckel, and several of his predecessors, be found in verse 17 where the "I" person enters מִקְדְּשֵׁי אֵל (the sanctuary of God), by Mowinckel described as the temple.[6]

[4] Furedi, Wasted... p. ix. On *demands of the student* it might be right to add that there would be different ways of demanding a workload from a student. One could ask if the student know a certain amount of facts, like the content of the United Nations human rights or in an Old Testament context the law of Torah. Or one could demand of the student to give an ethical or religious argument were the student tries to detect the problem at hand when the making of the UN human rights or the law of Torah took place.

[5] Mowinckel, *Skriftene*... p. 156.

[6] Mowinckel, *Skriftene*... p. 156-57.

Having access to the temple and appearing in one of the Asaph-psalms, the ”I” person is often associated with a royal cultic setting.[7] Placed right after a psalm from the great royal ceremonies, Psalm 72, and a national lament over the devastation of the temple in Psalm 74, John Eaton suggests that this psalm could be read as what he calls a “drawing near to God” psalm.[8] This again builds on Eaton’s previous work with Psalm 73 where he suggests reading Psalm 73 as the testimony of a king to Yahweh’s faithfulness.[9] To this position Steven J.L. Croft states that: ”it seems better to see the piece, not as a private meditation of a wisdom poet, but, as the final verse indicates, as a piece of wisdom teaching intended to be delivered in public”.[10] In his *The Identity of the Individual in the Psalm* (1987) Croft put Psalm 73 under the headline “The Individual as a Minister of the Cult”.[11] Even if Croft focus is on the individual, the result of his work seems to have moved the discussions of Psalm 73 towards a more collective understanding of the “I” person of the Psalm. Referring to Croft, Walter Brueggemann in *The Psalms and the Life of Faith* (1995) reads the “I” person in Psalm 73 as the people of Israel. More precisely that is: the “trustful, waiting community” within Israel.[12]

The “I” person in Psalm 73 has almost become a blurred individual. When reading Psalm, 73 scholars often end up on the receiving end, together with the faith community (Brueggemann) or the people of Israel (Mowinckel, Eaton, Croft). That said; the “I” person of Psalm 73 is still the main character. This Martin Ravndal Hauge convincingly illustrated in *Between Sheol and Temple. Motif Structure and function in the I-Psalms* (1995), where he, under the subtitle “The Way to Confession”, describes how the “I” person is a character able to manoeuvre between the motives of evil and good.[13] When looking for reflection of heuristic learning in Psalm 73 the follow-up question to Hague’s observation could be: where and how did the “I” person learn to manoeuvre between motives of good and evil? At home, within the family, local community or perhaps in school, are of course generally valid answers to the question. Still, the way Psalm 73 is presented, with its problem and the

[7] “Traditions saw Asaph as one David´s chief leaders of psalmody, and these psalms will have come from his family down the generations”, Eaton, *The Psalms*… p. 265.
[8] Eaton, *The Psalms*… p. 266.
[9] Croft use Eaton’s argument as a starting point for his discussion on Psalm 73 in *The Identity*... p. 163.
[10] Croft, *The Identity*... p. 163.
[11] Croft, *The Identity*... p. 163.
[12] Brueggemann, *The Psalms*… p. 64.
[13] Hauge, *Between*... p. 267-80.

way the "I" person describes the process of solving the problem, I believe this text may help us better to understand how learning took place in ancient Israel.

Reading Psalm 73

To find reflections of heuristic learning in Psalm 73 one needs at least three findings; one is *a subject of learning* (1), the other is *a problem to solve* (2), and the third is *a description of the "I" person solving the problem at hand based on what the "I" person knows* (3). *Knowing,* aside from what the "I" person may have learned, also includes the experiences of the "I" person. Since the "I" person in this Psalm 73 appears in every respect as a subject of learning (1). The question to ask is therefore what sort of problem the subject of learning is challenged with in this text, and how the "I" person solves the problem. As a well-documented wisdom text Psalm 73 most likely has its origin in a wisdom school or learning tradition. What the "I" person then would learn is what we might call "the law of wisdom", that God is good to Israel:

Truly God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart.[14] (v. 1)

As the first psalm in the third book of psalms (73-89) the line is drawn back to the beginning of the first book of the psalms, to Psalm 1.[15] The opening phrase tells us, just as the "I" person has learned, that all goes well with those who meditate over Yahweh's Torah.[16] By establishing this wisdom doctrine in the first verse of the psalm, this "truth" is then challenged in the second verse. In the second verse the wisdom doctrine of God, "as good to those pure at heart", is put to the test by a heuristic reflection by the "I" person. In the second and third verse we then have a problem for the subject of learning to solve (2) and we also find that the "I" person in Psalm 73 uses what he or she knows when referring to experiences (3):

But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; my steps had nearly slipped. For I was envious of the arrogant; I saw the prosperity of the wicked. (vv. 2-3)

[14] In this paper I have chosen to follow the NRSV of translation Psalm 73 except in v. 1 NRSV translate "to the upright" based on the prp (לישר אל). In v. 1 I follow MT and translate "to Israel" (לישראל).
[15] Eaton, *The Psalms*… p. 265 and Brueggemann, *The Psalms*… p. 206.
[16] deClaissé-Walford, *Reading*… p. 75.

The contrast between the first and second verse is overwhelming. The doctrine from the opening verse is put to the test by measuring its relevance against the life of the "I" person. The overwhelming contrast between the first and second verse almost seems like a *testing plot*. Several scholars have therefore linked this text to the book of Job, and Nancy deClaissé-Walford, in her *The Shaping of the Hebrew Psalter* (1997), suggests the subtitle of Psalm 73 to be "Little Job of the Psalter".[17]
Indeed, an interesting link to Job is that both Psalm 73 and the book of Job comment on, or protest, that which we might assume is canonically valid.[18] When summing up more than 30 years of wisdom studies, Crenshaw argues that the student (or son) "never assumes the position of respondent" in the wisdom literature.[19] If we view the *testing plot* in Psalm 73 as a protest towards the wisdom doctrine, Crenshaw position from his *Education in Ancient Israel* (1998) may be problematic. According to Crenshaw there would be nothing like a heuristic process of learning in ancient Israel, because the students would be forced to silence out of fear.[20] To underline this point Crenshaw gives a contemporary parallel to the school-like system in ancient Israel in Singapore: "Modern educators differ with one another about corporal punishment as an incentive to learning, and at least one contemporary government, Singapore, has reinstated caning as punishment for juvenile delinquency".[21]
On the one hand a text like Psalm 73 is so well written and appears so true that one as a reader easily gets convinced that this text really is referring to a concrete episode in a person's life. On the other hand the fact that so many readers of this text rely on it may work as an argument for its universality, which in turn can easily be understood as a curriculum in a wisdom tradition, rather than authentic experiences. Either way, the reflection of a heuristic learning is there, learned or known to the "I" person of the psalm.

[17] deClaissé-Walford, *Reading*… p. 75.
[18] Brueggemann, *The Psalms*… p. 207.
[19] Crenshaw, *Education...* p. 187.
[20] Same reference as given in note 2, p. 1.
[21] Crenshaw, *Education...* p. 203. Brueggemann presents a different way of handling the problem with protest, or challenging the doctrine, in the context of wisdom. In his; *The Psalms and the Life of Faith* (1995) he presents a suggestion to the problem of protest, where he unlike Crenshaw acknowledges the protest, though he somewhat disarms the problem. In Brueggemann's view the protest is in the text, but it is not present or at work. It is an earlier protest, "however, a protest kept canonically available as one to which Israel could return again and again" (Brueggemann, *The Psalms*… p. 207).

Almost becoming the wicked to be drawn near to God?

When the "I" person of Psalm 73 observes רְשָׁעִים (the wicked) they are not "like chaff witch the wind drives away" (Ps 1, 4). On the contrary the "I" person, as we know from verse 3, seems to be drawn to the wicked due to their well-being:

For they have no pain; their bodies are sound and sleek. They are not in trouble as others are; they are not plagued like other people. Therefore pride is their necklace; violence covers them like a garment. Their eyes swell out with fatness; their hearts overflow with follies. They scoff and speak with malice; loftily they threaten oppression. They set their mouths against heaven, and their tongues range over the earth. (vv. 4-9)

The problem is obvious and one of the great problems of life for anyone regarding God as rightful and good: How is it that the innocent suffer while the wicked seem to live on unharmed? In heuristic learning finding a solution to the problem as efficiently as possible is essential. The way the "I" person has learned to speak of God (v. 1) does not work in real life according to the experiences of the "I" person (vv. 2-9), and at this point in the text everything seems to be put upside down. God, who is supposed to be in favour of those of pure heart and harsh towards the wicked, lets the wicked increase their wealth whereas the pure hearted wash their hands in vain:

Such are the wicked always at ease, they increase in riches. All in vain I have kept my heart clean and washed my hands in innocence. For all day long I have been plagued[22]*, and am punished every morning.* (vv. 12-14)

In the everyday experience of the "I" person, the wicked seem to be at ease, while the innocent "I" person feels plagued. This, the problem plot of Psalm 73, reaches its climax in verse 13 when the "I" person complains of having kept his or her heart clean all in vain. At this point in the text the heuristic conclusion is in fact that the God of the "I" person doesn't work, or as John H. Hayes pointed out in his *Understanding the Psalms* (1976), "was tempted to declare his religion irrelevant and

[22] When the "I" person in v. 14 tells that וְאֶהְיֵ֣ נָגוּעַ (have been plagued) has, beside the testing plot, also been read as a parallel to the book of Job (Kraus, H. J., *Theology of the Psalms*, p. 168.). This might be, but most likely are the plagues and punishment the "I" person experience in Psalm 73 to be read linked to קִנֵּאתִי (I was envious). It is therefore more likely to be understood as a mental struggle of jealousy rather the physical suffering know to be afflicted Job.

erroneous".[23] Even if it occasionally would be useful to have a psalm ending in despair, a reader of the Hebrew bible knows that a turn of fate is about to happen. Psalm 73 has now reach the point where the descriptions of the "I" person from earlier, when everything seemed to be upside down (vv. 2-14), now is turned back in its right place again.

I have already mentioned how Mowinckel like several of his predecessors has understood verse 17 as the key moment in this psalm.[24] There has been much speculation as to what instructions God gave the "I" person in the temple, but the text never reveals it and we are therefore left with conjecture.[25] Reading the text in search of heuristic learning uncovers a lot of information if one also includes some events prior to verse 17 (vv.15-16) and also the following verse 18. I find reading verse 17, "the sanctuary session", as the only definite turning point problematic. I therefore rather choose to read verse 17 as a part of a three, or four, step process.

If I had said, 'I will talk on in this way', I would have been untrue to the circle of your children. But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task, until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I perceived their end. Truly you set them in slippery places; you make them fall to ruin. How they are destroyed in a moment, swept away utterly by terrors! They are like a dream when one awakes;[26] on awaking you despise their phantoms. (vv. 15-20)

The first step is where the responsibility, or perhaps even the morality, of the "I" person is tested. In verse 15 the "I" person mirrors his or her life as if she or he lived like a wicked: "If I had said, 'I will talk on in this way'" (v. 15). The "I" person is obviously tempted to let go of her or his religion and live on like a wicked (vv. 2-14), but picturing him or her self as a wicked results in a change of mind: "I would have been untrue to the circle of your children" (v. 16). It is the remembrance of בָּנֶיךָ (children), or generations of (your) children, which appears as the first argument for not becoming a wicked. Remembering the generations of children the individual

[23] Hayes, *Understanding*... p. 94.
[24] Page 2 in this paper.
[25] Hayes, *Understanding*... p. 94-95.
[26] When first choosing to read Psalm 73 for reflections of heuristic learning and due to my argument that the "I" person *almost* becomes the wicked, NRSV's choose of translation v. 20a, "They are like a dream when one awakes", is not helping me much. In future work with this psalm a new translation in needed, and to keep closer to MT (כַּחֲלוֹם מֵהָקִיץ אֲדֹנָי בָּעִיר) in v. 20a most likely to be better chose.

understands that leaving God is not only a personal matter, it implies generations of children.[27] The moral of the "I" person is put to the test by seeing the implications of leaving her or his religion.

The second step contributing to the change of view of the "I" person is the time of reflection in verse 16: וָאֲחַשְּׁבָה לָדַעַת (I thought how to understand this). Based on what the "I" person had learned of God (v. 1) and what the "I" person knew from her or his experiences in life, trying to understand this and holding it together is described as "a wearisome task" (v. 16). A task not solved until the "I" person enters מִקְדְּשֵׁי אֵל (the sanctuary of God) in verse 17. The event that takes place in verse 17, where the "I" person enters the sanctuary of God, makes the third step in this turning process. I would like to separate verse 17 into two events, the entering episode and the foreseeing episode: "then I perceived their end" (v. 17).

The third step is when the "I" person enters the sanctuary of God. A common way of understanding this passage is presented by Hans-Joachim Kraus in his *Theologie der Psalmen* (1979): "The psalmist had entered the temple precincts in order to seek a solution to the problems that were oppressing him".[28] Including the two previous steps, this passage in verse 17 seems more likely to be understood as an end of a process rather than the beginning of one. The "I" person enters the sanctuary to give praise to the God that made her or him understand. The "I" person in Psalm 73 uses the sanctuary to mark an ending of a process which led the "I" person to understand how it goes with the wicked (v. 17-20), or rather how it would go with him or her if the "I" person became one of the wicked.

How to understand the wicked is a potential fourth step in this heuristic process of learning in Psalm 73. I say potential because a comprehensive discussion of the רְשָׁעִים (the wicked) in Psalm 73 is indeed an overwhelming task. Nevertheless I will give a brief description of how the wicked may be understood as evidence of a heuristic learning. Even if the wicked are to be read as "wealthy and happy lords" (vv. 3-9) within Israel or not,[29] the way the "I" person identifies with the wicked throughout the psalm makes it possible to understand the wicked as something other than an outsider.

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[27] This observation I find very well describes by Nancy L. deClaissé-Walford, in her *Reading from the Beginning. The Shaping of the Hebrew Psalter* (1997), where she states: "The psalmist's remembrance of belonging, of being part of an ongoing community, provides the assurance required to maintain identity and direction" (deClaissé-Walford, *Reading*… p. 76).

[28] This quotation is taken from the English translation of *Theologie der Psalmen*: *Theology of the Psalms,* published in 1986.

[29] Referring to Crofts discussion with Birkeland in *The Identity*... p. 16-23.

When we in the beginning of verse 18 read "Truly you set them in slippery places" we hear the echo from the opening of the psalm "but as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; my steps had nearly slipped" (v. 2). The same motive as in verse 2 appears again here (v. 18), even though the fate of the "I" person differs from the fate of the wicked. Where the wicked "slip" the "I" person *almost* "slips" The way it goes with the wicked is also a description of the way it *almost* went with the "I" person in the past - had it not been for:[30] 1) the moral obligation to the generations of children; 2) the process of reflection; 3) marking the end of a painful process by entering the sanctuary and 4) seeing oneself in another by identifying with the wicked.
The reflections of a heuristic learning are not telling us that the wicked will have their final punishment. But it shows us how the "I" person ceases to be jealous of the wicked (v. 3-9) when he or she understands that the wicked have problems of their own. The "I" person doesn't become the wicked, but by almost becoming the wicked and that way identifying with the wicked, the "I" renews her or his insight of God. A God the "I" person first has learned of (v. 1), for then to experience in his or her life. Therefore the "I" person concludes:

But for me it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord God my refuge, to tell of all your works. (v. 28)

Having reached the conclusion of this psalm we have our happy ending and perhaps also an essential key to understanding this psalm. In the first verse we find the *learned* attitude towards God and in the last verse we find a renewed insight, based on a self-experienced relationship with God. These two ways of describing God indeed seem at odds and indicate that something quite important took place between the first and the last verse. When searching for reflections of a heuristic learning one could say the sum of what the "I" person experienced in Psalm 73 changes the way she or he describes God. These two verses (v. 1 and v. 28) are not only separated by the text they share, but also by concrete experiences in the "I" person's life.

[30] Hauge, *Between*... p. 277.

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THE RISE AND FALL OF THE FEMALE PROPHET

Female Prophecy in Second Temple Judaism in the Popular Imagination of the Past and in Contemporaneous Society

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I have recently addressed the loaded question why there are so few female prophets in the Hebrew Bible.[1] As we know from the contemporary comparative material, women were active as prophets; so where are they – according to the Hebrew Bible – in ancient Israel and Judah. An answer commonly found is that the patriarchal editors and gatherers of the Hebrew Bible excluded them. In my view, this answer does not hold, simply because the Neo-Assyrian Empire, in which according the preserved records the majority of prophets were female, was equally patriarchal. My proposed explanation had to do with the gender alignement between deity and prophet; in most cases world wide and throughout history, female prophets tend to speak for male deities/spirits, and male prophets for female deities/spirits and their relationship is often expressed in the language of marriage and/or sexual union.[2] This is entirely absent from prophetic communication in the near East where the tendency is that prophet and deity are of the same gender.[3] Tthus, I contended that Judah's patriarchal monotheism may explain the prevalence of male prophets in Israel's religious literature.

[1] STÖKL (2009). In the following I will mostly follow the generally accepted parlance in scholarly English in which 'female prophet' replaces the term 'prophetess'. The latter of the two terms is now often regarded as downplaying the role of female prophets in the same way that words such as 'actress' or 'princess' are seen as belittling. I would, however, like to point out that being a native speaker of a language which unlike English is gendered, feminine titles can point out the contribution of women just as well as supposedly non-gendered ones. Thus, when I occasionally use prophetess, this is not to be understood as downplaying the historical and literary women I refer to but instead merely for stylistic variety.

[2] This is not to say that other gender arrangements did not exist. The prevalent view that gender ambiguity is very much part of the divine-human communication is, generally speaking, correct.

[3] Such language is occasionally used in medical texts to express possession by a demon.

Having said that I am left with the following question: whither comes the upsurge in female prophecy in Second Temple literature? Why is Miriam called a נביאה – and why is the same title attributed to Deborah? Neither fulfils the 'classical' definition of 'prophecy' which is understood as an intuitive form of divination, which, in turn, is the transmission of a divine message to a human addressee through a (human) intermediary. Why, then, are these women understood as prophets? On first glance, I see two ways out: either they are not prophets and the ancient authors understood the term נביאה differently or the definition of prophecy is wrong. A number of recent interpreters have taken the second route and have attempted to redefine 'prophecy'.[4] While that is a logical way to approach the question, it does not, in my view lead to a satisfactory solution. If we widen the definition of prophecy it ceases to be a useful analytical tool.

At the same time that the number of female prophets increased in the literature that was to become the Hebrew Bible, the opposite problem also existed: according to the Hebrew Bible prophecy as a whole seems to cease to exist in Second Temple Judaism. This picture has long since been rightly challenged.[5] Alex Jassen has recently added his voice to the debate and argued that in Qumran prophecy continued in the form of inspired exegesis of scripture – much in line with Schniedewind's findings for innerbiblical 'prophetic' literature.[6] Additionally, Martti Nissinen has shown how *pesher* literature is not only in name related to Akkadian omen literature but that it is divinatory literature in the similar vein as Akkadian dream omens.[7]

[4] Arriving at what I would refer to as maximalist understandings of 'prophecy', see e.g. BUTTING (2001), FISCHER (2002), and GAFNEY (2008).

[5] See BARTON (1986) and SCHNIEDEWIND (1995). More recent literature can be found in e.g. FLOYD/HAAK (2006), DE TROYER/LANGE/SCHULTE (2009) and EDELMAN/BEN ZVI (2009).

[6] JASSEN (2007 and 2008).

[7] NISSINEN (2009b and 2010).

If both are correct, and I agree with their analyses, it follows that Jewish divination underwent a radical change in the Second Temple period, a change that creates a new model, more akin to Hellenistic than to Mesopotamian divination:[8] in Mesopotamia, intuitive and technical divination appear to be fairly clearly delineated, while Hellenistic divination cannot be classified so neatly – individual diviners perform various forms of divination bridging intuitive and inductive forms, which in Mesopotamia would have been performed by different specialists. Israel's divination which appears to have been organised akin to the Mesopotamian model before the exile seems to become more Hellenised when we reach the Graeco-Roman period. In itself this should not surprise is too much as at least on the surface most Levantine high and written culture became Hellenised in this period.

1 Female Prophets in Israel's Past

Let us now have a short look at the Hebrew Bible's female prophets. As is well known, the Hebrew Bible uses the term נביאה only six times. In canonical order the women to whom the title is attributed are Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, the woman in *Isa* 8 and Noadiah.[9] From an historical point of view a different order should be established. In my view the probably oldest attest female prophet is the prophet of *Isa* 8, followed by Huldah who is, in my view, also already a female prophet before the Exile. It seems likely that Noadiah follows them. Miriam is probably turned into a prophetess because of her connection with the song of the sea and to music.[10] Let us look at these five women in their likely historical order.

[8] For Greek divination see JOHNSTON (2008) and FLOWER (2008).

[9] *Ex* 15:20 (Miriam), *Jud* 4:4 (Deborah), *2 Ki* 22:14 (Huldah), *Isa* 8:3 (the unnamed mother of Isaiah's child), *2 Chr* 34:22 (Huldah) and *Neh* 6:14 (Noadiah). This order is, of course, according to the Jewish canon. In the Christian canon the woman of *Isa* 8:3 and Noadiah would swap places, and the two attestations of Huldah would come next to each other.

[10] It is commonplace in the study of ANE prophecy to assume that music and prophecy is linked, see e.g. LEMAIRE (1996). All this shows is that at the time Miriam was turned into a prophet music and prophecy were

The Prophet of *Isa* 8:3

The only exception to this rule is the prophet of *Isa* 8:3. Part of that may be due to the failure to realise that here was a woman described as a prophet. Most interpreters throughout the history of interpretation have taken her to be 'Mrs. Isaiah the Prophet', rather than 'The female prophet'.[11] To the best of my knowledge it took until well into the 20th century before it was pointed out that feminine titles are not conferred upon women purely because of their husband fulfilling a function in Hebrew.[12] A Judean woman who has a certain title will fulfil the connected function, that is a female carpenter will indeed be a female carpenter, just as a female prophet is a prophet. Even the possible exception מַלְכָּה ('queen') is not an exception at all, as the queen fulfilled an important function in ANE courts organising parts of the palace economy.[13] In my view there is little doubt that the נביאה in *Isa* 8 is a prophet in her own right. However, literary history has made sure that we do not know what she did or said. Considering that in Huldah we have another woman who seems to be acknowledged as a prophet at the Judean court. Personally this does not surprise me much, but in the current research climate it remains important to point this out.[14]

seen to be functionally linked. In fact, the only place where we find music leading to prophecy is in *2 Ki* 3:15 where Elisha asks for the musical support for his prophesying: וְעַתָּה קְחוּ־לִי מְנַגֵּן וְהָיָה כְּנַגֵּן הַמְנַגֵּן וַתְּהִי עָלָיו יַד־יהוה ("'And now, get me a musician!" When the musician was playing, the hand of Yhwh came upon him [Elisha].'). There are two Mari texts, FM 3 2-3 that are often cited in this debate. However, the musicians' actions in the two texts depend on whether the *muḫḫû*/*muḫḫātum* ('cult ecstatics') goes into ecstasy, rather than the other way around. No functional link can be established here. Where the link between prophecy and music in the second temple came is a different question for which we lack the evidence.

[11] As Wilda Gafney pointed out in a paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of the SBL in New Orleans, 4*QIsa*[a] uses a masculine here.

[12] JEPSEN (1960). Whether or not she was Isaiah's wife is besides the point for the story. It is only later interpreters who are interested in that question. She may have been married to Isaiah, but she may equally well have been a completely different prophet who co-operated in this all-encompassing sign-act. I believe that attempts such as GAFNEY's (2008:103-105) to 'prove' by the use of verbs that she is Isaiah's wife shows more about her own value judgement than about the chapter itself.

[13] See e.g. ZIEGLER (1999).

[14] See also the remarks on this issue in WILLIAMSON (2010).

Huldah

Huldah appears in *2 Ki* 22 || *2 Chr* 34 and validates the newly found laws as correct. In the text she validates the old-new law-book that Hilkiah had found in the temple.[15] We learn that according to the text she lived in the מִשְׁנֶה and that her husband was Šallum, master of the king's clothes. Like a good biblical (dtr) prophet, she starts by giving an oracle of doom. Often her later oracle of salvation is regarded as genuine *because* it was not fulfilled, but recently more and more doubts have surfaced about the literary genesis of the pericope and its deuteronomistic character.[16] Indeed, much of its wording could just as well come from the book of *Jeremiah*. Recently, Michael Pietsch has analysed the literary structure of Huldah's oracles' and links to other biblical texts.[17] He insists that the expression 'to be gathered to one's ancestors' is not used elsewhere in *1-2 Kings* and that the only direct correspondance within the 'Deuteronomistic History' can be found in *Jud* 2:10.[18] While I concur that there are strong links between the Huldah pericope and *Judges* 4 I cannot see why this means that the expression 'to be gathered' must mean 'to be buried' here and cannot mean 'to die'. Such a conclusion would require the *Deuteronomistic History* to be a coherent literary work after all. If the salvation oracle were as e.g. Marvin Sweeney argues the only words probably linked to the pre-exilic female prophet, she would not have had to keep to specific semantics detected by Pietsch.[19] That both *Jeremiah* and *1-2 Kings* have a deuteronomistic flavour to them does not mean that they constantly copy from each other, even where similarities

[15] On the issue of new-old documents at the basis of religious reforms and changes see now the contributions to WASCHKE (2009).

[16] RÖMER (2009:176-177) and PIETSCH (2010). For earlier views see e.g. MONTGOMERY (1951:526.546-547), CROSS (1973:286 nt.46), GRAY (1977:713), COGAN/TADMOR (1988:295) and HALPERN/VANDERHOOFT (1991:223-229).

[17] PIETSCH (2010:75-76). Pietsch misunderstands the socio-historical function of prophecy when he says that Huldah's oracle cannot save the community from the announced doom. As was recently shown by SCHMIDT (1998) and TIEMEYER (2005), prophecy, like all other forms of divination show the consequences for a chosen path *in order* to warn about its outcomes, which in turn can then cause a change in behaviour and with it, hopefully, a change of outcome.

[18] I use the term DH as a shorthand for *Joshua-2 Kings* here rather for the coherent work of one author.

[19] SWEENEY (2007:442).

abound. Therefore, I hold on to the idea that Huldah was indeed a female prophet in Judah and was available to emissaries of the king.

Noadiah

We do not have much information about Noadiah other than that she seems to have been the leader of a group in conflict with Nehemiah.[20] If we want to go futher than this we do not only enter the realm of speculation, something that we are well used to, but speculation without anything to be guided by. All *Neh* 6:14 tells us is that it is very likely that there were women in mid 5th century BCE who used the title נביאה and who were important in society. However, the authors do not provide us with further information as to what Noadiah actually did. Therefore we cannot tell whether the title נביאה is used in its 'prophetic' meaning here or whether it has already acquired the sense of a 'leader who is close to YHWH' as in the case of Abraham or Moses, but as *Ezr-Neh* uses the title 'prophet' only for Haggai and Zecharia (*Ezr* 5:1, 6:14).[21]

Miriam

The singer of the song of the sea is referred to as a prophet in *Ex* 15. That she is best understood as a literary figure rather than as a historical figure is clear and a consensus is forming that she had her most important time in the Persian period.[22] What is specifically 'prophetic' about her? If I apply to her the definition of prophecy which I gave above, I could not call her a prophet – but the text clearly does so. The next logical step, taken particularly

[20] While theoretically possible, SCHUNCK's (1998-:173) attempt to revive GALLING's (1954:228) emendation of נועדיה to מועדיה does not convince. Since the name Noadiah is ambiguous as to gender it may be possible that the spelling in *Neh* 6:14 is an Aramaicised spelling of the masculine (נביאה) as found in *Ezr* 5:1 and 6:14 for Haggai and as LXX understands *Neh* 6:14. However, it seems more likely to me that the translators of LXX would turn a female prophet into a male one than Hebrew scribes mistaking an Aramaic masculine for a Hebrew feminine, and I remain with MT unless better evidence can be found.

[21] Yet, CARROLL (1992) devoted an entire article on her.

[22] KESSLER (1996).

by a number of recent authors on female prophets in the Hebrew Bible is to change the definition of what a 'prophet' is, in order to include people, such as Miriam, whom the text refers to as prophet.[23] That reaction is entirely legitimate, indeed, necessary, when trying to understand the semantics of the term נביא(ה) in the Hebrew Bible in its final form, but it is not helpful when trying to recover how prophecy operated in ancient Judah; and precisely that is necessary for our enterprise here.

Deborah

The most famous of the female prophets in the Hebrew Bible is probably Deborah. 'Her' song is usually understood to be one of the oldest parts of the Old Testament and is regularly dated to the 10th or 9th century BCE. Others date it to the 8th century while some more recent voices will date it to the late Persian or even early Hellenistic periods.[24] Whenever it may have been written, it does not refer to Deborah as a prophet – that title is reserved for her in the prose narrative, and many scholars have commented on the peculiar syntax by which she is introduced:

וּדְבוֹרָה אִשָּׁה נְבִיאָה אֵשֶׁת לַפִּדוֹת

'And Deborah, a woman, a prophet, wife of Lappidot'[25]

As Charles Echols has shown, the portrayal of Deborah owes much to the epic tradition.[26] She appears as more of a divinely inspired warrior than a prophet whose funcion is to

[23] See e.g. WACKER (1988), BECHMANN (2003) and the three monographs on prophets all of which write as if they used an historical approach but who really present us with a canonical reading of the biblical female prophets: BUTTING (2001), FISCHER (2002) and GAFNEY (2008).

[24] The youngest dating of the text can probably be found in DIEBNER (1995), WALTISBERG (1999) and BERTHELOT/KUPITZ (2007). BECHMANN (1989) dates the text to the 8th-7th century BCE, while SCHULTE (1990) and BLOCK (1999) favour a pre-monarchic dating. On both linguistic and redaction-critical grounds LEVIN (2003) finds a post-exilic date most convincing.

[25] The translation 'wife of Lappidot' has been heavily criticised recently as being the result of a masculine reading of the text. It is true that white male interpreters have – and I apologise for the unintended pun - dominated the history of interpretation, so that this could well be the case. However, the alternatives 'woman of torches/flames/spirit' does not take into account the closest parallel, *2 Ki* 22:14, where Huldah is introduced as 'Huldah, the prophet, wife of Šallum. We may not like it, but the authors of the Hebrew Bible were androcentric and usually described female characters as 'the wife of X'.

transmit divine messages to their human addressees.[27] She is a שֹׁפְטָה and therefore rightly included in *Judges*. In the Persian period she gains title נביאה by virtue of her song. She becomes a prophet at the same time as Miriam and for the same reason: both are women who are important in stories and legends. They are, I submit, so important that they cannot be deleted entirely. So instead of being sidelined entirely they get elevated to the status of prophets. But they are prophets in the past not the present day – and at some level, either within the Hebrew Bible or in early Jewish interpretative tradition, they are blemished prophets, as is Noadiah. In the case of Deborah this has the interesting side effect that the first and last named prophets in the Deuteronomistic history are Deborah and Huldah, and as we have just seen there are some formal links between the two pericopes.

Having reviewed the evidence both for historical and literary prophets in Israel's past, we can identify the following problem: either we follow the picture drawn by the Hebrew Bible assuming that its use of terms such as נביאה corresponds to some form of historical reality, or we assume, as I do, that, with regard to *Ex* 15 and *Jud* 4, the Hebrew Bible's usage of the term reflects a late Achaemenid to Hellenistic Period usage. While the latter assumption has the advantage that the biblical text can be used for reconstructing the political and theological world of late Achaemenid Yehud, it fails to take into account that fossilised terms, expression and traditions may better reflect previous periods than the Persian and Hellenistic periods.[28]

While I must admit to some circularity in my argument, I believe that using extra-biblical data to reconstruct constructs of prophecy in Mesopotamia may provide a corrective when trying to decide whether prophets such as Huldah and Miriam bore the title נביאה already

[26] ECHOLS (2008).

[27] I agree with DAY's (2000:136-138) assessment that Deborah does not simply translated as either Anat or Attart, contra CRAIGIE (1969, 1977 and 1978), DEMPSTER (1978), TAYLOR (1982), ACKERMAN (1998) and TSANG (2006).

[28] With this I wish to raise the vexing question of the relationship between the sociological and the literary phenomena 'prophecy' and where to see Israel's prophecy, see recently NISSINEN (2009a:106-108 and 2009c).

before the Persian period. It is indeed possible that prophecy was understood to work differently in the west, but the consistency over the vast difference in time between 18th BCE Mari and 7th century Assyria regarding the way that prophecy was understood to work, combined with the compatible information from the Transjordanian kingdoms, and the problematic chapter *2 Ki* 22 to me indicate that it is likely that Judean prophecy also worked in more or less similar ways.[29]

We have, thus, three women who probably were prophets in their own lifetimes: the female prophet of *Isa* 8, Huldah and Noadiah. Miriam and Deborah gained that status some time in the Achaemenid period. As we can see from the *Seder Olam Rabba* this literary process did not stop there. In chapter 21 of this 2nd century CE work, seven women are classified as prophets: Sarah, Miriam, Deborah, Hannah, Abigail, Huldah and Esther.[30] The first thing we notice is that the number goes up from five to seven; however, only three of the biblical prophetesses are included: Miriam, Deborah and Huldah. Noadiah and the female prophet of *Isa* 8 are simply ignored, presumably because Noadiah was not regarded as a prophet of YHWH and because the female prophet of *Isa* 8 was understood as 'Mrs. Isaiah' by the Rabbis. The 4 women added by the Rabbis to make up the list to seven, Sarah, Hannah, Abigail and Esther, are included because of their relationship with YHWH or because they predict certain events. It is interesting to note that three out of the 'four most beautiful women' are included in this list: Sarah, Abigail and Esther, while the fourth, Rahab, is left out. What we can see at work here is the shift of the meaning of the title נביאה in a process similar to the one posited by many scholars for earlier times.

[29] I am aware of the literary links to *Jer* 36, but I do not believe that they require that *2 Ki* 22 be Persian, as argued by RÖMER (2009).

[30] BRONNER (1991). For the text of *Seder Olam Rabba* see GUGGENHEIMER (1998). The often cited list in *bMeg* 14a goes back to this earlier work.

With this last text that we looked at we are already firmly within the world of the late 2nd Temple period and beyond. What we have seen in the text of the Hebrew Bible itself is a trend to refer to some women as prophets who presumably would not have born that title at the time that the stories about them are set. Let me be clear at this point. I do believe that it is rather likely that in Judah's and Israel's polytheistic past – if I may be allowed to use this term – female prophets were nothing particularly unusual.[31] The fact that the text mentions the female prophet of *Isa* 8 and Huldah as if they were nothing out of the ordinary is a reflex of that reality. The evidence from Mari and Nineveh shows this unequivocally: prophecy was one of the relatively few professions which just used masculine and feminine forms rather than being more strictly gendered.[32]

The trend to refer to women in Israel's mythic past as prophets in their capacity as women who are in a special relationship with their deity, and who therefore have acquired some form of political leadership, may surprise some scholars who would not expect such developments in patriarchal societies. When using anthropological data as a control group we find, however, that female mediums occur in many traditionally patriarchal societies.[33] Anthropological data, however, should not be used without great care, and we have to take into account that anthropological data consists of 'present day' descriptions, i.e. descriptions from the time that they are describing which is fundamentally different to the Hebrew Bible which represents us with a remembered constructed past.[34] Why do the authors women *in the*

[31] *Contra* WEEMS (2003) who thinks that the normal introduction of Huldah indicates that the author ironically showed that a female prophet was not at all common at all.

[32] On this question see e.g. BATTO (1974), but also FLEMING (2004) and STÖKL (2008).

[33] See e.g. LEWIS (2003).

[34] This opens the question what to do with aging anthropological reports. As they, like all scholarship, reflect the concerns, questions and limitations of their times, they should be used with particular care and anthropologists often do not count them as admissible evidence today. An example may be the depiction of Chukchi shamans by BOGORAS (1904), who describes the case of homosexual shamans but does not mention that they are not homosexual by today's standards of gender study, as the 'male homosexual' shamans in question perform a female gender role and the 'female homosexual' ones perform male gender roles, which encompassing all forms of gendered behaviour including the usage of prosthetic sexual organs.

past into prophets rather than women in their own days? I will return to this question later on when drawing the various aspects of this paper together.

2 Prophecy in the Present

Let us now turn to the second question: What about female prophets in the present of Second Temple Judaism? In order to assess that question we have to look at the topic in general – what about prophecy in the late Second Temple period. In order to (re-)construct the construction of prophecy during the late Second Temple period the only sources we can use are written texts, such as the Qumran scrolls, some New Testament writings and some early Rabbinic literature.[35] While I am not a scholar of the New Testament or Rabbinic literature, enough has become clear in the last few years to enable me to draw a picture of their understanding – or construction – of prophecy as far as it is useful for my current enterprise.

Recently Alex Jassen has recently presented a detailed study of prophecy at Qumran.[36] His result is two-fold: the 'Qumran community', whoever they were, did not use the term נביא to refer to their own members. However, they regarded those members of their community who interpreted scripture as the successors of the biblical prophets. This itself is a continuation of the development that starts within the Hebrew Bible itself, away from the socio-historical phenomenon 'prophecy' to the literary phenomenon.[37]

[35] I rely here on the 2009 Gunning Lecture at New College, Edinburgh University, entitled 'Constructs of Prophecy: The Cases of Assyria and Biblical Scholarship' delivered by Martti Nissinen on December 12th 2009. See also NISSINEN (2009c:494-496).

[36] JASSEN (2007 and 2008).

[37] See e.g. RÖMER (2009), NISSINEN (2009a), and the contributions to FLOYD/HAAK (2006).

That means that prophecy as such had undergone a considerable change from what we can see in Neo-Assyrian prophecy, assuming that prophecy in Judah in the first temple period was to some degree similar, to Qumran. The understanding of prophecy as part of the subcategory of intuitive or non-inductive divination put forward among others by Martti Nissinen and myself which works so well for the Mesopotamian texts does not work for this late Second Temple material any longer.[38] What we find instead is that learning and training in the art of reading the divine message which is a normal component of inductive divination as found in the ANE is required in scriptural exegesis in order to be able to read scripture well. It is interesting to note here that the diviner does not read a natural phenomenon, but a text which contains the hidden divine message. However, our interpreter cannot do without divine inspiration – which in Nissinen's and my model corresponds to the non-inductive kind of divination.

As we have already heard, in the two Mesopotamian corpora of prophecy from Mari and Nineveh we find that female prophets are completely accepted and normal. Female technical diviners are by comparison rare but they certainly do exist.[39] The gendered world of Mesopotamia - whether it recognised two, three or more genders does not matter here[40] - did not often have the various genders fulfil the same function under the same title. While learning was not the exclusive domain of men, they represented the by far predominant gender in writing, divination and scholarship at the NA court as well as in OB Amorite

[38] See e.g. NISSINEN (2010). In her comments on the issue SCURLOCK (2010) does not represent well the consensus which uses the term 'Literary Predictive Texts', DEJONG ELLIS (1989), because she wants more comparison between them and biblical books to be made. While it is true that most biblical texts also are part of the general genre of literary texts, they are less concerned with prediction as such, and are themselves the product of inner-biblical *Fortschreibung* and interpretation which led to Qumran-style 'prophetic exegesis', which as Scurlock rightly points out requires both 'science' (training) and 'art' (inspiration), SCURLOCK (2010:277 nt.1).

[39] Particularly the *šāʾiltu*, cf. HENSHAW (1994:141).

[40] Assyriology is discovering gender as a fruitful subject of study as can be seen by the subject of the Helsinki RAI, see e.g. PARPOLA/WHITING (2002). Very interesting in this context is the work of BAHRANI (2001, 2003 and 2008).

Mesopotamia.[41] Second temple Judaism was no kinder in its access to education to women, the necessary pre-condition for becoming an inspired interpreter of Scripture. That means that because prophecy had changed radically from a non-inductive form of divination to a form of divination including inductive and non-inductive elements women were excluded from performing an office which they clearly had performed in biblical times – at least in groups such as the 'Qumran community'.

Another Second Temple Jewish text cites *Joel* 3:1 (2:28), YHWH's promise that:

> 'I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams, And your young men shall see visions.' (Acts 2:17)

This indicates that the early church regarded women as capable of prophesying. It is possible that at least at the time that Acts was penned down, learning was not considered as an important pre-condition for prophetic behaviour by Christian groups. As early Christianity shared the Rabbinic believe that Samuel's mother Hannah was a prophet (*Luke* 2), which shows that it had a similar interest in rooting female prophecy in history; unlike Rabbinic Judaism, however, it did not exclude prophecy as a valid form of contemporary form of revelation. That the phenomenon of prophetically gifted people, particularly women, became a problem to Christianity as well is well known, particularly when entering the realm of interpreting scripture.

To sum up this section: for groups such as the community which produced or read the texts found at Qumran, inspired exegesis became the way in which prophecy continued legitimately. This required the interpreter to not only be inspired but also to have access to the necessary education in order to be recognised by the community as an interpreter of

[41] While there is a NA hymn to Gula in which she is referred to as an *apkallatu* that is, to my knowledge the only time that the feminine form of the title is used, HENSHAW (1994:155).

scripture, which excluded women from holding this office. Other groups on the fringes of Second Temple Judaism, such as Christianity, seem to have allowed for men and women to be recognized as prophets, presumably influenced by the expectation that the eschaton was nigh indeed. Naturally, the two phenomena which are both called 'prophecy' do not, as such, appear to be too similar. It may, indeed, be best to distinguish them from a phenomenological point of view, and I think Qumranites would not have agreed with the understanding of early Christian ecstatic behaviour as 'prophetic'.

3 Conclusions

As we have seen in the first section of this paper, pre-exilic Judah presumably recognised female prophets as nothing particularly unusual. As I argued elsewhere, I think that developing monotheism with a predominantly male deity led to the much lower numbers of female prophets that we find in today's Bible.[42] In a movement in partial contrast to this, Second Temple Judaism attributed the title נביאה to women who previously did not bear it, such as Miriam and Deborah, a development which continues until even Sarah, Abigail and Esther become prophets. They bear the title in a changed form, not so much as a professional title, but as an expression of their closeness to YHWH, and for other aspects which had become connected to prophecy but which may not have been previously, such as intercession. However, the title seems to have been used mostly for women in Judah's 'mythic past', rather than its contemporary context. Female prophets thereby became part of the past and not the contemporary present in Second Temple Judaism. The fact that Rabbinic Judaism regarded most of them as not entirely '*kosher*' may well point in the same direction. In the Talmud

[42] STÖKL (2009).

(*bMeg* 14a) we read that Deborah's name means *ziborata* ('hornet') and Huldah's name *kurkušta* ('weasel'). In both cases the name of a prophetess is changed from that of a quite harmless animal, the bee and the mole or, zooologically correct, the blind mole rat, into that of a pest (and of skilful and prolific hunters, but that seems to have been an unintended side-effect).[43] The three woman prophets who might challenge male authority are read in such a way that they become non-threatening for the ruling patriarchal structures. But to the Rabbis' credit we can note that they do not refuse these women the title נְבִיאָה. Further, as Bronner points out, the condemnation is not universal. Targum *2 Chr* 22 interprets the fact that Huldah lives in the מִשְׁנֶה as an indication that Huldah had an academy and was teaching Torah there – one could hardly imagine a higher honour to be bestowed on her. Similarly, *Yalkut Šimoni* has Deborah teach Torah under the palm tree bearing her name, but both of these sources lie well outside the time scale covered in this paper.

Where we have access to Jewish constructions of prophecy in the Second Temple period outside of millenarian movements such as early Christianity, prophecy seems to have turned into the inspired interpretation of scripture – a form of reading biblical texts which is reminiscent of a Lutheran understanding of preaching sermons. While I doubt that many Christians would be happy to refer to sermons as divination, they are remarkably similar in structure. Leaving the critique of divinatory aspects of the Christian sermon to other scholars better qualified for that task let me return to the ancient world.

We have a threefold phenomenon: on the one hand female prophets disappear from the record as the majority of YHWH prophets were quite probably male, and prophets of other gods were excluded by e.g. the *Law of the Prophets* (*Dtn* 18).[44] Secondly, we find the attribution of the title to some women in Israel's past, such as Miriam and Deborah. This

[43] RÜTERSWÖRDEN (1995) comments that the name Huldah does not refer, as commonly assumed, to the mole as the common mole does not exist in the middle East, and that it therefore must refer to the *Stumpfschnauzenmull* or blind mole rat, the *spalax Ehrenbergi*.

[44] This is the subject of my contribution, STÖKL (2009).

expresses that they fulfil the definition of a prophet in the earlier part of the Achaemenid period: someone with a close relationship with YHWH, possibly singing a song which is regarded as divinely inspired. Groups, such as the Qumran community, finally, constructed prophecy in such a way as to exclude women from being recognised holders of the office. The changing construction of prophecy, of modern scholars as well as of ancient scholars and societies, has profound impacts on the way women were perceived as participating in prophecy, and in order to recognise this, it is, in my view, important to pay careful attention to the historical contexts and developments, as I hope to have shown in this paper.

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Jacob: Friend or Foe of the Ezekiel Tradition?

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The following submission, an extract from my thesis, argues that the book of Ezekiel polemicizes against both the Abraham and Jacob tradition in order to argue that the future inhabitants of the land will come from the exiles. I envision the main points of discussion to be the following three points: (1) has the argument that there is a polemic against the Jacob tradition been sustained; (2) is this argument, along with the polemic against Abraham, sufficient evidence those two traditions were combined prior to the composition of Ezekiel; (3) can this evidence be construed as an indication that the book of Ezekiel underwent a redaction to harmonize the patriarchal and exodus traditions.

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This chapter will explore how the book of Ezekiel employs the "as I live" and "lifted hand" formulae in order to shape a message that identifies a purified remnant of the Babylonian exiles as the rightful heirs to the land of Judah while simultaneously challenging the Babylonian imperial ideology that the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple indicated Marduk had defeated and killed YHWH. This discussion will indicate that the "as I live" and "lifted hand" formulae are tightly linked to the exodus tradition and that these connections are employed by the book to advance its theological program. A number of these themes associated with the divine oath have hitherto not been recognized by scholars. When duly noted they help to clarify the book's attitude towards the future of YHWH's land, people and even God's own leadership. Although these are themes commonly discussed in relation to Ezekiel, the additional insights offered by the "as I live" and "lifted hand" formulae contribute new and significant insights on several problematic texts.

1. The Divine Oath and the Future of YHWH's Land

The land remains a central concern of the exilic community despite their distance from it. Indeed, Allen is certainly correct to observe that in the book, "Life is repeatedly defined in terms of

returning to the land."[1] Such a return, however, was not welcomed by all. The question "who shall possess the land of Israel in the future?" is perhaps the most contentious one in Ezekiel, a situation indicated by the argumentative tone exhibited by the passages where the book of Ezekiel expresses its view that the rightful heirs to the land were amongst the exiles. Modern scholars' interest in these passages is both to understand their meaning but also to use them as a means of reconstructing the socio-political dynamics of the sixth-century B.C.E. This scrutiny is also due to the lone mention of Abraham in the book: "The word of the LORD came to me: Mortal, the inhabitants of these waste places in the land of Israel keep saying, 'Abraham was only one man, yet he got possession of the land; but we are many; the land is surely given us to possess'" (Ezek 33:23-24). Or, perhaps better said, much attention has been given to grasping what motivates Ezekiel's vitriolic reaction to this claim. With all of this in mind, this section will demonstrate that the "as I live" and "lifted hand" formulae are key components in a sustained engagement with the patriarchal tradition in Ezekiel. The "as I live" divine oath, in particular, serves as the sharp edge of Ezekiel's verbal sword used to pierce the claims of the non-exiles that YHWH has promised them possession of the land because of their descent from Abraham and Jacob.

This argument is based primarily on exegesis of Ezek 5:5-17, 33:23-29, 20:32-44 and 35:1–36:15. However, it ranges far beyond those texts, engaging others within Ezekiel and more outside the book. The relevance of the current argument in such a wide range of texts reinforces its validity and underscores its importance to Ezekiel's theology.

(a) Ezek 5:5-17

Following the call of the prophet Ezekiel and a series of sign actions, Ezek 5:5-17 possesses a key *Sitz in der Literatur*: as the first direct address by the prophet to his audience it introduces the magnitude and extraordinary nature of the judgment that will come upon Jerusalem. This speech sets the stage for all that follows in chapters 6–24, and even for a great deal of what is found in Ezek 33:23–48:35. The address to Jerusalem follows on logically from the sign actions that precede it. It is notable that Jerusalem is described as "in the midst of the nations and surrounded by countries" (Ezek 5:5). The is a description of Mt Zion, although the explicit reference is missing.[2]

1. Leslie C. Allen, *Ezekiel 20–48* (WBC 29; Dallas, Tex.: Word Books, 1990), xxiv.

2. Walther Zimmerli, *A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, Chapters 1–24* (Hermeneia 1; Translated by Ronald E. Clements. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1979), 41; Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 1–24* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1997), 197-99; Thomas Renz, "The Use of the Zion Tradition in the Book of Ezekiel," in *Zion, City of Our God* (eds. Richard S. Hess, and Gordon J. Wenham; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1999).

Although it remains debatable whether Ezekiel endorses the election of Jerusalem contained in the Zion tradition, the positive portrayal of the renewed Jerusalem in Ezek 20 as "my holy mountain" (הר־קדשׁי, Ezek 20:40) suggests a positive, even if somewhat distant, relationship to the Zion tradition. This complex use of well-known images and language is indicative of how the book as a whole interacts with other theological traditions.

Crucially, YHWH's judgment is characterized as that which YHWH has refused to do previously. Verse 9 is explicit in this regard: the fate of Jerusalem is is something "YHWH has never done and will never do again."[3] The particulars of this unprecedented judgment are listed in vv. 13-16, showing an unmistakable connection to the exodus tradition. The connection of these verses to Lev 26 is noted regularly,[4] but their links with Num 14 and Deut 32 have received much less attention. Greenberg and Block[5] have both explored the connections to Deut 32, with Greenberg remarking on 5:5-17 that, "the affinities with Lev 26 are most pronounced (with embellishments, toward the end, from Deut 32)."[6] The connection to Num 14 remains largely absent from discussion. Yet, the judgment is described as occurring "in the sight of the nations" (לעיני הגוים, v. 8) and as "in the sight of all who pass by" (לעיני כל־עובר, v. 14). Both descriptions suggest a reversal of Num 14:13-16 where Moses pleads that YHWH not destroy the first exodus generation all at once because of what the Egyptians will conclude about God's power. This idea is also paralleled in Deut 32:26-27, a connection not discussed by Greenberg or Block. Furthermore, YHWH declares that the time for tolerance has ended and that, "my eye will show no pity; nor will I show mercy."[7] This reverses the forebearance promised in Num 14:20, an attitude also found in Deut 32:36. These links establish the importance of Num 14 and Deut 32 as background and adumbrate their importance for what follows.

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3. וְעָשִׂיתִי בָךְ אֵת אֲשֶׁר לֹא־עָשִׂיתִי וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר־לֹא־אֵעֶשֶׂה כָמֹהוּ עוֹד. My translation.

4. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, 175-76; Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 22; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co, 1983), 124-28; Block, *Ezekiel 1–24*, 204; Risa Levitt Kohn, *A New Heart and a New Soul: Ezekiel, the Exile and the Torah* (JSOTSup 358; London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 43-75.

5. Block, *Ezekiel 1–24*, 203-4, 212-6.

6. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 127.

7. וְלֹא־תָחוֹס עֵינִי וְגַם־אֲנִי לֹא אֶחְמוֹל. Following Block's translation (Block, *Ezekiel 1–24*, 205).

(b) Ezek 33:23-29

A major shift in the book of Ezekiel comes at 33:21-22 with the report of Jerusalem's destruction.[8] Most interpret this message as the fulfillment of the judgment against Israel discussed in chapters 1–24, from which it is separated by the oracles against the nations in chapters 25–32, and the event that allows for the following oracles of salvation. This three-fold division of the book has its merits, but it can obscure that Ezekiel's message in 33:23 and following remains tinged with judgment.[9]

Ezekiel 33:23-29 is a disputation speech, a form highlighted by the opening statement of the interlocutor's words to preface YHWH's counterargument, that focuses on who has the right to dwell in the land. The *a fortiori* logic of the non-exiles thesis is clear:[10] "Abraham was one man and he possessed the land. And we are many: to us the land is given as a possession."[11] On the surface, the logic of the prophet's response is equally transparent: the non-exiles have defiled themselves by their conduct and, thus, they will die in YHWH's judgment. If they perish they most certainly cannot possess the land.

In 1972 John Van Seters framed the deeper issues raised by Ezekiel's hostility to the non-exiles' Abraham-based land claims:

> ... what is noteworthy is the fact that the theme of the promise to the patriarch and his descendants is not used. Furthermore, Ezekiel repudiates an appeal to Abraham as a claim to the land because for him possession of the land is entirely conditional upon obedience to the law. For him the law and the promise were two aspects of the oath or covenant with the fathers of the exodus-wilderness generation.[12]

Van Seters further argues that Ezekiel's response indicates there did not yet exist a connection between the tradition of YHWH's land promise to the patriarchs as recorded in Gen 12–35 and the exodus tradition in the sixth-century BCE .[13] Moreover, the mention of Abraham without Jacob is

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8. Walther Zimmerli, *A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet of Ezekiel, Chapters 25–48* (Hermeneia 2; Translated by James D. Martin. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 193-94; Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21–37: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 22A; New York: Doubleday & Co, 1997), 681-82; Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 25–48* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1998), 234-35.

9. Contrary to this traditional three-fold understanding of judgment against Israel, judgment against the nations and salvation for Israel, see Marvin A. Sweeney, "The Assertion of Divine Power in Ezekiel 33:21-39:29," in *Form and Intertextuality in Prophetic and Apocalyptic Literature* (Fat 45; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005) and Tyler D. Mayfield, *Literary Structure and Setting in Ezekiel* (FAT II/43; Tüningen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010).

10. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 684.

11. Translation is mine.

12. John Van Seters, "Confessional Reformulation in the Exilic Period," *VT* 22 (1972): 449.

13. For further development of this argument, see Van Seters subsequent work in John Van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1975) and John Van Seters, *Prologue to History:*

evidence those two traditions had not yet been integrated.[14] Many interpreters continue to believe that Ezek 33:23-29 is entirely compatible with a pre-exilic combination of the Abraham and Jacob traditions[15] by contending Ezekiel's objection is limited to just the behavior of the non-exiles. But, by applying the insights gained about the "as I live" and "lifted hand" formulae, one can see that Ezekiel's view is predicated on ideas that challenge the very premises of the Abrahamic claims. The response, equally importantly, is saturated with allusions to the exodus tradition, underscoring Ezekiel's belief that Egypt was Israel's place of origin. All of these points are supported by themes connected with the "as I live" divine oath formula. The principal one is the "as I live" formula's allusion to YHWH's power in the exodus from Egypt, to which the experience of the exiles will be directly compared. A key passage for seeing this connection is Deut 32:39-43.

A logical starting point is the connection between the "as I live" formula and the disputation speech. Ezekiel 33:23-29 initially suggested the link between the divine oath and the disputation speech and its particular application of the form underscores the contentious nature of the land. It also introduces a broader overlap between this genre and the land debate: the five passages that address possession of the land (11:14-21; 20:1-31; 20:32-44; 33:23-39; 35:10-15)[16] all incorporate this form in some way. Of these, only Ezek 11:14-21 lacks the "as I live" formula, an exclusion that will be explained in due course.

The "as I live" formula is preceded in Ezek 33:23-29 by a series of six indictments and is followed by a series of six punishments, placing it at the critical pivot from the motivation for YHWH's judgment to the specification of it.[17] The six indictments show strong connections to Lev 26:[18]

The Yahwist as Historian in Genesis (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 1992). This line of argument is expanded and augmented by Römer (Thomas Römer, *Israels Väter: Untersuchungen zur Väterthematik im Deuteronomium und in der deuteronomistischen Tradition* [OBO 99; Göttingen: Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990]). See now Matthias Köckert, "Die Geschichte Der Abrahamüberlieferung," in *Congress Volume Leiden 2004* (ed. André Lemaire; VTSup 109; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 106.

14. On the independence of the Jacob narrative from the Abraham narrative, see Blum (Erhard Blum, *Die Komposition der Vätergeschichte* [WMANT 57; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984]) and Carr (David M. Carr, *Reading the Fractures of Genesis: Historical and Literary Approaches* [Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1996]). Römer also has suggested this possibility (Thomas Römer, "Recherches Actuelles Sur Le Cycle D'abraham," in *Studies in the Book of Genesis: Literature, Redaction and History* [ed. A. Wénin; Bibliotheca Ephemeridiom Theologicarum Lovaniensium 160; Leuven: Peeters, 2001], 192).

15. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 687-90; Block, *Ezekiel 25–48*, 258-61.

16. One might add Ezek 34:1-16 and chapter 37 to this list, although this is debatable.

17. Block mentions that vv. 24-29 are a remarkable hybrid of the prophetic proof oracle and the classic disputation (Ibid., 258). This is achieved, in part, by the way the "as I live" formula functions.

18. Fishbane notes, "In fact, the language of these punishments echoes the punishments for covenantal malfeasance listed in Lev. 26: 19, 25, 30-33, and thus underscores the fact that the delicts noted in Ezek 33:25 refer to

Action	Ezekiel	Holiness Code
Eating meat with blood	33:25	Lev 17:10-16; 19:26
Worship gillulim	33:25	Lev 26:30
Shed blood	33:25	Lev 17:4?
depend on their sword	33:26	Lev 17:4[19]
commit abominations	33:26	Lev 18:22, 26, 27, 29, 30; 20:13
defile their neighbor's wife	33:26	Lev 18:20; 20:10

The six punishments have a similar relationship:

Judgment	Ezekiel	Holiness Code
Fall by sword	33:27	Lev 26:25
Devoured by animals	33:27	Lev 26:22
Die by pestilence	33:27	Lev 26:25
Desolate and Devestate the land	33:28	Lev 26:33
End the land's proud might	33:28	Lev 26:19
None will pass through	33:28	

In his recent study on the use of the H by Ezekiel, Lyons notes, "This technique, wherein the author draws on different prohibitions in H, changes them into accusations, and combines them" occurs throughout Ezekiel.[20]

acts of covenantal malfeasance found in Lev. 17–18" (Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985], 294).

19. Based on Greenberg's connection with the previous wrongdoing in "shedding blood" (Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 685).

For all that, the depth of congruence between Ezekiel and H's theology regarding the land is rarely perceived. This recognition depends upon the distinction between who suffers the first three and the last three punishments. The sword, wild beast and pestilence (v. 27) will fall upon the people left in the land, i.e. those interlocutors quoted at the outset of this disputation speech. The remaining three judgments, by contrast, are addressed to the land (הארץ), specified as the mountains of Israel (הרי ישׂראל) in v. 28b. This subtle shift indicates that the defiling behavior of the non-exiles caused both them *and the land* to be impure.[21] That idea is otherwise unique to H.[22] Nihan remarks:

> More generally, disobedience to the law is now repeatedly conceived of as leading to the pollution not only of the sanctuary (Lev 20:2, 4), as in P (Lev 4; 16), but of the entire land (Lev 18:24-30; 20:22ff; and 26:34-35!), a notion unparalleled elsewhere in the Torah although here again it is reminiscent in some respects of the theology of the book of Ezekiel where a similar view is found with regard to the city of Jerusalem (see, e.g., Ez 22).[23]

Besides Nihan's connection to Ezek 22, others link the idea with Ezek 36:25.[24] Another occuring in Ezek 33 is, then, unsurprising. This idea is also present in Deut 32:39-43: the final strophe of the poem introduces its assertion that YHWH, "will repay those who hate him, and cleanse the land

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20. Michael A. Lyons, *From Law to Prophecy: Ezekiel's Use of the Holiness Code* (Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 507; New York: T & T Clark, 2009), 95.

21. Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 17-22: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 3A; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 1404-05; Jan Joosten, *People and Land in the Holiness Code: An Exegetical Study of the Ideational Framework of the Law in Leviticus 17-26* (VTSup 67; Leiden: Brill, 1996), 169-92, particularly 178-80; Christophe Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch* (FAT II/25; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 395-575. Kutsko anticipates this point (John F. Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth: Divine Presence and Absence in the Book of Ezekiel* [Biblical and Judaic Studies from the University of California, San Diego 7; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2000], 126-27, note 110).

Galambush has argued for a distinction between Ezekiel and Leviticus on this point (Julie Galambush, "God's Land and Mine: Creation as Property in the Book of Ezekiel," in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling With a Tiered Reality* [eds. Stephen L. Cook, and Corrine L. Patton; Sbl Symposium 31; Atlanta, Ga.: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004], 98-102). However, the distinction she attempts to draw between the land as merely victim in Leviticus (and Jeremiah for that matter) and guilty of its own sins in Ezekiel (highlighting Ezek 6, 7, 14:12-23) is overstated. This is demonstrated by Lev 18:25, wherein the land is punished for its iniquity (וָאֶפְקֹד עֲוֹנָהּ עָלֶיהָ). The relationship between people and land for H and Ezekiel is so close that the land (under its various titles) can be a metonymy for the people when desired.

22. Even if one accepts Milgrom's argument that the concept of land pollution is, "stated (or implied) by every pentateuchal source (e.g., Gen 4:11-12 [JE]; Num 25:33-34 [P]; Deut 21:4 [D])," (Milgrom, *Leviticus 17-22*, 1575) it is important to note that even Milgrom qualifies this by observing that, "H has taken the ubiquitous notion that homicide pollutes the land... and applied it to other violations" (Ibid., 1579). Because Ezekiel's specifies the defiling actions go far beyond homicide, and even beyond the "sexual violations" that Milgrom identifies in D (Ibid., 1404), this passage should be correlated to H and not to a more commonly held concept, even if that general outlook did indeed prevail.

23. Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch*, 559.

24. Milgrom discusses this interpretation at Qumran and amongst the rabbis (Milgrom, *Leviticus 17-22*, 1574).

for his people" (Deut 32:43bβ) with the "as I live" formula too.[25] It does not seem coincidental that these passages share a concern for the defilement of the land and its need for cleansing.

How is Ezekiel's and H's shared conception related to a polemic against the Abraham tradition? The answer lies in the terminology of the non-exiles claim: "Abraham was one man and he possessed (וַיִּירַשׁ) the land. And we are many: to us the land is given as a possession (רֵשָׁה–לָמוֹ)" (Ezek 33:24). The noun מוֹרָשָׁה is rare, and especially so outside of Ezekiel where it only refers to the land once.[26] However, Rendtorff has demonstrated that the related verb is central for Gen 15,[27] the quintessential statement of the land promise to Abraham.[28] Whereas Gen 15 uses יָרַשׁ in an overwhelmingly positive sense, all seven instances of מוֹרָשָׁה in Ezekiel are negative.[29] Five times it refers to one nation being conquered by another (Ezek 25:4, 10; 36:2, 3, 5) and the two other instances (Ezek 11:15; 33:24) appear in the non-exiles' land claims that Ezekiel rejects. When Ezekiel does intend to speak positively the people's control of the land the book selects either אֲחֻזָּה,[30] the term used in Lev 17–26, or נַחֲלָה, a word favored in Deuteronomy and DtrH.[31]

Each of these three terms possesses a particular ideological slant. Habel explains the nuance of מוֹרָשָׁה as used positively in Gen 15: "Here Abraham, progenitor of the people of Israel and the representative of the ancestral households of Israel, is promised the land unconditionally and given control (*yaraš*) over that land for the people."[32] This differs from אֲחֻזָּה, H's preferred term, which Habel explains refers to those, "who possess their land as property (*ʾaḥuzzah*) held in tenure under

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25. S. R. Driver, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy* (ICC; 3 ed. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1902), 380-81.

26. Exod 6:8. Deut 33:4 refers to the torah of Deuteronomy.

27. Rolf Rendtorff, "Genesis 15 im Rahmen der theologischen Bearbeitung der Vätergeschichten," in *Werden und Wirken des Alten Testaments: Festschrift für Claus Westermann* (eds. R. Albertz, and et al.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1980). See also Daniel I. Block, *Gods of the Nations: Studies in Ancient Near Eastern National Theology* (Evangelical Theological Society Monograph Series 2; Jackson, Miss.: Evangelical Theological Society, 1988), 79-81.

28. One might further note that another four occurrences of verbal forms from יָרַשׁ occur in the the patriarchal narratives and build connections to both Isaac and Jacob. Cf. Gen 21:10; 22:17; 24:60 (where it is applied to Rebekah); 28:4 (where it is referred to as "the blessing of Abraham" [בִּרְכַּת אַבְרָהָם]).

29. Ezek 11:15; 25:4, 10; 33:24; 36:2, 3, 5.

30. Ezek 44:28; 45:5-8; 46:16, 18; 48:20-22.

31. Ezek 35:15; 36:12; 44:28; 45:1; 46:16-18; 47:14, 19, 22-23; 48:28-29. Cf. Deut 4:20-21, 38; 9:26, 29; 10:9; 12:9, 12; 14:27, 29; 15:4; 18:1-2; 19:10, 14; 20:16; 21:23; 24:4; 25:19-26:1; 29:7; 32:9. At the risk of being repetitive, one might again note the combination of Dtr and H terms employed by Ezekiel.

32. Norman C. Habel, *The Land is Mine: Six Biblical Land Ideologies* (OBT; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1995), 125.

divine ownership."[33] Gerleman's detailed study on אחזה and נחלה brings further clarity: "As אחזה, the land is not described as a belonging, but as arable land of Israel that is granted as an allocation and for usufruct."[34] Thus, אחזה emphasizes that YHWH remains the true owner of the land and offers Israel only conditional residence whereas מורשה signifies a permanent, unconditional right to the land, possibly even implying that true ownership has passed from YHWH to the human residents.[35] The book of Ezekiel selects its words carefully in order to simultaneously indict the behavior of the non-exiles and refute the very premise of their appeal to Abraham. Namely, the descendants of Abraham cannot possess (ירשׁ) the land because YHWH will not allow any group to control the land in this way. The form of this two-pronged rebuttal demonstrates that Ezek 33:23-29 is a polemic against the Abraham tradition. Furthermore, the allusions to Lev 17–26 and Deut 32:39-43 identify this argument with the exodus tradition, reinforcing the position that those two traditions were in conflict when this passage was composed.

Further evidence for this line of argument comes from Ezek 11:14-21. This passages includes a claim strikingly similar to the inhabitants of Jerusalem in Ezek 33:23-29: "They have gone far from the LORD; to us this land is given for a possession (לנו היא נתנה הארץ למורשה)."[36] Despite lacking an explicit reference to the Abraham tradition, the recurrence of enmity between the non-exiles and the exiles and the claim that the land has become a מורשה present an undeniable connection between the two. Ezekiel 33:23-29 and 11:14-21 also employ the same polemical logic. The important concept that the land has become defiled can also be inferred from Ezek 11:18: "when they return to it they will remove all its detestable things and all its abominations

33. Ibid., 110; Block, *Gods of the Nations*, 81-84.

34. "Als אחזה wird das Land nicht als Eigentum, sondern als Anbaugebiet Israels bezeichnet, das zur Verfügung und Nutzung eingeräumt wird" (Von Gillis Gerleman, "Nutzrecht und Wohnrecht: zur Bedeutung von אחזה und נחלה," *ZAW* 89 (1977): 318). Although Habel stresses the differences between אחזה and נחלה (Habel, *The Land is Mine*, 99), Gerleman correctly draws them closer together. He argues, "Die Erklärung dieser vieldiskutierten Erscheinung ist einfach und ergibt sich von selbst, wenn man sieht, daß נחלה nicht »Eigentum«, sondern »Wohnsitz« meint" (Gerleman, "Nutzrecht und Wohnrecht," 320). Cf. Block, *Gods of the Nations*, 76-79.

35. One might further support this distinction by looking at the different terms used in Gen 15 and 17 for the land promise. In Gen 15, the tradition closest to the non-exiles claim, the verb ירשׁ is used five times. Genesis 17 instead chooses to specify the land as לַאֲחֻזַּת עוֹלָם (Gen 17:8). One might read in this the security of YHWH's promise, e.g. the promise continues indefinitely. However, one might just as readily stress that עוֹלָם modifies, and thus qualifies, אחזה and indicates that the land will always be held in tenure and remain owned by YHWH, presumably to utilize differently if so preferred.

36. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 2,* 198; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 688;Block, *Ezekiel 25–48*, 258; Paul M. Joyce, *Ezekiel: A Commentary* (Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 482; London: T & T Clark International, 2007), 193.

from it." That is, they will cleanse the now defiled land. This concept also underlies the notoriously difficult phrase in v. 16: "Therefore say: Thus says the Lord GOD: Though I removed them far away among the nations, and though I scattered them among the countries, yet I have been a sanctuary to them for a little while (מקדשׁ מעט) in the countries where they have gone." The difficulties in translating the phrase מקדשׁ מעט are well known, and even though its interpretation remains debatable, there is sufficient evidence for the temporal understanding used here.[37] This is based partially on Joosten's description of the nexus between land and people in H:

> One of the theological axioms of H—in fact, the most fundamental of its theological axioms—is that YHWH is present in the midst of his people, in the camp and, later, in the land. YHWH's holy presence radiates outward from the sanctuary throughout the entire land and imposes its demands on all the inhabitants. This fundamental axiom explains the notions of YHWH's ownership and lordship over the land. The land occupied by the Israelites is his because he dwells there in his sanctuary.[38]

Ezekiel 33:23-29 indicated that this view is shared by Ezekiel. Its two-fold dynamic – the land belongs to Israel because YHWH dwells there and YHWH's demands are relevant because of his presence – underlies all of Ezek 11:16-21. The first half, YHWH's presence, or in Ezek 11 YHWH's absence, shows the invalidity of the Jerusalemites claim. YHWH had to leave Jerusalem because its pollution made it impossible to dwell there any longer (cf. Ezek 8–9). But, the second half, explaining YHWH's revolutionary choice to be present with the exiles,[39] albeit "neither to the same degree nor on as permanent a basis as it had been heretofore,"[40] was not necessary. In taking this step, YHWH emulates his presence in the exodus. Taken together, these themes declare unmistakably that it is from the exiles that the future inhabitants of the land will emerge.

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37. Good overviews are provided in Block (Block, *Ezekiel 1–24*, 349-50) and Joyce (Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 112-14. Joyce indicates there are two reasons to prefer the degree interpretation: (1) vv. 16 and 17 should be read separately, not linked, and (2) usage elsewhere permits this translation. The second is indisputable; the degree interpretation is possible based on other occurrences. However, the first places a harder break between the two verses than necessary. They are separate, but are both responses to the non-exiles contention and can be read in parallel. Verse 16 addresses the present tense response of YHWH, that is what God is doing. Verse 17 addresses the future response of YHWH, that is what God will do. This evidence for the temporal interpretation is further supported by the sign act in Ezek 4:4-9 (cf. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 104-05) and, in due course, by the way Ezekiel manipulates the themes of the Babylonian *akītu* festival.

38. Joosten, *People and Land*, 176-77.

39. Cf. Ezek 5:9.

40. Block, *Ezekiel 25–48*, 350.

(c) Ezek 20

Perhaps the best known discussion of the land in Ezekiel is ch. 20, which, despite its prominence, continues to produce problems for interpreters. Chapters 3 and 4 brought clarity to how vv. 1-31 employ the "lifted hand" land transfer formula: portraying YHWH as the royal figure who authorizes the transfer of all land, it explains that the numerous changes in Israel's relationship to the land have all been under YHWH's control. The argument continues in vv. 32-40, which turns its attention to the future in order to describe the exiles' return as a second exodus through which YHWH will once again transfer control of the land to them.

The common interpretation of the "lifted hand" formula as part of the divine oath obscures the real importance of it in Ezek 20. As a result of the consensus view, many scholars suggest that נשׂא יד functions as a synonym for YHWH's oath with the verbal root שׁבע that is so common in Deuteronomy. For instance, Römer, in his extremely thorough analysis of the oath of the land, writes:

> This phrase [נשׂא יד] ... speaks, in my opinion, of the clear parallelism to the Dtr נשׁבע texts for the retention of the usual translation "he raised the hand (to swear)" (cf. the parallel of חי אנ(כ)י and נשׂא יד in Ezek 20 and Deut 32:40).[41]

Pons had previously proposed the same dynamic: "Initially, Ezekiel moves intentionally away from Deuteronomy: it uses נשׂא יד for 'to render an oath,' instead of שׁבע as is habitual in Deuteronomy."[42] For Pons, this was one of many indications that Ezek 20 is actually a polemic against Dtr. Seely, as another example, remarks: "Ezekiel prefers *nśʾ yd* while the Deuteronomic material is full of *nšbʿ*. This may show an archaizing tendency in Ezekiel, or simply that he prefers other traditions to Deuteronomy."[43] These examples could be multiplied, but the point is clear. Albeit correct to note the subtle yet important avoidance of the characteristically Dtr שׁבע, these scholars are wrong about the rationale. Ezekiel is not opposed to Dtr, which is demonstrated by

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41. Ibid., 492-93. "diesem Ausdruck ... spricht m. E. der eindeutige Parallelismus zu den dtr נשׁבע-Texten für die Beibehaltung der üblichen Übersetzung "die Hande (zum Schwur) erheben" (vgl. auch das Nebeneinander von חי אנ(כ) und נשׂא יד in Ez 20 und Dtn 32,40)."

42. Pons, "Le vocabulaire d'Ez 20," 218-19. "Éz s'éloigne d'abord délibérément de Dt il utilise נשׂא יד pour «prêter serment», au lieu de שׁבע si habituel au Dt."

43. David Rolph Seely, "The Raised Hand of God as an Oath Gesture." in *Fortunate the Eyes that See: Essays in Honor of David Noel Freedman in Celebration of His Seventieth Birthday (*Ed. Astrid B. Beck. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1995), 420.

Ezek 20's use of the Dtr "as I live" authenticating element. Rather, Ezekiel does not use שׁבע because that expresses a singular, permanent promise of blessing that was sworn to the ancestors in Egypt. To express the numerous changes in status YHWH decrees for Israel *vis-à-vis* the land, Ezekiel must choose the "lifted hand" land transfer formula. In so doing, the book also draws on its broader connotation in the ancient Near East: recall that Labuschagne's study of the land transfer formula indicated that, "The documents... picture him [the king] as administrator and controller of the land and estates, in fact *as the real owner of land*... He takes property away from the one and gives it to the other... that is, he 'transfers' property from one to the other."[44] This is precisely the viewpoint used in Ezek 33:23-29 and 11:14-21 in order to refute the non-exiles' claims. Its fourfold appearance in Ezek 20:1-31 indicates how deeply this view is imbedded in the book of Ezekiel's theology.

Greater attention to Ezek 20:32-44 is now necessary. This disputation focuses on YHWH's intention to gather the people out of exile, to purify them in the desert by judging those continuing in rebellion and, finally, to restore them to the land of Israel with worship in Jerusalem. These steps can be summarized as a second exodus, a motif previously associated with Ezek 20:32-44.[45] Recent studies have shown this theme is constructed with a mix of terms from Dtr, P and H.[46] The most detailed of these studies is the 2002 monograph *A New Heart and a New Soul* by Risa Levitt Kohn.[47] Notwithstanding the thorough nature of her study, Levitt Kohn fails to recognize the connections between the "as I live" formula, divine judgment in the Dtr tradition, and the exodus motif. Observing the interplay of these features only magnifies the exodus theme. Tellingly, the very first words in YHWH's speech are חי אני, recalling immediately the divine judgment announced in Dtr exodus tradition (Num 14:21; cf. Num 14:28). Further, v. 33 pairs the "as I live" formula with the Dtr phrases "a mighty hand and an outstretched arm" and "with wrath poured out" creating an unmistakable surge of Dtr themes and language. Later in YHWH's speech (v. 42) the

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44. C. J. Labuschagne, "The *Našû-Nadānu* Formula and Its Biblical Equivalent," in *Travels in the World of the Old Testament: Studies Presented to Professor M. A. Beek on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday* (eds. G. Heerma van Voss et al.; 1974), 177. Emphasis added.

45. Levitt Kohn, *A New Heart and a New Soul*, 107-10; Corrine Patton, ""I Myself Gave Them Laws That Were Not Good": Ezekiel 20 and the Exodus Traditions," *JSOT* 69 (1996):; Block, *Ezekiel 1–24*, 651; Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 153.

46. This recognition is coming even from outside of studies focused directly on Ezekiel as evidenced by Römer's work (Römer, *Israels Väter*, 504).

47. Levitt Kohn does not distinguish between D and Dtr nor between P and H in this chapter or in her conclusions. The latter is unfortunate given the work by Milgrom (Milgrom, *Leviticus 17-22.*) and Knohl (Israel Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence: The Priestly Torah and the Holiness School* [Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1995]), now joined by Nihan (Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch*), that demonstrates the important and substantial differences between P and H.

"lifted hand" land transfer formula appears again, in this case drawing in the priestly tradition of the same exodus events (cf. Num 14:26-38). This confirms the earlier observation that Ezek 20 positively adopts Dtr and H language in order to express its theology. Moreover, by presenting the return from exiles as yet another change in the people's status in relationship to the land effected by YHWH, Ezek 20:32-44 implicitly denies the non-exiles's claims based upon the Abrhamic tradition.

In view of these emphases, the rather innocuous comment that YHWH will lead the exiles out "from the land of their sojourn" (מארץ מגוריהם) gains new significance. Whereas the patriarchal tradition describes Canaan as the land of sojourn in a positive sense (cf. Gen 17:8; 21:22-34; 26:1-5; 28:4; 35:27), here the author shifts that location to Babylon and gives it a negative undertone. The exchange of Canaan for Babylon is more than coincidental, but evidence from other passages is necessary to demonstrate it.

(d) Ezek 35:1 - 36:15

The third passage in Ezekiel that addresses the land and its future inhabitants is Ezek 35:1–36:15. Although the ancient versions generally understood this as two separate oracles, modern scholars have recognized their connection, a feature reinforced by the divine word formula in 35:1 that opens the section and the same formula in 36:16, indicating the opening of a new section. In between, the oracles to Mt Seir and the mountains of Israel detail the future prospects for the land. Although those basic details are not in dispute, there remains much debate about why this foreign nation oracle is the lone one to appear outside the otherwise unified collection in Ezek 25–32. What was so special about Edom that might have prompted this arrangement? A common answer identifies the content of the oracle against Edom in ch. 35 as a particularly good thematic pair for the restoration oracle to Israel in Ezek 36:1-15. The compiler, an astute reader, placed the two oracles together in order to underscore the coming restoration of the land and resettlement of YHWH's people there. Some propose a slightly more sophisticated, but largely comparable, scenario that emphasizes the downfall of Edom as the basis for the blessing of Israel. Joyce summarizes this as "the 'seesaw'/'teeter-totter' phenomenon with Israel's fortunes rising as those of the

nations decline."[48] Recently, Assis has offered a new variation on this idea by noting the particularly hostile attitude towards Edom in no less than ten separate passages.[49] Assis argues that the:

> widespread historical reasons given to this phenomenon—Edom's participation in the downfall of Judah and the Edomite infiltration into Judah—are not satisfactory... Since Edom was seen as an alternative to Israel, being identified with Esau, Jacob's brother, it was thought possible that God had now chosen Edom as his people in place of Israel. The Edomite participation in Judah's destruction and especially their settlement in the promised land in their place supported their impression that Edom has replaced Israel. The anti-Edomite oracles were meant to instil into the hearts of the people that, despite the destruction, Israel is still the chosen people and the sins of Edom against Judah will not remain unpunished.[50]

Assis should be applauded for this creative suggestion.[51] However, he asserts a plausible reconstruction with only one text to support it: Mal 1:1-5.[52] Even though that text certainly addresses the election of Jacob over Esau, the eponymous ancestor of Edom, Mal 1:3-4 concerns the land of Edom, not that of Israel. Verse 5 drives home this difference by specifying its interest is YHWH's power to control events outside of Israel.

There is, however, a preferable explanation for the placement of this oracle and the identity of Edom. Johan Lust has demonstrated that, "the editors of Ezekiel sarcastically identified the inhabitants of Jerusalem with the Edomites"[53] and in Ezek 35–36 "the term [Edom] refers, not to historical-geographical Edom, but rather to Edom-Esau, the brother-enemy of Israel, and was used as a nickname for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, as opposed to 'real Israel' in exile or in the diaspora."[54] In support of this identification, Lust offers, "the quotations of Edom in Ezekiel 35–36 are

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48. Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 200. Joyce offers this summary in commenting on Mathews study of Isaiah 34 -35 (Claire R. Mathews, *Defending Zion: Edom's Desolation and Jacob's Restoration (Isaiah 34-35) in Context* [BZAW 236; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1995]).

49. Assis lists the following: Isa 21:11-12; 63:1-6; Jer 49:7-22; Ezek 25:12-14; 35; Joel 4:19-21; Amos 1:11-12; 9:13-15; Obad; Mal 1:1-5.

50. Elie Assis, "Why Edom? On the Hostility Towards Jacob's Brother in Prophetic Sources," *VT* 56 (2006): 19; Cf. Sweeney, 170.

51. For instance, he is certainly correct in the approach he takes to the historicity of the Jacob and Esau tradition, building from its well known status by the 6th century and not debating the details of how that situation came to pass (Assis, "Why Edom?", 9).

52. Assis cites as evidence texts indicating Israel's despair about its situation after 587 BCE; this despair is undoubted, but that despair is always related to Israel's rejection without any text specifying YHWH has replaced Israel. He offers two further "facts" for her position: there was Edomite participation in the destruction of Jerusalem and the Edomite colonized some land in Judah. In sum, one finds all this evidence to be less an argument for the position than circumstantial evidence that could, but certainly must not, relate to the assertion.

With regards to Ezekiel, even if Mal 1:1-5 could sustain the argument, the relevance of this passage would remains questionable because it post-dates Ezekiel.

53. J. Lust, "Edom - Adam in Ezekiel, in the MT and LXX," in *Studies in the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, and the Septuagint Presented to Eugene Ulrich* (eds. Peter W. Flint et al.; VTSup 101; Leiden: Brill, 2006b). Because this article was published the same year as Assis', it does not deal with his proposal.

almost identical with those of the inhabitants of Jerusalem in 11:15 and 33:23."[55] Lust's argument contains the best parts of Assis' position and combines it with a stronger textual basis for identifying Edom. Insofar as the book of Ezekiel is concerned, the exiles did not fear that YHWH had rejected them in favor of Edom, but rather the book expresses its disdain for the non-exiles making claim to their recently lost estates by use of this couched slur.[56] Thus, there is a simple explanation for the location of this passage outside chapters 25–32: Ezek 35–36 is not a foreign nation oracle!

Lust fails to carry his argument on to consider an even more significant part of the rationale for using the designations Mt Seir and Edom for the non-exiles: an attempt to subvert the Jacob tradition and its role in underpinning their claim to the land. How is this possible when Jacob is mentioned positively elsewhere in Ezekiel? How can the same figure appear here in such an antagonistic fashion all the while remaining totally unnamed? Chapter 4 demonstrated that the first mention of Jacob in the book (Ezek 20:5a) is a late insertion on two points: first, the otherwise unattested usage of the "lifted hand" formula in that half verse and, second, the contradictory nature of a positive mention of the patriarch in the midst of an extended oracle placing Israel's origin in Egypt. There remain three other mentions of Jacob in the book: 28:25, 37:25 and 39:25. The phrase "my servant Jacob" appears in 28:25 and 37:35:[57]

וְיָשְׁבוּ עַל־אַדְמָתָם אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְעַבְדִּי לְיַעֲקֹב	28:25
וְיָשְׁבוּ עַל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְעַבְדִּי לְיַעֲקֹב	37:25

Commentators have noted that Ezek 28:25-26 sits uneasily in its place, interrupts the flow of the foreign nation oracles, and is likely, "a systematizing summary of Ezekiel's theology (cf. 39:21-29), possibly secondary."[58] Concerning Ezek 37:25, in vv. 24-28 Jacob is not the only person identified as the servant: there are two instances of "my servant David" (vv. 24, 25) that frame the mention of "my servant Jacob." What is more, in the same portion of v. 25 there is a reference to Israel's ancestors (אבותיהם),[59] a far more common term in Ezekiel and one that woud remain

54. Ibid., 400; Renz is less direct, but recognizes that the non-exiles are to be included in this form of address (Thomas Renz, *The Rhetorical Function of the Book of Ezekiel* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 109).

55. Lust, 389.

56. One may also read in this way Amos 9:12, one of the passages Assis cites in support of her argument.

57. Cf. Isa 44:1-2, 21; 45:4; 48:20; Jer 30:10; 46:27-28.

58. Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 180; Zimmerli, *Ezechiel 2*, 100-01; However, compare with Greenberg's excursus here on the criteria for determining authentic material in Ezekiel (Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 597-99).

sensible if the reference to Jacob were omitted.[60] There is also a syntactical oddity about the phrase לעבדי ליעקב, an appositional construction with the preposition repeated.[61] Even though this is possible, and one must allow for the flexibility of a language, it is awkward. Especially so when it is compared to the two instances of "my servant David" that lack the repeated preposition.[62] Finally, the Old Greek translates with ἄρχων, suggesting an original נשׂיא and not the מלך that now appears in v. 25. The Old Greek also lacks the phrase, "they and their children and their children's children shall live there forever." It is certain, then, that v. 25 has been reworked over time. On this basis, it is tempting to conclude that the phrase "to Jacob" is an addition or gloss; the greater likelihood is that the verse has experienced several stages of growth,[63] making it nearly impossible to reconstruct the process by which it arrived in the final form. Yet, it is plausible the mention of Jacob is a late redaction, the logic for which will be detailed shortly.

The final occurrence of Jacob is at Ezek 39:25, part of the section from vv. 21-29 that brings to an end the famous Gog passage. This unit is also regarded as late and it too contains significant evidence of one or more stages of redaction.[64] Verse 25 contains no significant issues, but v. 26 has the challenging phrase ונשׂו את־כלמתם. MT and LXX understand the verb as a defective spelling of the verbal root *nś'*, reading it as an instance of the phrase *nś' klmh* used elsewhere in Ezekiel.[65] However, Lust observes, "Many modern translators and commentaries do not

59. See the BHS apparatus; reading, as is the consensus, with the LXX and S.

60. Ezek 2:3; 5:10; 18:2; 20:4, 18, 24, 27, 30, 36, 42; 36:28; 37:25; 47:14. Note, in particular, the importance of this term in Ezek 20.

61. Cf. Ezek 34:2; Ibid., 695.

62. Note that precisely the same construction occurs in Ezek 28:25. Although it cannot be a direct comparison, it is interesting to add that this appositional structure with the repeated preposition does not appear in Deutero-Isaiah either (Isa 41:8; 44:2; 45:4; 48:20; Cf. 44:1)

63. For instance, Tov has argued that the MT of Ezekiel should be considered a redactional stage of Ezekiel rather than a copy of the text (Emanuel Tov, "Recensional Differences Between the Mt and Lxx of Ezekiel," *ETL* 62 (1986):). Lust has argued, especially with reference to Ezek 34-39, that P967 testifies to an earlier version of the text (J. Lust, "The Use of Textual Witnesses for the Establishment of the Text. the Shorter and Longer Texts of Ezekiel," in *Ezekiel and His Book: Textual and Literary Criticism and Their Interrelation* [ed. J. Lust; BETL 74; Leuven: Peeters, 1986]). Because P967 does include the reference to Jacob, the addition of this phrase must have occurred rather early. However, as will be argued later in this section, it is likely that the addition was made in the late 6th or early 5th century BCE.

64. Lust proposes three stages, but notes the tentative nature of that reconstruction (J. Lust, "The Final Text and Textual Criticism: Ez 39,28," in *Ezekiel and His Book: Textual and Literary Criticism and Their Interrelation* [ed. J. Lust; BETL 74; Leuven: Peeters, 1986a], 53). Klein also assigns Ezek 39:25-29 to a redactional layer later associated with the Gog pericope (Anja Klein, *Schriftauslegung im Ezechielbuch: Redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zu Ez 34–39* [BZAW 391; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008], 113).

65. Ezek 16:52, 54; 32:24-25, 30; 34:29; 36:6-7; 39:26; 44:13. See Ashley S. Crane, *Israel's Restoration: A Textual-Comparative Exploration of Ezekiel 36–39* (VTSup 122; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 192-93 for arguments supporting this interpretation.

accept the Masoretic reading, preferring instead to read the unpunctuated text as: *wnšw klmh*: «They shall forget their shame.»"[66] This reading fits better with the overwhelmingly positive context of the passage, matches Ezekiel's usage of other rare words[67] and, as Joyce remarks, "provides yet another argument for the secondary nature of vv. 21-29."[68] Taking stock of the four mentions of Jacob in Ezekiel, there is substantial evidence each one of these positive mentions of the patriarch is a late addition to the book.[69]

The strong thematic similarities between the four occurrences is further evidence that the passages are connected in some way. In each case where Jacob appears there is also a statement about the security of Israel's dwelling in the land throughout the future. In Ezek 20:5a the intent is certainly to link Jacob with the original promise of the land to Israel. Ezekiel 28:26 and 39:26 both address the future and indicate that when Israel returns it will dwell on the land with security (בטח). Ezekiel 37:25 is even more expansive, suggesting Israel will live dwell in the land forever (עד־עולם). Although caution is necessary when arguing from reconstructions of diachronic growth, combining the evidence for their late dating and thematic coherence suggests these four passages may be part of a coordinated redaction in the book of Ezekiel. This possibility will be considered further in due course, but at this juncture it is only possible to note the precedent for such an effort has been established by Römer's detailed study of the patriarchs in Deuteronomy.[70] Given the relationship between Ezekiel and Dtr in other matters, the prospect they were redacted in a similar process cannot be entirely surprising.

Returning to the issue of the book of Ezekiel's polemic against the non-exiles' use of the Jacob tradition, the evidence from Ezek 28, 37 and 39 reinforces Lust's observation that, "the quotations of Edom in Ezekiel 35–36 are almost identical with those of the inhabitants of Jerusalem in 11:15 and 33:23."[71] To illustrate that there are additional points made against the Jacob tradition a systematic exegesis of 35:1–36:15 is necessary.

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66. Lust, "The Final Text," 51

67. For instance, Lust notes the peculiar use of כנס, a contrast to, "*qibbeṣ*, used elsewhere in Ezekiel in similar contexts" (Ibid., 49).

68. Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 218-19; Baruch J. Schwartz, "Ezekiel's Dim View of Israel's Restoration," in *The Book of Ezekiel: Theological and Anthropological Perspectives* (eds. Margaret S. Odell, and John T. Strong; Symposium 9; Altanta, Ga.: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 53.

69. Cf. David M. Carr, *Genesis in Relation to the Moses Story: Diachronic and Synchronic Perspectives* (BETL 155; Leuven: Peeters, 2001), 289, note 50.

70. Römer, *Israels Väter.*; Römer,

71. Lust, 389.

(i) 35:5-9

Chapter 35 contains three sections: vv. 1-4, 5-9, and 10-15.[72] Verses 1-4, a preamble to the rest of the chapter, contain two exodus images. First, the familiar phrase, "I stretch out my hand against you," found 13 times in the plague narratives of Exodus, recalls YHWH's power used so that, "The Egyptians shall know that I am YHWH" (Exod 7:5).[73] Second, YHWH's declaration that Edom will be made a desolation (שִׁמָּמָה) and its cities a waste (חָרְבָה) recalls the curses of Lev 26:33.[74] These two phrases also recall the oracle against Edom in Ezek 25:12-14, a similarity that suggests that 35:1-4 may have originated as an oracle against Edom that was later repositioned here. The contrast between vv. 1-4 and vv. 5-15, which introduce additional reasons for judgment and new punishments not found in 25:12-14, also supports this view.

Verses 5-9 begin with a new charge against "Edom": it has cherished an ancient enmity[75] and delivered Israel to the sword. The charge is immediately followed by the "as I live" oath formula, used to introduce YHWH's declaration of judgment. What is unusual in this case, if one takes "Edom" at face value, is that the "as I live" formula precedes judgment against a group of non-Israelites.[76] Indeed, of its 16 instances in Ezekiel, it would be only here and later in the same passage (v. 11) that the formula does not address Israel.[77] An argument for this shift might be the move from pre-fall to post-fall material in chs 33–38, but then one would have to explain why Ezek 34:8 uses the "as I live" formula to announce judgment upon the shepherds of Israel. It is preferable, therefore, to accept "Edom" as an alias for the non-exiles and to draw this example into line with every other occurrence in Ezekiel. This is substantiated by two further indications the non-exiles are in view. First, the guilt of the addressees is described as permitting bloodshed (v. 6b).[78]

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72. Cf. Block, *Ezekiel 25–48*, 311-22.

73. Exod 7:5, 19; 8:1-2, 13; 9:22; 10:12, 21-22; 14:16, 21, 26-27; Ezek 6:14; 14:9, 13; 16:27; 25:7, 13, 16; 35:3. Of the 13 instances in Exodus only 7:5 refers to YHWH's action; in the others, either Moses or Aaron is the subject of this action. Ezekiel, on the contrary, ascribes this action to YHWH in every instance. Whereas Exodus is works to make Moses and Aaron the means of YHWH's actions, Ezekiel's radically theocentric view sees YHWH as the only active agent. Cf. Levitt Kohn, *A New Heart and a New Soul*, 33.

74. Lyons, *From Law to Prophecy*, 183-84; Levitt Kohn, *A New Heart and a New Soul*, 38.

75. This charge appears in the oracles against the nations, directed against the Philistines and not the Edomites.

76. It does not appear that any of the major studies or commentaries note this issue as they are rather uninterested in the meaning of the "as I live" formula as anything more than a tool for emphasizing the other content of the passages in which it appears.

77. There is evidence outside Ezekiel for this usage: Jer 46:18; Zeph 2:9.

78. The text of this verse is problematic. There is clearly a plus in the MT that interrupts the flow from the "as I live" formula to the oath particle אִם־לֹא. Furthermore, there are issues in understanding the phrase דָּם שָׂנֵאתָ. Although none of the proposals is a definitive answer to the problem, Block's proposal to emend the verb to the

Elsewhere in Ezekiel sinful bloodshed is an indictment of Israel's behavior.[79] The instances in chs. 9, 16, 22 (which describe this as one of Jerusalem's sins) are noteworthy, but of utmost relevance is 33:25, where bloodshed typifies the sins of the non-exiles. Second, the outcome of YHWH's judgment – filling "Edom's" hills, valleys and rivers with its slain – is reminiscent of YHWH's punishment of Jerusalem in 11:6. This suggests that another function of the "as I live" formula in this passage is to allude to Deut 32:39-43: the authenticating element, the slain (חלל) and the sword (חרב) each appear in Deut 32:39-43. By invoking these images of YHWH's consuming action in the Song of Moses (Deut 32:42-43), the author evoked its aggressive and enhanced the passion of YHWH' declaration in Ezek 35:5-9.

(ii) 35:10-15

The strongest evidence yet for connecting "Edom" with the non-exiled Judeans comes from the disputation speech in vv. 10-15. This dispute opens with a quote that immediately evokes Ezek 11:14-21 and 33:23-29:[80] "These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will take possession (ירשׁ) of them" (Ezek 35:10a; cf. 36:12). It is generally assumed that this represents a gluttonous desire by Edom to possess the land previously controlled by the now defunct northern and southern kingdoms,[81] although some take it as a reference to Edom and Judah.[82] Because of this view, interpreters read v. 10b (ויהוה שׁם היה) as "but YHWH was there." The first difficulty with this reading is justifying the harsh transition from the interlocutors to a different third person subject prior to the logical transition (לכן) at the beginning of v. 11. Olley observes the exceptional nature of such a statement, saying it comes "unexpectedly" and that "elsewhere Lord is speaking in the 1st person."[83] Lust also detects the problem and comments, "It is more likely that the explicit use of the past tense of the verb היה emphasizes the fact that the Lord had left Jerusalem... It may also include an allusion to the quotation in 11:15 in which the inhabitants of

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nominal form and read attributively is the best proposal to date.

79. Ezek 9:9; 16:38; 18:10; 22; 23:37, 45; 24:6; 33:25.

80. As noted earlier, Lust draws on this similarity in his argument for Edom as the non-exiles (Lust,"Edom - Adam," 389-90).

81. Zimmerli, *Ezechiel 2*, 235; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 715; Block, *Ezekiel 25–48*, 318-19; Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 200.

82. John W. Olley, *Ezekiel: A Commentary based on Iezekieœl in Codex Vaticanus* (Septuagint Commentary Series; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 477.

83. Ibid., 477.

Jerusalem (called Edomites in chaps. 35–36) said of the Israelites, 'they have gone far from the Lord.'"[84] Lust is certainly right to draw the connection with 11:15, but once more he fails to carry this insight on to a more significant conclusion. He later notes that, "The Greek translation of 35:10, 'the Lord *is* there,' incongruously anticipates the final sentence of the book."[85] Is it not easier to read v. 10b as a continuation of the interlocutors speech and, having already identified that voice as the non-exiles, to follow the OG translation by understanding this claim as an emphatic restatement of precisely the position the non-exiles' took in 11:14-21 that YHWH was with them and not the exiles? Indeed, this eliminates the peculiarity of 3rd person divine speech identified by Olley and strengthens Lust's position.

"Edom's" stated desire to take possession (ירשׁ) of the land indicates a measure of underlying agreement between the Jacob and Abraham traditions. Recall that ירשׁ was the key term in the non-exiles claims quoted at 11:15 and, specifically in connection with the Abraham tradition, at 33:24. Regarding the latter, the importance of the term ירשׁ for Gen 15, as demonstrated by Rendtorff, was already highlighted.[86] This important term occurs in the Jacob tradition only at Gen 28:4:

> Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, "You shall not marry one of the Canaanite women. Go at once to Paddan-aram to the house of Bethuel, your mother's father; and take as wife from there one of the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother. May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and numerous, that you may become a company of peoples. May he give to you the blessing of Abraham, to you and to your offspring with you, so that you may take possession (לרשׁתך) of the land where you now live as an alien—land that God gave to Abraham."
>
> (Gen 28:1-4)

Although Gen 28:1-4 is typically linked with P's account of the Abrahamic covenant in Gen 17,[87] there is an obvious connection with Gen 15's promise that Abraham will possess the land.[88] Ezekiel's attribution of this important term to parties claiming descent from Jacob (Ezek 35:10-15), not only Abraham (Ezek 11:14-21, 33:23-29), is otherwise unprecedented. This shared premise indicates that the Abraham and Jacob traditions were viewed as compatible, if not already integrated together, in first few decades after the fall of Jerusalem.[89] Though there are many who accept a

84. Lust, 392-93.

85. Ibid., 393, note 17. Emphasis is original.

86. Rendtorff, "Genesis 15".

87. Rolf Rendtorff, *The Problem of the Process of Transmission in the Pentateuch* (JSOTSup 89; Translated by Scullion, John J. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), 163-64; Carr, *Reading the Fractures*, 87.

88. Römer, "Recherches actuelle," 210.

written form of the Jacob tradition existed prior to the exile, the combination of that material with the Abraham tradition is strongly debated. The evidence from Ezek 35 presents a challenge to those scholars.[90]

Finally, Ezek 35 brings this judgment speech to a close by specifying its addressees as "Mt Seir and all Edom, all of it." Lust remarks that this phrase "is to be contrasted with 'all Israel, all of it' in 36:10. The same phrase... also occurs in 11:15, where it clearly identifies 'real Israel' with the Jews living in exile or in the diaspora, excluding the real inhabitants of Jerusalem."[91] Indeed, it is yet another connection that substantiates interpreting "Edom" as an alias for the non-exiles, a sort of parting shot in this chapter to make certain the message does not go unnoticed. In sum, the various pieces of evidence presented here, when considered together, provide a robust basis on which to read "Mt Seir" and "Edom" in Ezek 35–36 as aliases for the non-exiles in Judah. In light of that identification, and the conspicuous parallels to the claims made via the Abrahamic tradition, it seems that Ezek 35 testifies to an appeal to the land promise to Jacob.

Turning the focus to the theology that underlies Ezekiel's response, one finds that it shares concepts with H and uses language from Dtr in the same way as Ezek 11:14-21, 20:32-44 and 33:23-29. All of chapter 35 has echoes of Lev 26, but this relationship is particularly strong in vv.

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89. Though most accept a written form of the Jacob tradition existed prior to the exile, the combination of that material with the Abraham tradition is strongly debated. Those favoring a pre-exilic combination of the material includes two groups. First, scholars working with a classic formulation of the documentary hypothesis that places JE prior to a typically 7th century D (see, for instance, Ernest W. Nicholson, *The Pentateuch in the Twentieth Century: The Legacy of Julius Wellhausen* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); J. A. Emerton, "The Origin of the Promises to the Patriarchs in the Older Sources of the Book of Genesis," *VT* XXXII [1982]). Second, among scholars supporting other theories of the Pentateuch's formation, the most notable is Blum (Blum, *Die Komposition.*). Those disputing a connection of the two traditions prior to Ezekiel include many who postulate a late date for J (for instance, Van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition*). Römer (Römer, 189-93, especially p. 192) supports the post-Ezekiel combination as does his teacher de Pury, who argued that the combination can be dated confidently to the short period between 535 and 530 B.C.E. (Albert de Pury, "The Jacob Story and the Beginning of the Formation of the Pentateuch," in *A Farewell to the Yahwist: The Composition of the Pentateuch in Recent European Interpretation* (eds. Thomas B. Dozeman, and Konrad Schmid; Symposium 34; Atlanta, Ga.: Society of Bilbical Literature, 2006c); cf. Albert de Pury, "Abraham: The Priestly Writer's 'Ecumenical' Ancestor," in *Rethinking Foundations: Historiography in the Ancient World and in the Bible: Essays in Honour of John Van Seters* (eds. S. L. McKenzie, and Thomas Römer; BZAW 294; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000a), 180, Albert de Pury, "Situer le cycle de Jacob quelques réflexions, vingt-cinq ans plus tard," in *Studies in the Book of Genesis: Literature, Redaction and History* (ed. A. Wénin; Betl 155; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2001b) and Albert de Pury, "La tradition patriarcale en Gènese 12-35," in *Le Pentateuque en question: Les origines et la composition des cinq premiers livres de la bible à la lumière des recherches récentes* [eds. Albert de Pury, and Thomas Römer; Le Monde De La Bible 19; Genève: Labor et Fides, 2002]). For a general overview of work on the Abraham tradition see Römer, "Recherches actuelle".

90. Van Seters, *Prologue to History: The Yahwist as Historian in Genesis.* de Pury, "The Jacob Story" places this combination between 539 and 520 BCE; cf. de Pury, "Situer le cycle".

Those supporting a pre-exilic combination of the Abraham and Jacob tradition fall into two groups.)

Those Römer, Israels Väters

91. Lust, 393; Cf. Ezek 20:40.

10-15 where Lyons has identified that the outcome of YHWH's actions, described in vv. 12, 14 and 15, is based on the program of Lev 26.[92] This passage, similar to 33:23-29, personifies the land, a feature otherwise found only in H. In Ezek 33:28 YHWH's judgment is directed against the land; the same thought appears in Ezek 35:15 where Mt Seir receives punishment. Another indicator is the positive description of the land as "the inheritance (נחלה) of the house of Israel" in v. 15, as noted above a term associated with Dtr. For Ezekiel it serves as a positive term for the entire land that will be possessed in the future by YHWH's people[93] and distinguishes the book's perspective from the non-exiles'claims. Chapter 35, it is clear, crafts its judgment speech using the Dtr divine oath of judgment "as I live" and various allusions to its ideological associate H. In sum, one could outline Ezek 35 thus:

vv. 1-4	Original oracle against Edom
vv. 5-9	Judgment introduced with "as I live" divine oath
vv. 10-15	Dispute introduced with "as I live" divine oath

This illustrates Ezekiel's rhetoric succinctly: the "as I live" divine oath, the leading statement in both judgment speeches, is the sharp point of the sword used to attack the non-exiles' land claims that invoke the patriarchal tradition. The "as I live" formula plays this leading role both because it unmistakably marks the speech as an announcement of judgment while simultaneously evoking YHWH's power as exhibited in the exodus.

(iii) 36:1-15

In the second panel of the larger oracle, Ezek 36:1-15, the immediate issue is the undeniable problem in establishing the text, which is in such a confused state that Block opined it, "looks like a patchwork quilt, except that quilts usually reflect more deliberate design."[94] The chapter opens with promising clarity, no scholar doubting that vv. 1-2 can be retained. However, things change abruptly with v. 3 and continue on in a disheveled state until the end of v. 7: each of these five verses opens with the logical continuation particle לכן, contains other prophetic formulae and

92. Lyons, *From Law to Prophecy*, 183-84; Cf. Levitt Kohn, *A New Heart and a New Soul*, 38 and Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 724-25.

93. Ezek 35:15; 36:12; 44:28; 45:1; 46:16-18; 47:14, 22-23; 48:29. This can be compared to the other positive term in Ezekiel אחזה (Ezek 44:28; 45:5-8; 46:16, 18; 48:20-22), which is used to refer to the holy district, that is the section of land set apart to contain the city, temple, dwelling of the prince and the Levites.

94. Block, *Ezekiel 25–48*, 322. By contrast to the H term אחזה is used in Ezekiel to refer to the section of land devoted to YHWH.

offers either the opening of an assurance to Israel (v. 3, 4, 6) or of a judgment against Edom (v. 5, 7). Various reconstructions have been offered with the most widely accepted recognizing vv. 3-5 as a series excerpts from other oracles and the proper continuation of vv. 1-2 coming in vv. 6-7. The road is somewhat easier to navigate from there with only v. 10 remaining questionable and v. 12 appearing as a later transition between vv. 8-11* and vv. 13-15.[95] In view of the present argument, it is necessary to reevaluate this judgment and the place of v. 5 in particular. By its inclusion of "the rest of the nations" (שׁארית הגוים) alongside "Edom, all of it," v. 5 recognizes what must have been the historical reality: even though the non-exiles were making confident claims to the land, the actual extent of their control must have been rather small and there is no doubt that foreigners, including the actual Edomites, encroached on Judah's former territory. Moreover, the reappearance of the term מורשׁה connects v. 5 to both v. 2, which is certainly part of the original oracle, and to the theme of ch. 35. To exclude it in spite of these features seems unwise. The end of verse 5 does appear to contain later material,[96] but there is good reason for retaining the majority of it. The proposed reconstruction of 36:1-7* is thus:

(1) וְאַתָּה בֶן־אָדָם הִנָּבֵא אֶל־הָרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ הָרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
שִׁמְעוּ דְּבַר־יְהוָה (2) כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה
יַעַן אָמַר הָאוֹיֵב עֲלֵיכֶם הֶאָח וּבָמוֹת עוֹלָם לְמוֹרָשָׁה הָיְתָה לָנוּ
(5) לָכֵן כֹּה־אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה
אִם־לֹא בְּאֵשׁ קִנְאָתִי דִּבַּרְתִּי עַל־שְׁאֵרִית הַגּוֹיִם וְעַל־אֱדוֹם כֻּלָּה[97]
אֲשֶׁר נָתְנוּ־אֶת־אַרְצִי לָהֶם לְמוֹרָשָׁה בְּשִׂמְחַת[98]
(6) יַעַן כְּלִמַּת גּוֹיִם נְשָׂאתֶם[99]

95. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 2*, 232-33; Cf. Block, *Ezekiel 25–48*, 322-23, who argues for retaining more of the pericope as original.

96. כָּל־לֵבָב בְּשִׂאָט נֶפֶשׁ לְמַעַן מִגְרָשָׁהּ לָבַז is likely redactional.

97. Reading with BHS, including evidence from Qumran.

98. Discontinue the text of v. 5 here for three reasons: (1) the phrase כל־לבב is not included in LXX and is likely to be a late MT plus (Crane, *Israel's Restoration*, 44); (2) בשאט נפשׁ, not only a very difficult phrase, seems in context to be an explanation for 'with wholehearted delight,' the last portion of which was just excluded on textual evidence; (3) the phrase למען מגרשׁה לבז has no antecedent for the suffix on מגרשׁה and it appears to either be dittography (Elliger's suggestion in BHS) or to be a later gloss (Allen, *Ezekiel 20–48*, 168). Critically, this retains אם־לא in 5a which can then serve to explain, via dittography, for the difference between MT and LXX in v. 7.

99. These majority of v. 6 is excluded because its addressee is the land (אדמה) of Israel and not the mountains, demonstrating its discontinuity. However, the final four words are included for several reasons: (1) the concluding phrase כה־אמר אדני יהוה indicates the end of the phrase; (2) the concluding formula is followed by an obvious editorial Wiederaufnahme, recalling YHWH's jealousy mentioned in v. 5; (3) the final phrase is necessary for v. 7 to

(7) לָכֵן אֲנִי נָשָׂאתִי אֶת־יָדִי אל[100] הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר לָכֶם מִסָּבִיב הֵמָּה כְּלִמָּתָם יִשָּׂאוּ

> But, you, son of man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel and you will say to the mountains of Israel: "Hear the word of YHWH: 'Thus says Lord YHWH: because the enemy said to you 'Ah' and 'the ancient heights are a possession for us.' Therefore, thus says Lord YHWH, surely with burning jealousy I have spoken against the remnant of the nations and against Edom, all of it, which took my land for themselves as a possession with joy. Because you bore the insults of the nations, therefore I myself will lift my hand against the nations that are round about you and they themselves will bear their insults.'"

This proposed text corresponds well with ch. 35, and thus it is unsurprising that it contains no new indicators of the Jacob tradition, albeit repeating the key term מורשׁה.

The new contribution of this section is using the "lifted hand" formulae to specify that it is YHWH who will judge the presumptuous inhabitants of Judah. Verse 6 indicates that because the land of Israel has borne the insults (כלמה) of the nations YHWH will force those nations to endure the same fate. If any doubt remains that נשׂא יד is not an oath formula, LXX's translation indicates that the oath particle אם־לא in MT is a scribal error for the preposition אל, which is reflected in the above translation.[101] The phrase is actually the formula in its second convention – unique to Ezekiel – that specifies who will inflict the punishment implied in the phrase נשׂא כלמה. Consequently, it recalls YHWH's statement in 11:21 that "I will bring their deeds upon their own heads, says the Lord YHWH," further emphasizing that this speech presents YHWH taking the side of the exiles against the non-exiles.

Ezekiel 36:8-15 also shares the theological viewpoint of Lev 26. In the first place, Lyons details the connections with Lev 26:9: "I will look with favor upon you and make you fruitful and multiply you; and I will maintain my covenant with you." The emphasis on fructification and multiplication appears in vv. 9, 10 and 11 and describes an increase in both population and agricultural production. This theme is enhanced by the rare phrase הנני אליכם, also shared by Ezek 36:9 and Lev 26:9.[102] It was noted earlier that Lev 26:33 serves as background to Ezek 35; the

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make sense.

100. Reading with the LXX ἐπὶ and regarding the MT as an error from dittogrpahy with v. 5.

101. Crane remarks: "LXX does not reflect MT's oath formula of אִם־לֹא ('surely')... Zimmerli (1983, p. 230) suggests that LXX's use of ἐπὶ ('against') for MT's אִם־לֹא presupposes אל... LXX may not have understood the declarative and oath formulae used together here in MT. However, if LXX misunderstood the oath here, then why was it understood elsewhere?" (Crane, *Israel's Restoration*, 45-46).

102. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 2*, 238; Lyons, *From Law to Prophecy*, 180.

same is true of 36:10, although here the image of wasted cities is used to describe the depths of destruction from which Israel will rise. Finally, though they lack a direct linguistic parallel, vv. 13-15 recall the description of the land in H. In both Lev 18:24-30 and 20:22-26[103] the Israelites are warned not to defile themselves as the previous inhabitants so that the land does not vomit them out (קיא). The description of the land's action in Ezekiel as devouring (אכל) and bereaving (שׁכל)[104] people is somewhat different than H's, albeit not so far from it to obscure the similar conception of what the land is capable of.[105] Of the utmost importance, the ideological basis in both passages is that the land can serve as an active agent, leading both passages to personify the land. Nihan, recognizing this as part of H's distinct theological profile, concludes:

> In Lev 17–26 the general concern for the land's purity is further highlighted by the *personification* of the land, especially in the parenetic framework of Lev 18–20. Whereas the HB knows of a tradition of the land "devouring" its inhabitants (Num 13:32 and Ez 36:13-14), which is also taken up in Lev 17–26 (see 26:38), H goes further and introduces the conception of a land reacting to pollution caused by its inhabitants by "vomiting" them outside its boundaries (Lev 18:24-30; 20:22). The effect of such a conception is to suggest an almost *organic* relationship between the land and its inhabitants... The same conception is expressed in the final exhortation of ch. 26. The land's inability to enjoy its Sabbatical rest (26:34-35) because of the people's crimes will eventually lead to their expulsion and their dispersion among the nations."[106]

Thus, the fundamental theological agreement between Ezekiel and H comes to the fore in this final section. This rounds off the larger oracle that sustains its argument against the non-exiles by selecting language with connections to Dtr and H in order to emphasize YHWH's relationship to his people is rooted in the exodus, and not the patriarchal, tradition.

This section ends with a reference back to the context of the "as I live" divine oath, albeit lacking the actual formula. Greenberg has suggested a connection between 36:1-15 and Num 13–14 based on two linguistic connections in vv. 3-4. Even though those verses are likely redactional,[107] his insight is not entirely nullified as he also notices the ties between the accusation leveled against the land in v. 13 and Num 13:32.[108] In light of the current argument, it is hardly surprising

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103. Lev 20:24a twice includes the verbal root ירשׁ, which is extraordinary in H. It is likely, however, that v. 24a is a later Dtr interpolation; see the discussion in Milgrom, *Leviticus 17-22*, 1759-64, especially p. 1760.

104. See Crane for a discussion on the textual issues and possible wordplay employed here (Crane, *Israel's Restoration*, 56-62).

105. Block, *Ezekiel 25–48*, 335, note 59; contra Nihan who sees the two ideas as distinctly different (Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch*, 559-60).

106. Ibid., 559-60.

107. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 717-8, 725. It might be suggested that vv. 3-4 were added to 36:1-15 because of the connection between v. 15 and Num 13:32.

108. Ibid., 721-22; Cf. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 2*, 238-39; Block, *Ezekiel 25–48*, 335; Klein, *Schriftauslegung im*

to find such an allusion between Ezek 35:1–36:15 and Num 13–14. But there is a finer point to be put on this too: as his final foray, the author specifically relates the assertions made by the non-exiles' to those of the unbelieving first exodus generation. Is this merely coincidence? In view of the present argument it seems far more sensible to conclude it serves as a final hammer blow in the passage. The importance of comparisons with the first exodus generation will be explored further in section 2 of this chapter.

(e) Ezek 16:43-58

The case of hidden identity in Ezek 35:1–36:15 begs the question, does the book of Ezekiel deal with Jacob in a similar way elsewhere? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to look more closely at what Ezekiel knows of the Jacob tradition. Gen 28:4 stood out as the text attesting to the Jacob tradition that the non-exiles' invoked with their claims to possess (*yaraš*) the land. This verse is part of a larger section, 27:46–28:9, typically assigned to P about which David Carr writes:

> Gen 26:34-35; 27:46–28:9 presents Esau as cheating himself out of the blessing by marrying foreign women who upset his parents (26:34-35), and Isaac freely turning to Jacob to give him the blessing and send him forth to find a better wife (28:1-5). In the P narrative, Jacob immediately obeys (Gen 28:7), while Esau in resentment goes to Ishmael and marries Ishmael's daughter, another foreign woman (Gen 28:6, 8-9).[109]

The assignment of this passage to P increases the likelihood that Ezekiel knew this text or the tradition that inspired it. Regardless of such redactional questions, this primary importance of these texts is to highlight the concern given to the descent of Esau's foreign wives.

Commentators have long struggled to understand why Ezek 16:3 traces Jerusalem's origins to the wrong place and wrong parents.[110] The classification of the city as Canaanite, with an Amorite father and Hittite mother, is in tension with other biblical statements.[111] Joyce is certainly right when he observes "the intent here is to insult. Moreover, in so far as the city represents the nation, this ignores the Patriarchal tradition of origins, though this is clearly known (cf. 33:24)."[112] The

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Ezechielbuch, 336-37.

109. Carr, *Reading the Fractures*, 87; cf. Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary* (OTL; Translated by Marks, John H. London: SCM Press Ltd, 1961), 281-82; de Pury, "Abraham," 173-74

110. Block, *Ezekiel 1–24*, 474-75.

111. Elsewhere it is identified as a Jebustite city: Josh 18:28; Judg 19:10-11; 2 Sam 24:18-25; 1 Chr 11:4-5.

112. Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 130; cf. Block, *Ezekiel 1–24*, 474-75.

text actually does more than ignore the patriarch tradition, it seeks to subvert it. It is intriguing to note Esau's lineage: even though he is an Israelite through his father Isaac, his matrilineal descent links him to Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram (Gen 25:19-26). Equally, in the P account Esau is ostracized by his parents because "When Esau was forty years old, he married Judith daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath daughter of Elon the Hittite; and they made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah" (Gen 26:34-35). Therefore, the descendants of Esau are, in one manner of speaking, Arameans and Hittites. Is this lineage relevant for Ezekiel? Allowing for a minor scribal error, abominable Jerusalem in Ezek 16 has precisely the same lineage as Esau. The necessary scribal error is only the metathesis of א and מ, i.e. supposing the consonants הארמי (Gen 25:20; cf. Ezek 16:57[113]) were accidentally transposed into האמרי (Ezek 16:3) by an early scribe.[114] This argument is conjectural and, it must be admitted, there is no ancient textual evidence for it. However, it is certainly worth noting that the so-called credo of Deut 26:5-11 opens, "A wandering Aramean (ארמי) was my ancestor" (Deut 26:5), an unambiguous reference to Jacob.[115] If that is possible, then a similar designation for Esau cannot be precluded. On the whole, this suggestion adopts the strength of the prevailing insight – that this identification is "sharply polemical"[116] – without having to apologize for the authors intention with a statement like, "Ezekiel is not giving a lecture in ethnography."[117] No, Ezekiel is not an ethnographic textbook. What it is is an exceptionally sophisticated text that uses precise and often cleverly indirect language to make resounding arguments against dissenting views.[118] Is it so far fetched that those subtleties were lost on an early scribe?

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113. There is some question whether the proper reading here is Aram (בנות־ארם) or, following the Syriac tradition, Edom (בנות־אדם). See Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 290. The difference could be either scribal error or a simple misreading by the translators. If the present argument is correct, one wonders if Edom is used to draw out the polemic more clearly for the hearer or reader.

114. This must have happened before the Old Greek translation of Ezekiel since no manuscript reflects such a textual variant. One must, in addition, presume that this influenced the similar identification in 16:45. This could have occurred in one of two ways: either the scribe made the same error here, a case of extended dittography, or Ezek 16:43-58 was composed after the scribal error. The first is to be preferred.

115. de Pury argues that Deut 26:5-9 is a Dtr polemic against the nascent Jacob tradition necessitated by its focus on Moses (de Pury,).

116. Block, *Ezekiel 1–24*, 475.

117. Ibid., 475.

118. That such a polemic is possible gains further support from the similarities between Deut 32:1-43 and Ezek 16. First, the two passages have very similar structure (Jason Gile, "Ezekiel 16 and the Song of Moses: A Prophetic Transformation?" JBL forthcoming). Second, both Deut 32 and Ezek 16 contain an indication that YHWH will punish his rebellious people. Indeed, the polemic against Sodom and Gomorrah (Deut 32:28-33) might be the source for the introduction of Sodom as the wicked, smaller sister in Ezek 16:46.

If this is not sufficient evidence for the explanatory power of a polemic against Jacob in Ezekiel, there is a further indication in the way the "as I live" formula is utilized by Isa 49:14-26, a passage which shares with Ezek 16 the metaphor of Jerusalem as YHWH's wife.[119] This passage, in which Zion opines that YHWH has forsaken her, is categorized by Graffy as a disputation speech. Nonetheless, as noted in chapter 3, it is an extraordinary example of that genre. Graffy summarizes:

> The disputation speech in Isa 49.14-25 shows Deutero-Isaiah's skill in adapting the genre to his own purposes. Nevertheless, he maintains the structure intact: the double refutation found in Ezekiel reappears here, and the formulae common in Ezekiel, absent in Isa 40,27-31, return in v.18 (oath formula), vv.22-25 (messenger formula) and v.23 (formula of recognition of Yahweh).

Graffy helpfully notes the similarities between Ezekiel and Isa 49, but there are still more to observe. Goldingay points out further connections between the two texts when commenting on v. 18: "The image of the city's finery has been a negative one, directly or indirectly... Here it becomes a positive one."[120] His comparison passages for the negative image of Jerusalem's jewelry include Ezek 16. As the sole link this would weak, but the added presence of the "as I live" oath formula in v. 18 solidifies the overlap with Ezekiel. What is more, 49:19 carries on YHWH's assurance by promising the restoration of Zion's waste places (חרבתיך) and desolate places (שׁממתיך), precisely the terms used to describe the land in Ezek 33:24-29, 35:1-15 and 36:1-15.[121] With these indicators that the two passages are in dialogue with one another, it is only a small step to contend that Isa 49:14-26 is responding to the harsh polemic against the non-exiled Judeans and the Jacob tradition in Ezekiel by reversing its images. The strongest evidence for that reversal is Deutero-Isaiah's exceptional use of the "as I live" oath formula: Isa 49:14-21 is the *only* passage in the Hebrew Bible where this form of the divine oath introduces salvation for Israel. Despite that inversion, it retains the usual connection with the land, using it to resolutely assure Zion of its future prosperity. The exceptional use of the "as I live" authenticating element in an oracle of salvation can be explained by a perceived need to counter the sharp rhetoric of Ezekiel. This suggestion is

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119. Kathryn Pfisterer Darr, "Ezekiel's Justifications of God: Teaching Troubling Texts," *JSOT* 55 (1992): 105. Ezek 16:53-63 is likely a *Fortschreibung* to Ezek 16, possibly in two stages: vv. 53-58, 59-63. The first stage (vv. 53-58) may address the reality that the exiles were likely to return to a land still inhabited by descendants of the non-exiles who had not yet experienced the full measure of their punishment. If the present argument is correct, then the second (vv. 59-63) could be a reflex of Isa 49.

120. John Goldingay, *The Message of Isaiah 40-55: A Literary-Theological Commentary* (London: T & T Clark, 2005), 388.

121. In Ezek 33:23-29 it describes the places where those claiming Abrahamic descent live; in Ezek 35 they explain the state the land will be left in after YHWH's judgment; in Ezek 36:1-15 they denote the state of the land prior to YHWH's acts to restore and resettle it.

further supported by Isa 51:2, which points positively to Abraham and Sarah as progenitors of Israel and is undeniable evidence of Deutero-Isaiah's positive disposition towards the patriarchs.[122] That temperament is generally evident in the prominent role Jacob plays in Isa 40–48, but it is notably present in Isa 49 through the author's designation of YHWH as "the Mighty One of Jacob" (Isa 49:26).

(f) Ezek 47:13 – 48:35

Finally, a few words on the last passage concerning the land that employs the "lifted hand" land transfer formula. The "lifted hand" formula contributes two things to the passage: first, it brings the audience back to the double dispute of Ezek 20:1-44 by portraying the apportioning of the land as the fulfillment of the second exodus and, second, it describes the new land in the same fashion as Dtr. The reference back to Ezek 20 is facilitated by a direct connection to vv. 42: "You will know that I am YHWH when I bring you to the ground of Israel, to the land that I raised my hand to give it to your ancestors."[123] In parallel, Ezek 47:14 declares, "you shall receive it as a special grant,[124] equally apportioned,[125] which I raised my hand to give it to your ancestors. This land will fall to you as a special grant." Thus, Ezek 47:13–48:35 serves as the completion of the second exodus described in Ezek 20:40-44 and as the indication that the audience should now recognize the identity of YHWH without reservation. Further, by using variations of the verbal root נחל three times in vv. 13-14, the author evokes the Dtr attitude towards the land as a special grant that remains YHWH's property although the tenant may reap from its produce. The same term is used in 48:29, creating an inclusio around the material concerning the division of the land. This stresses agreement between Ezekiel and Dtr on the role of the land, an emphasis balanced by the endorsement of H's views indicated by the use of the "lifted hand" formula. Even at its very end, then, there is a clear effort in the book of Ezekiel to advance a theological program that is shared by H by using terms common to H and Dtr.

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122. Bernard Gosse, "Les Traditions Sur Abraham Et Sur Le Jardin D'éden En Rapport Avec is 51,2-3 Et Avec Le Livre D'ézéchiel," in *Studies in the Book of Genesis: Literature, Redaction and History* (ed. A. Wénin; Betl 155; Leuven: Peeters, 2001). suggests that Isa 51:1-3 is not concerned with the possession of the land, as is Ezekiel, but with portraying the destruction and reconstruction of Jerusalem as the expulsion and re-entry into the garden of Eden. Despite the difference perspectives, Gosse's connection only serves to strengthen the relationship posited here.

123. Block, *Ezekiel 25–48*, 709-10.

124. Translating the idea contained in the verb נחל. See the discussion above on the related noun form נחלה.

125. Following Block's translation of the phrase אִישׁ כְּאָחִיו (Ibid., 706, note 9).

(g) Implications

This chapter explored the book of Ezekiel's perspective about who will inhabit YHWH's land in the future. In doing so, it dealt extensively with the role of Abraham and Jacob in the book, particularly how those figures are positively employed by the non-exiles and negatively viewed by the exiles. Abraham's place in this debate has been widely noted, but the present study has shown for the first time that Jacob receives a correspondingly negative treatment in the book of Ezekiel. This evidence has various implications for the formation of the Patriarchal History (Gen 12–50)[126] and the Pentateuch as a whole.

First, the use of both Abraham and Jacob in the non-exiles' claims points towards the combination of the traditions surrounding those two figures by no later than the early 6th century B.C.E. Ezekiel's polemic against Abraham (Ezek 33:23-29) appears immediately after the report of Jerusalem's fall, which is dated to 585 B.C.E. by the book.[127] The clearest challenge to the Jacob tradition appears in Ezek 35:1–36:15, more specifically in 35:5-9 and 10-13. This section of oracles also comes under the 585 B.C.E. date heading, and in spite of the difficulties in identifying the precise date for this material, the structure of the book indicates that the editors intend to make this material roughly contemporaneous with 33:23-29. The accusation in 35:5, that Israel was betrayed at the time of its calamity (אידם, no doubt a word play on Edom, אדום), is obviously post-587 B.C.E. But it should not be pushed too far from that date for at least three reasons. First, the dual claim that YHWH is present with the non-exiles and that they will possess (ירשׁ) the land is nearly identical to the pre-fall claim made in Ezek 11:15.[128] This suggests they are not separated be a large span of time. Second, the ambitions of the non-exiles to capture the "two nations" and "two lands" (Ezek 35:10) implies a period when the nations surrounding Judah had yet to encroach on its territory, a process that could not have taken too long to begin.[129] Third, the deep animosity shown for the non-exiles reflects just how fresh the perceived injustice was for the exiles. Pohlmann uses this attitude as part of the criteria for dating texts to the so-called oldest layer of the book, the layer to which he allocates both 35:10-12.[130] Given his propensity to find a much later context for much of the book, this is significant. There remains the possibility that the Jacob-based

126. Hereafter PH.

127. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 8; Block, *Ezekiel 1–24*, 28-29; See Zimmerli's argument for the "general confidence" that can be placed in these dates (Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, 10).

128. On this dating, see Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 110.

129. Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion*, 371-3.

130. Pohlmann, *Ezechiel*, II.471-7; cf. Pohlmann, *Studien*, 217-8.

claim could even antedate the fall of Jerusalem, but this prospect is predicated on the somewhat more speculative argument that Jacob is polemicized in Ezek 16.[131] It seems prudent, in view of this evidence, to conclude that a form of the Jacob tradition complimentary to the Abraham tradition was employed by the non-exiles sometime in the 580's B.C.E.

This study also has important implications for determining what form this combined patriarchal tradition comprised? The non-exiles' employed both the Abraham and Jacob traditions to support their possession of (ירשׁ) the land points, which points towards two key texts: Gen 15 (especially vv. 7-21) and Gen 28 (especially vv. 1-4). It is, of course, possible that the tradition was combined and experienced wide currency prior to the composition of these texts,[132] so the possibility that a PH containing these texts circulated in Jerusalem prior to Ezekiel's deportation must remain open. That prospect would account for the sophisticated way the book of Ezekiel uses the verbal and nominal form of the term in its polemics. Even if these texts were composed in the immediate aftermath of Jerusalem's destruction, perhaps between 585 and 580 B.C.E., then this reconstruction can help adjudicate between the various proposals for how the PH formed. For instance, it supports various proposals for an early dating of the Patriarchal History. This includes the still widely held concept of a pre-exilic JE source,[133] but is more commensurate with various proposals for dating the initial PH to the exilic period. Among the notable reconstructions in this group are Van Seters,[134] Blum,[135] Carr[136] and Kratz.[137] By contrast, this evidence presents a challenge to scholars who have moved the date for the first combined Abraham-Jacob narrative to the end of the exile or afterwards. Perhaps the most ardent proponent of this view is de Pury, who dates this combination between 535 and 530 B.C.E. on the basis of Abraham's "ecumenical" role.[138] Römer has followed de Pury on many points, but suggests an even later Persian period

131. This oracle comes under a date header placing it at 592 B.C.E. (Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 8; Block, *Ezekiel 1–24*, 28-29).

132. For instance, Carr remarks, "To be sure, we can not presuppose a text is only to be dated to th time when its major themes appear in other datable texts" (Carr, *Fractures*, 228; cf. Blum, *Studien*, 218, note 44).

133. As examples, Nicholson, *The Pentateuch.* and Emerton, "The Origin of the Promises to the Patriarchs in the Older Sources of the Book of Genesis." (for whom see also J. A. Emerton, "The Priestly Writer in Genesis," *JSOT* 39 (1988):).

134. Van Seters, "Confessional Reformulation," 448-59 ; Van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition*; Van Seters, *Prologue to History*, especially pp. 331-2. Van Seters does not appear to place any further precision on the date for a combined Abraham-Jacob composition than the "exile."

135. Blum originally placed this composition in the pre-exilic period (Blum, *Komposition*, 271-361), but has later revised his position to the exilic period (Blum, *Studien*, 214, note 35).

136. Carr, *Fractures*. See a brief summary of his position at pp. 305-11.

137. Kratz, *The Composition of the Narrative Books of the Old Testament*, 272-3.

138. Albert de Pury, "Abraham: The Priestly Writer's 'Ecumenical' Ancestor," in *Rethinking Foundations:*

date.[139] The same conclusion has been reached on different grounds by Schmid in his extended study of the question.[140] There remain strengths in each one of these scholars' arguments, but they are now faced with explaining why such a large time lapse occurred between the initial uniting of these two figures and the production of an integrated form of the narrative about them.

Finally, to come full circle, this evidence can offer a insight on the relationship between the positive and negative Jacob material in the book of Ezekiel. In establishing the presence of the anti-Jacob texts in Ezekiel, the four explicit mentions of this patriarch (Ezek 20:5a; 28:25; 37:25; 39:25) were assigned to a later stage of the book's development. Indeed, given the interest of those four passages (Ezek 20:1-31; 28:25-26; 37:15-28; 39:21-29) in the return of the people to the land, it is very plausible they comprise a coordinated redaction within the book. Their interest in the land is, in fact, a key in explaining their relationship to the polemic against Jacob in the book of Ezekiel. Recall that all of the passages in which the non-exiles' claims are tied to the patriarchs deal with the future inhabitants of the land (Ezek 11:14-21; 16:43-58; 20; 33:23-29; 35:1–36:15). One logical explanation for the insertion of the positive, explicit mentions of Jacob is to harmonize the book of Ezekiel's endorsement of the exodus tradition with the patriarchal tradition. That is the same goal that Römer ascribes to the redactor who undertakes the coordinated, sevenfold insertion of the patriarchal triad alongside the divine oath promising the land to the ancestors in Deuteronomy.[141] Thus, it is possible that the process of redaction that Römer proposes to have integrated Deuteronomy into the Pentateuch, creating the "final form" of the first five biblical books, is mirrored by a similar process in the book of Ezekiel. As for a possible setting, this is likely to have occurred after Deutero-Isaiah had gained prominence, a situation that would explain why Jacob is referred to as "my servant Jacob" (Ezek 28:25; 37:25; cf. Isa 41:8; 44:1-2; 44:21; 45:4; 48:20; Jer 30:10; 46:27). This suggests a *temrinus ante quem* of approximately 550 B.C.E. A *terminus ad quem* is hard to establish, but the use of the "lifted hand" land transfer formula with the patriarchal

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Historiography in the Ancient World and in the Bible: Essays in Honour of John Van Seters (eds. S. L. McKenzie, and Thomas Römer; Bzaw 294; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000a), 180. See also Albert de Pury, "The Jacob Story and the Beginning of the Formation of the Pentateuch," in *A Farewell to the Yahwist: The Composition of the Pentateuch in Recent European Interpretation* (eds. Thomas B. Dozeman, and Konrad Schmid; Symposium 34; Atlanta, Ga.: Society of Bilbical Literature, 2006c)., Albert de Pury, "Situer Le Cycle De Jacob Quelques Réflexions, Vingt-Cinq Ans Plus Tard," in *Studies in the Book of Genesis: Literature, Redaction and History* (ed. A. Wénin; Betl 155; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2001b). and Albert de Pury, "La Tradition Patriarcale En Gènese 12-35," in *Le Pentateuque En Question: Les Origines Et La Composition Des Cinq Premiers Livres De La Bible À La Lumière Des Recherches Récentes* (eds. Albert de Pury, and Thomas Römer; Le Monde De La Bible 19; Genève: Labor et Fides, 2002).

139. Römer, 189-93.

140. Schmid, *Erzväter und Exodus*, 273.

141. Römer, "Deuteronomy in Search of Origins," 136-8.

triad in Neh 9 suggests this harmonizing effort was not isolated. If Williamson is correct to identify the composer of Neh 9:5b-37 as a member of the non-exiles,[142] that would add evidence for a wider attempt to integrate the non-exiled and exiled communities and provide a timeframe for the corresponding work in Ezekiel. Regardless, the basic insight that the book of Ezekiel underwent a shaping process remarkably similar to the Pentateuch is noteworthy and merits consideration in future studies of the book.

142. Williamson, "Structure and Historiography in Nehemiah 9," 292-3; cf. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 300-19 and Williamson, "The Belief System of the Book of Nehemiah," 280-1.

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Historical consciousness amongst eschatological speculation in Megillat ha-Megalleh of Abraham bar Hiyya

Overview

Megillat ha-Megalleh (The Scroll of the Revealer)[1] by Abraham bar Hiyya[2] (12th c.) is probably best known as a work containing extensive calculations for the coming the redemption.[3] Messianic speculation is one of the most conspicuous elements in the work, as is also its use of astrology. Seen as a whole, however, the work is written in a quasi-homiletical style and contains, aside of the calculations, varied materials ranging from philosophy, through biblical commentary, to astrology. A balanced view of the work requires that these various ingredients are all taken into account. This paper will address the materials concerning history in *Megillat ha-Megalleh*, and their role in the overall framework of the book. This question is not only relevant to the study of this particular work, but perhaps also for the research on the role of historical consciousness in the Medieval Jewish culture.

Bar Hiyya lived and wrote in the first half of the 12th century in Northeastern Spain. Very little is know about his life. His preserved works can be divided into scientific and

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1 The text of *Megillat ha-Megalleh* was published in Berlin 1924 by Posnanski and Julius Guttmann. Before this, the work had been studied by Jacob Guttmann, see Jacob Guttmann, „Ueber Abraham bar Chijja's "Buch der Enthüllung"“, *Monatschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums* XLVII (1903) 446-468; 545-569. The book was translated into Catalonian by J. Millas i Vallicrosa: *Llibre Revelador* (Alpha, Barcelona, 1929).

2 On Bar Hiyya in general, see Geoffey Wigoder, “Introduction” in Abraham Bar Hayya: *The Meditation of the Sad Soul,* (New York Schocken Books 1969) 1-30; Wigoder’s entry on Bar Hiyya in Encyclopedia Judaica; Norman Roth, “Abraham bar Hayya” in Roth (ed.) *Medieval Jewish Civilization* (London Routledge 2002) 3-6; Georges Vajda, «Les idées théologiques et philosophiques d'Abraham bar Hiyya», Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Age, (1946) 191-223 and Meyer Waxman, “The philosophical and religious thought of Abraham bar Hiyya the Prince” (in Hebrew) in *Sefer ha-Yovel likhvod Tzvi Wolfson*, Hebrew part, (Jerusalem American Academy for Jewish Research 1965) 145-168. Leon D. Stitskin, *The Judaism as Philosophy, the Philosophy of Abraham Bar Hiyya* (New York Bloch Publishing Company 1960) may contain valuable information, but needs to be approached critically.

3 Abba Hillel Silver: *A History of Messianic Speculation in Israel* (Beacon Hill Beacon Press 1959) 69-74. Joseph Sarachek: *The Doctrine of the Messiah in Medieval Jewish Literature* (Hermon Press New York) 313 - 328. See also Amos Funkenstein: *Perceptions of Jewish History* (Berkeley University of California Press 1993) where Funkenstein claims on this work that Bar Hiyya's ”sole interest is calculation of the End”.

theological. The scientific works include manuals on mathematics, astronomy and land surveying.[4] Of the two theological works, *Hegyon ha-Nefesh* is concerned of the meaning of repentance, and the other, *Megillat ha-Megalleh*, of the redemption of the Jewish people.[5] Bar Hiyya's works are characterised by a shift from Muslim to Christian dominance in Spain and its significance to the Jews. He is operative in a transfer of scientific information from the Arabic to Hebrew, and even into Latin.[6] Also, to some extent, his works display an apologetical, perhaps even polemical attempt to confront a growing Christian influence to the Jews.[7]

Summary of Megillat ha-Megalleh

Bar Hiyya begins *Megillat ha-Megalleh* with an introduction which mainly provides a justification for writing on a controversial topic: the date of redemption. He also declares a polemical intent stating that the exile has not been caused by the sins of the Jews, and that he intends to refute the claims of those according to whom the Messiah has already come.

The first chapter discusses the nature of time. The tone of the chapter is mainly philosophical, even if bar Hiyya does not present a philosophically problem-free definition of time[8]. Anyway, his main interest in the nature of time becomes clear: time is created along with the world, and time and creatures depend on each other for existence. Bar Hiyya proceeds to prove that time is finite, i.e. that it has an end, even if the philosophers

4 On Bar Hiyya's scientific works, see Jose Maria Millas Vallicrosa, *Estudios sobre historia de la ciencia española* (Barcelona Instituto Luis Vives de Filosofia, Seccion de la Filosofia Española 1949) 219-262 and Shlomo Sela, *Abraham ibn Ezra and the rise of Medieval Hebrew Science* (Leiden Brill 2003) 96-104. On Bar Hiyya's astrological works, see Shlomo Sela, "Abraham Bar Hiyya's Astrological Work and Thought" Jewish Studies Quarterly, 13,2 (2006) 128-158.

5 Hegyon ha-Nefesh was first published in Leipzig 1860; an English translation was published by G. Wigoder 1969.

6 Bar Hiyya is known to have cooperated with Plato of Tivoli in translation of scientific and astrological works from Arabic to Latin.

7 Bar Hiyya explicitly states in his introduction, that he intends to prove in the work that the Messiah has not come already. He also disproves of the idea, common in Christian polemics against Judaism, that the exile has been caused by sins of the Jews. Instead, he considers the exile as a necessary part of a divine plan in history. He also argues against typically Christian interpretations of Gen 49:10 and Dan 9:24-27, verses that were cornerstones of Christian polemics.

8 J. Guttman's introduction to *Megillat ha-Megalleh*, Berlin 1924, p. XIV.

have not been able to agree on the duration of the world. The first chapter also serves to introduce several philosophical concepts that will be made use of later in the book[9].

In the second chapter, Bar Hiyya states that the duration of the world can only be uncovered by means of the religious tradition. He first establishes, by a combination of exegetical and philosophical arguments, that the creation days in Gen. 1 correspond to periods of history: in fact he means that history with its good and bad periods is potentially contained in creation. He then goes deeper into strengthening this theory by support from the Scriptures and the rabbinical literature and examining in detail how the day-periods map to the history of the Jewish people. Finally the model is applied to a number of eschatological calculations. There are also two major excursions, a shorter one on worlds of light and a longer one on the levels of prophecy.

In the third chapter bar Hiyya defends the concept of physical resurrection believed to happen at the beginning of the Messianic era. According to his eschatological scheme the Jews will be resurrected in the beginning of the Messianic age, and a general resurrection for the Judgment Day will occur at the end of this age. Bar Hiyya even attempts to prove that resurrection can be reconciled with the contemporary scientific information, but the main part of his argument is a combination of biblical interpretation and philosophical concepts. He examines in great detail the accounts of the creation of man and of the story of the Garden of Eden[10]. According to his interpretation, these texts at the same time relate to the primal events and to the whole history of mankind. The final goal of redemption, which God has planned from the beginning, is to restore man into his original state as it

[9] Especially form, lack of form, actuality and potentiality, temporal and non-temporal precedence

[10] For a detailed study of this passage, see Sara Klein-Braslavy, "The Creation of Man and the Story of the Garden of Eden in the Thought of Abraham bar Hiyya" (In Hebrew), in *Professor Israel Efros –Poet and Philosopher* (Tel Aviv University 1981) 203-229.

was during the creation. This chapter also contains eschatological calculations towards the end.

The fourth chapter examines the book of Daniel, which bar Hiyya compares with later history starting from Alexander the Great, allowing him to comment on the later history, especially the fates of Roman/Christian and Muslim empires and their relation with the Jews. Occasionally, bar Hiyya appears to be arguing against interpretations used by the Christians. Again, eschatological calculations appear in the latter part of the chapter.

The fifth and final chapter of the book examines the history of Jews and the world, starting from the Exodus, interpreted according to the conjunctions of Jupiter and Saturn. The author explicitly states, that the already presented material should convince a believing Jew, but the astrological material is included to convince even others. The chapter is full of detailed astrological information, while it simultaneously offers a unique view to Bar Hiyya's view and knowledge of history. The chapter also carries a polemical tone against Christianity, Manichaeism and Islam. The component of eschatological predictions is again present towards the end of the chapter.

Thus, even if the work contains speculation as to the time of the redemption, and occasionally even isolated comments on the nature of the messianic era, the work as a whole might be better seen as a sustained attempt to prove that the course of history is inevitable and eventually leads to the redemption of the Jews in a messianic age. In other words, to defend the traditional Jewish belief in the coming of the Messiah and the subsequent Messianic era as the culmination of history.

The historical element in Megillat ha-Megalleh and in Medieval Judaism

The historical element in *Megillat ha-Megalleh* has received surprisingly little attention in previous research. The idea of correspondence between creation and history is often mentioned, likewise the existence of a vision of the role of the Jewish people and its history in redemption. For Julius Guttmann, the role of history in his religious thought sets bar Hiyya apart from the neo-Platonists.[11] Guttmann mentions how bar Hiyya constructs a periodic view of history, based on a correspondence with the creation, which will finally be completed in redemption. This structure bears a resemblance to Christian thought,[12] as if bar Hiyya would present a Jewish version of originally Christian ideas.

Aside of these general notions, the amount and role of historical information in *Megillat ha-Megalleh* has not been discussed in detail. The main exception is the article of Resianne Fontaine that sees the consolation given by the history a major theme in the book.[13] Fontaine, however, focuses on the concept of the dependency of history on the creation week as contained in the second chapter of *Megillat ha-Megalleh*, largely ignoring the more detailed accounts of history contained in the fourth and fifth chapters of the book.

A more general research problem is related to the characterization of a text as historical writing, or perhaps rather, as a literary creation informed by historical thinking. The question of historiography and historical consciousness in medieval Judaism has been much debated. M. Steinschneider classified around 200 texts as *Geschichtsliteratur*,[14]

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11 Julius Guttmann: *Die Philosophie des Judentums* (Korneuburg fourier 1985) 130-131

12 Amos Funkenstein regards that Bar Hiyya is influenced by Augustine while Julius Guttmann and Resianne Fontaine also consider Isidore of Seville as a possible source. See Amos Funkenstein, *Perceptions of Jewish History* (Berkeley University Of California Press) 1993 103, 115-116; Julius Guttmann, "Introduction" in Abraham Bar Hiyya, *Megillat ha-megalleh* (Berlin Mekize Nirdamim 1924) XIII-XIV; Resianne Fontaine, "Over de troost der geschiedenis" *Studia Rosenthalia* vol. 26, n. ½ (1992) 65-84, esp. 74-75.

13 Fontaine: Over de troost der geschiedenis, see note 12 above.

14 Moritz Steinschneider: *Die Geschichtsliteratur der Juden in Druckwerken und Handshriften* (sic!) (Arno Press New York 1980).

whereas Salo Baron is said to have discarded much of the material as homiletical and thus non-historical,[15] and Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi came to accept only two cases of real Jewish medieval historiography: chronicles from the time of the first crusade, and *Sefer ha-Kabbalah* of ibn Daud.[16] Only in these cases, Yerushalmi claims, was there a sense that something new was happening and that there was special significance to the events themselves.[17] Yerushalmi divides historical thinking into two categories: historiography proper as opposed to the category of memory, which finds its expression in ritual and liturgy.

Yerushalmi's discussion also implicitly contains a third category. According to him, there was much interpretation of history without mentioning actual historical events or personalities.[18] Furthermore, whenever the Jews showed interest in recent events, they tended to see the events schematically and as a repetition of distant, Biblical events. According to Yerushalmi, there was no interest in the intermediate course of history, nor any real interest in the recent events as such. This tendency is particularly displayed in

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[15] Robert Bonfil: Jewish Attitudes Toward History and Historical Writing in Pre-Modern Times, in *Jewish History*, vol. 11, No. 1, Spring 1977, 7 – 40 esp 7. Bonfil is referring to Salo Baron: *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, *vol VI* (New York Columbia University Press 1958) 152 – 234, 399 – 440. It is however interesting to our present topic how Baron elsewhere regards Bar Hiyya's work: "Abraham bar Hiyya especially, confronted in Spain not only with Arabian but Christian historical reconstructions, developed a theory of Jewish history which adapted Augustinian and Isidorian teachings to Jewish needs. His philosophy might have stimulated further historical thinking were it not perhaps for the transcending influence of the "unhistorical" Maimonidean thought." Salo Baron: *History and Jewish Historians*, (JPS, Philadelphia, 1964) 112. Thus, Baron considers that Bar Hiyya had a genuine interest in history; it is only the later scholars that have ignored Bar Hiyya.

[16] In light of other research, Yerushalmi's lifting *Sefer ha-Kabbalah* as an example of real historiography does not really hold. While the work is structured as a historiographical work and consists of historical information, Ibn Daud too has been shown to be unreliable as a source and to use history both as a polemical tool and as a source of consolation. According to G. D. Cohen: *The Book of Tradition* (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul 1967), Ibn Daud sees history schematically as displaying a rhythm based on Divine Will, and tries to uncover these rhythms even when it requires distorting of the chronological data. E. Krakowski: "On the Literary Character of Abraham Ibn Da'ud's Sefer ha-qabbalah" in *European Journal of Jewish Studies* volume 1, number 2, 2007 219 – 247, has recently challenged Cohen's theory concerning symmetries of history, which according to Cohen, are based on an intentional modification of facts and imply a messianic message. Instead, Krakowski sees a polemical intent in ibn Daud, and that what Cohen sees as modifications of facts to convey an esoteric message are merely caused by sloppyness.

[17] Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi: *Zakhor, Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (University of Washington Press Seattle 1996) 31 – 52.

[18] Yerushalmi, *Zakhor* 31

texts of messianic and apocalyptical nature, which can often contain direct and detailed historical information, while there is, according to Yerushalmi, no historiography at all, only a desperate attempt to read the events into a fixed scheme.[19]

Amos Funkenstein provides a more extensive set of concepts than Yerushalmi. His primary modification is the addition of an intermediate category of *historical consciousness* between *collective memory* and *historical narrative*.[20] According to Funkenstein, Jewish historical thinking never ceased, even when it did not produce historiography. Jews never took their existence or granted; their culture was formed by an acute historical consciousness that was also related to a sense of distinctness and uniqueness of the Jews and a search for meaning in the sense of providence in history.

Also Robert Bonfil has in many ways challenged Yerushalmi's position. Instead of asking, whether and why Jewish historiography existed or did not exist in a particular period, Bonfil prefers a phenomenological and comparative approach, using which he has argued that in the Middle Ages Jewish historical writing was both quantitatively and qualitatively comparable to its Christian counterpart, whereas first in the early modern period the Jewish historical literature really falls behind its Christian counterpart. The conception of comparative lack of Jewish medieval historiography would thus be false.[21]

Against this background, it should be emphasized that *Megillat ha-Megalleh* is not a historiographical work. The accounts of history in the work are there to serve other purposes. On the other hand, Bar Hiyya does not easily match Yerushalmi's model of

[19] Yerushalmi, *Zakhor 34 - 37*

[20] Funkenstein, *Perceptions,* esp *10 - 12*

[21] Bonfil, *Attitudes* 8.
Robert Bonfil: How Golden was the Age of the Renaissance in Jewish Historiography?, in Ada Rapoport-Albert (ed.), *Essays in Jewish Historiography, in memoriam Arnaldo Momigliano,* 1988 (reprinted, Atlanta 1991) 78 – 102 .

seeing the present as a re-enactment of Biblical events. Rather, Bar Hiyya considers history to be a linear process, and even if he is looking for signs of the endtime, he presents summaries of history which are reasonably correct and it can be argued that it is the history as a whole, rather than the most recent events only, that his argumention is built on.

Bar Hiyya's sources for historical information are difficult to pinpoint. It is likely that much of the material comes from the extensive Arabic historiographical literature, but he may also have used Christian sources.[22] It is also interesting to note, that some Arabic works on history bear resemblance to Bar Hiyya's interest in time, creation and the question of the durations of the world. Al-Tabari begins his historical work on the nature of time followed by the question of the duration of the world.[23] Al-Maqdisi's *Book of Creation and History* contains philosophical and eschatological material in addition to the historical.[24] Finally it needs to be recognized, that in the 12th century, there was a revival of interest in history among Christian intellectuals, e.g. in the school of St. Victor history was used as a basis for biblical interpretation. [25]

Nature of time and Aetetas Mundi

Megillat ha-Megalleh is explicitly concerned of the question of the duration of the world. Bar Hiyya starts his book by an inquiry into the nature of time as a philosophical problem, and even if there are contradictions in his discourse,[26] a very central idea is time is related

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22 See note 12 above.

23 Franz Rosenthal (translated and annotated): *The History of al-Tabari*, vol. I (State of New York Press Albany 1989) 168 – 186.

24 Mahmoud Tahmi: *L'Encyclopédisme musulman à l'âge classique, Le Livre de la Creation et de l'histoire de Maqdisî* (Maisonneuve et Larose Paris 1998). C. Huart (transl. & ed.) *Le Livre de la Creation de l'histoire* in six volumes (Paris 1899 – 1919).

25 M-D Chenu: *Nature, Man and Society in the Twelfth Century* (University of Toronto Press Toronto 1997) 162 – 201 esp. 165 – 177. R. W. Southern: "Presidential Address: Aspects of the European Tradition of Historical Writing: 2. Hugh of St. Victor and the Idea of Historical Development", in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th series xxi (1971) 159 – 179. Rebecca Moore: *Jews and Christians in the Life and Thought of Hugh of St. Victor* (Scholars Press, Atlanta, 1998) 23 – 41.

26 Julius Guttman, in his introduction to *Megillat ha-Megalleh* (Mekize Nirdamim Berlin 1924) XIV.

to the moving of events from potentiality into actuality. Bar Hiyya sees creation as the establishment of events into a state of potential existence, from which these will later flow into actual existence in their proper time. He does not explicitly say it, but it appears that for him, time is either this motion into actuality itself, or rather a substrate in which this motion happens. Anyway, in Bar Hiyya's ontology time is probably the most basic entity, the foundation of all created existence.[27]

Bar Hiyya then goes on to show, based on the non-agreement among scientists and philosophers, that the duration of the world cannot be determined by reason. Thus he turns into a midrashic interpretation of the Biblical text, continuing his argument that all created existence is contained in the creation and that this existence gradually unfolds in time. He furthermore considers the days of the creation as archetypes, each different, each having its own mixture of good and evil, each corresponding to a period of history. He then proceeds to examine how these periods actually have been manifested in the history as he knows it. His scheme is much more complicated than the usual concept of six periods of one thousands years each. Through mathematics, Bar Hiyya arrives at a mean duration of 857 1/7 years per period, and then goes on to look for the actual turns of the periods.[28] The creation account is used to obtain characteristics for each period. The second and sixth periods are most evil, corresponding to the generations before the Flood and the exile after the destruction of the second temple respectively. The peak of the history has been the fourth day, starting from the Giving of the Torah to the Babylonian Exile. Compared to Christian applications of the same idea, Bar Hiyya appears to have created a clearly Jewish version of the ages of history.

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[27] Hannu Toyryla, “The concept of time in "Megillat ha-Megalleh"” in *Studia Orientalia 101*(2007) 441-460

[28] This really means that Bar Hiyya takes the 857 1/7 years only as a mean value and assumes that the actual durations of the periods have been of different lengths. He may here be influenced by geocentric planetary astronomy, where the planetary motions can be presented by mean motion, if observed over a longer time, but the actual motions are variable.

This account in itself seems to match the characteristics of schematic approach, i.e. having a tendency to see events as re-enactments of Biblical events, and interpreting history without actually touching events and personalities as described by Yerushalmi. But we should regard this part in the context of the work as a whole, and then these conceptions can be regarded as a framework and a basic outline, a foundation for more detailed accounts that follow later in the text.

The idea of six world ages corresponding to the creation days was extremely common in Late Antiquity as well as in the Middle ages, among Christians, Muslims and also Jews. It is difficult to point to a specific source.[29] Bar Hiyya's chronological division however is quite certainly his own.

Bar Hiyya's interest in providing a philosophical basis to his work is not unique. Among Muslim historiographers, al-Tabari starts with developing his concept of time, also discussing the question of duration of the world and also touches eschatological issues in his history.[30] Al-Maqdisi's *Kitâb al-bad' wal-Târîkh* treats philosophical, theological and eschatological questions extensively.[31]

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[29] The idea that creation days correspond to periods of history or ages of the world was very common from the late antiquity to the middle ages. On this concept among the Christian Church Fathers, see Auguste Luneau, *L'histoire du salut chex les pères de l'Eglise* (Paris Beauchesne et ses Fils 1964) and Roderich Schmidt, « Aetates Mundi. Die Weltalter als Gliederungsprinzip der Geschichte" *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte,* vierte folge V, LXVII Band (1955/56) 288-317. Amos Funkenstein regards that Bar Hiyya is influenced by Augustine while Julius Guttmann and Resianne Fontaine also consider Isidore of Seville as a possible source. See Amos Funkenstein, *Perceptions of Jewish History* (Berkeley University Of California Press) 1993 103, 115-116; Julius Guttmann, "Introduction" in Abraham Bar Hiyya, *Megillat ha-megalleh* (Berlin Mekize Nirdamim 1924) XIII-XIV; Resianne Fontaine, "Over de troost der geschiedenis" *Studia Rosenthalia* vol. 26, n. ½ (1992) 65-84, esp. 74-75. Muslims, especially Ismailis, also regarded the history as consisting of seven ages, each with its own legislating prophet. See Farhad Daftary, *The Isma'ilis, their History and Doctrines* (Cambridge Cambridge University Press 1990) 139-140 and Yves Marquet, *La Philosophie des Ihwân al-Safa* (Paris Arche Milano 1999) XIII, 419-438. Similar ideas are also found among the Jews: in the Talmudic idea of three two millennium periods of the world in Sanh. 97a, in the *Kitâb al-târîkh* attributed to Saadia Gaon and especially in the *Bereshit Rabbati* of Moses ha-Darshan. See also Fontaine, *Troost der Geschiedenis* 73-77.

[30] See note 23 above.

[31] See note 24 above.

History as an interpretation to Daniel 11

In the fourth chapter of *Megillat ha-Megalleh*, Bar Hiyya turns into examining the Book of Daniel, on the surface because it had been commonly used in an attempt to derive the duration of the world. Yet also here, Bar Hiyya's examination turns out to include much more than mere eschatological calculations. In his interpretation, Bar Hiyya uses a principle that a prophecy must be understood in its historical context and that contents of a prophecy or a series of visions or prophecies must conform to a logical and temporal sequence. In the case of Daniel, this means that the whole span of future was not revealed to Daniel at once. The more recent future was disclosed first and the more distant future later, gradually. Any matters concerning the destruction of the Second temple and the exile that followed, could not be disclosed to Daniel who at the time was merely waiting for the end of the first exile. This principle, which bar Hiyya uses in several places in *Megillat ha-Megalleh,* allows bar Hiyya also to argue against Christian interpretations of Dan 9:24-27.

As a background to his interpretation of the book of Daniel, Bar Hiyya also discusses Jer. 25:12-14, 19-26 which he also employs in a simple calculation. Bar Hiyya reads the passage so that God takes revenge on 27 nations one by one. Aside of the eschatological calculation based on the verses, the interpretation also implies the idea that the fates of nations within history carry a meaning that is relevant as to the eventual redemption of the Jews.

A large part of the chapter consists of a commentary to Dan. 11, in which Bar Hiyya gives his first detailed account of history, which can be summarised as follows:

The Persian rule that began in Daniel's time continued through four kings,[32] until the conquests of Alexander the Great. The rule of Alexander lasted only 12 years, after which his empire was split between several of his generals. In Alexandria, Ptolemaic kings ruled until the time of Cleopatra. Then, Rome had become a world power at the time a Julius Caesar, and gradually conquered Greece, Egypt and Babylonia. At this time, disciples of Jesus were active and finally killed. Also, Vespasian and Titus destroyed the Second Temple.

220 years later, Constantine adopted Christianity which became the religion of the Roman Empire and moved the capital to a new city called Constantina. Gradually, the Roman empire was divided into two parts and later even further.

340 years later Muhammad appeared with a new religion. He was not of noble descent and was not immediately accepted by his people. Later on, he managed to prevail over his enemies and rule over the Arabs. After his death, the kingdom he established was able to conquer the land of Israel, Babylonia and Persia.

The land of Israel has been ruled by the two empires: Rome and the Arabs, and the treatment of the Jews has varied. The Muslim rulers had sometimes let the Jews live there, sometimes expelled them. The Muslim empire had been split into parts at the time of the Abbasids, resulting in poorer conditions for the Jews. Recently, Rome had again conquered the land from the Arabs, taken the holy places to their possession and forbidden Jews access to them.

It must be noted that Bar Hiyya is presenting this account within his interpretation of the vision of Daniel, not as an account of past history. The summary, thus, is the result of extracting the historical elements from Bar Hiyya's interpretation. For a comparison, complete passages from Bar Hiyya's interpretation are included as an appendix.

At this point, we can assess the passage at hand against Y. H. Yerushalmi's conception of

[32] Bar Hiyya follows the traditional Jewish view of the succession of Persian kings and the chronology of the Second Temple period.

apocalyptic interest in times of upheaval, an interest in contemporary events which are subsumed into familiar archetypes from the remote past, to which the recent events were mapped, and a lack of interest in the longer span of time.[33] Now, in Bar Hiyya's case, we can affirm that his lifetime was a time of upheaval in the sense that the balance of power between Christians and Muslims shifted to the advantage of the Christians, both within the Iberian Peninsula and in a larger scale (meaning Europe, North Africa and the Middle East). However, even if the change was significant, it was certainly not catastrophic nor calling for immediate apocalyptic response. The life of the Jewish communities both in Spain was not directly affected, and it is difficult to see Bar Hiyya's discourse here as a response to events such as the massacres in Rheinland in the 1090s (which are not at all mentioned).

While it is true that Bar Hiyya maps the events described to familiar archetypes, in this case to the vision of Daniel concerning the four empires, this is not at all a case of matching recent events to remote archetypes. Bar Hiyya lays out a sequence of events spanning 1500 years, paying more attention to the latter 1000 years, quite loosely modelled according to a familiar text. We cannot dismiss the fact that Bar Hiyya presents his audience a view of history, be it simplified and be it presented as an interpretation of Daniel's vision. The recent events are significant, but they gain their relevance not only because they seem to match a prophecy, but also from their belonging to the course of events. Of course, the passage under analysis here is not historiography, but rather a sermon or a midrash on historical themes. It is not relevant as a source of information on the events it describes, but it is relevant as to the historical outlook of the author and through that, of his times and cultural context.

[33] See notes 17 to 19 above.

An astrological interpretation of history

In the fifth chapter of *Megillat ha-Megalleh*, Bar Hiyya turns into an astrological interpretation of history with a subsequent extrapolation into the future.[34] First, as he now extends the basis of his inquiry from the Scriptures to non-Jewish sciences, he needs to justify his use of astrology. Astrological evidence is needed when one has to convince those, Jews and non-Jews alike, that do not accept Scriptural evidence.[35]

Bar Hiyya's astrological interpretation is based on the conjunctions of Jupiter and Saturn, occuring roughly at 20 year intervals. The conjunctions are then seen to mark cycles of roughly 20, 60, 238, 953 and 2859 years.[36] The shorter cycles are thought to represent minor changes in world history, the longer ones drastic changes and upheavals, like transfer of power from one dynasty or kingdom to another or even rise of completely new kingdoms.[37] A horoscope drawn for the vernal equinox preceding a conjunction is used to interpret the nature of the conjunction and the events of the corresponding cycle.[38] The technique is quite complex. Horoscopes are not merely static, they are also used dynamically so that the position of the sun, for instance, at a later date, is compared against the horoscope at the beginning of a cycle.[39]

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34 For a treatment on this chapter, see Sela: Astrological Works, 131 - 136

35 He also presents an argument for that his use of astrology is legitimate. This argument is not relevant in the scope of the present article.

36 Sela: Astrological Works, 133 – 135 ; Silver: *Messianic Speculation,* 72 – 74.

37 Keiji Yamamoto and Charles Burnett (ed. & transl.): *Abû Mashar on Historical Astrology, The book of Religions and Dynasties (On the Great Conjunctions),* vol. I (Brill Leiden 2000) 582 – 587. Mûsa ibn Nawbajt: *Kitäb al-azmina wa-l-duhûr, Tratado de Astrologia Mundial* (Universiad de Valencia, Valencia 2005) 0.50. E. S. Kennedy: The World-Year Concept in Islamic Astrology, in *Studies in the Islamic Exact Sciences* (American University of Beirut 1983) 351 – 371 esp. 358 – 359.

38 This technique is probably due to the fact that because of the very slow motions of the upper planets, the exact time of the conjunction cannot be determined accurately enough, whereas the time of the vernal equinox is accurate enough for astrological use.

39 For an explanation of dynamic use of horoscopes, see Kocku von Stuckrad: *Geschichte der Astrologie* (C. H. Beck München 2003) 27 – 29 . For an example of Bar Hiyya's interpretation of a horoscope, see Josefina Rodríguez-Arribas: Historical Horoscopes of Israel, Abraham bar Hiyya, Abraham ibn Ezra and Yosef ben Eliezer, in Oestmann, Rutkin and von Stuckrad (eds.): *Horoscopes and Public Spheres, Essays on the History of Astrology* (Walter de Gruyter Berlin 2005) 145 – 164.

Astrological interpretations of history were common in medieval Arabic culture,[40] and they also raised interest later in the Christian West, partly because of Bar Hiyya's work.[41] Bar Hiyya sometimes refers to earlier interpreters anonymously, but prefers to do his own calculations and interpretations.

Bar Hiyya then proceeds to discuss the course of history using these methods, starting from the birth of Moses and the subsequent birth of the kingdom of Israel. Throughout his discussion, astrological criteria are used to characterize the Jewish nation as just and God-fearing. Initially, Bar Hiyya is showing interest only in the events concerning the Jewish nation as recorded in the Bible. From the first exile onwards, the focus extends to include other nations. The account covers

- Alexander the Great and the disintegration of his empire
- destruction of the Second temple
- rise of Christianity and the adoption of Christianity by Constantine
- an account on Mani, the founder of Manichaeism
- rise of Muhammad and an account of the subsequent development of the Muslim empire including the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties
- Muslim rule in Spain, first by Umayyads and later by the Almoravids
- conquest of the land of Israel by the Crusaders

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[40] Best known are the work of Masha'allah and Abu Mashar. See E.S. Kennedy and David Pingree: *The Astrological History of Mâshâ'allâh*, (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts, 1971) and Yamamoto and Burnett: *Historical Astrology.*

For a more extensive list of works, see Kennedy: *World-year* 360 -365. The extant work that perhaps comes closest to Bar Hiyya's treatment of astrological history is Mûsa ibn Nawbajt: *Al-Kitâb al-Kâmil, Horóscopos Históricos* (edición y Traducción por Ana Labrat, Prólogo de Juan Vernet) (Institito Hispano-Árabe de Cultura, Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona, Madrid 1982).

[41] On Bar Hiyya's reception in Latin, see Guttman's introduction to *Megillat ha-Megalleh* (Berlin 1924) XXVIII – XXXI.

Compared with the account based on Dan. 11, this account carries a lot of chronological detail, which of course has been necessary in order for the horoscopes to be drawn. The accounts also carry a clear polemical tendency to use the astrological data to characterize other nations and religions as false, injust or outright evil. The astrological support appears to make Bar Hiyya's judgments look like more than mere opionions. Bar Hiyya appears to consider his astrological interpretation as especially convincing; he explicitly states that here he has used the science of the non-Jews to show that their claims are false. Bar Hiyya may have been working as an astrologer for the Catalonian court, and therefore had some firsthand experience on the value of astrological arguments.[42]

Towards the end, the chapter goes beyond interpretation of history to speculate on the coming of the redemption based on the astrological theory. These predictions have received much interest particularly from Christians in a Latin translation, but they do not contribute much to our understanding of Bar Hiyya's outlook on history.

Conclusions

Megillat ha-Megalleh contains both theoretical views on the nature of time and history, and reasonable summaries of the course of history. It is, of course, not a historiographical work, but rather a quasi-homiletical work intended to convince the public of the continued validity of the Jewish hope for redemption. History together with the Scriptures, philosophy and astrology are employed to support this argument.

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[42] Bar Hiyya's title *sâhib al-shurta* suggests that he held an official position of some kind, implying a connection with the court, see J.M. Millas-Vallicrosa: ”The Beginning of Science Among The Jews Of Spain”, in Joseph Dan (ed.): *Binah, Jewish Intellectual History in the Middle Ages,* volume 3 (Praeger, Westport 1994) 45 – 46. Also, Bar Hiyya himself writes, at the end of his so-called Astrological Letter, that in his youth his astrological skills had been valued by princes and kings, see Moritz Steinschneider: ”Abraham Judaeus – Savasorda un Ibn Esra”, in *Gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin 1925, reprinted Georg Olms 1980) 334 – 335 and Z. Schwartz: ”Letter of R. Abraham bar Hiyya the Prince” (in Hebrew), in *FestSchrift Adolf Schwarz zum siebzigsten Geburtstage* (R. Löwit Verlag, Berlin und Wien, 1917) (23-36) 36.

In *Megillat ha-Megalleh*, Bar Hiyya displays familiarity with the general course of history, and utilizes it to build an argument. Therefore, it may be assumed that he regarded that his public also shared a certain historical consciousness in order to be responsive for this argument. It is also possible that Bar Hiyya intends to educate his public about the details of the course of history, following a similar motivation as displayed in his scientific works.

At the bottom of all this, Bar Hiyya also has his own philosophy of history, starting from the idea that time is connected to the movement of entities from potentiality to actuality, to the more specific idea that history is precontained in Divine thought and unfolds arranged to periods of varying degrees of good and evil, corresponding to the creation days. That Bar Hiyya was in this way looking for laws of history, similar to the laws of nature, even if it looks very unscientific in modern eyes, can be seen typical of a Sephardic Jew's scientific mind in the early 12th century.[43]

[43] G. D. Cohen: ”Messianic Postures of Ashkenazim and Sephardim” in Marc Saperstein (ed.): *Essential papers on messianic movements and personalities in Jewish history* (New York, New York University Press 1992) 214 – 215.

EXCERPTS FROM ABRAHAM BAR HIYYA'S INTERPRETATION OF DANIEL 11
PRELIMINARY TRANSLATION[1] BY Hannu Töyrylä / 17 Aug 2010

At this time the Greek Kingdom ruled over kingdoms of Medea and Persia and most other kingdoms in the days of Alexander, but his kingdom only lasted for 12 years, and after his death it was divided. All his commanders rebelled against his mother and his son Nicanor, and each of them ruled in his own area, as it is written "when he rises, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided to the four winds of heaven" (Dan. 11:4). As it says that "when he rises" we see that his days will not be long, but his kingdom will be shattered immediately when he rises. As it says "not to his posterity, no according to his dominion" (ibid.) we see that those that rule after him will not be comparable to his power. (MM 93:16 – 22)[2]

…

King of the South [in Dan. 11:5] is the king of Alexandria, which is located to the south of Macedonia, Alexander's birthplace. After him, there ruled in Alexandria 8 kings, all named Ptolemy [בטלמיוס] which is Talmi [תלמי] in the Holy Language, like the man whom Alexander appointed as he went to war with the king of Babel.

And the one of [Alexander's] commanders that is called the king of the north in the second verse, that is the prince of the army appointed over Macedonia and Rome, together with [Alexander's] mother and son, rebelled against them and took the kingdom from them. (MM 93:25 – 94:4)

…

The kingdom of Ptolemys lasted in Alexandria for 280 years, and after them ruled a woman called Cleopatra [קליאופטרה]. In those days there ruled many kings in Rome and in Macedonia until the kingdom of Julius [יוליוש] who is called Caesar [קיסר]. In the days of Augustus [אגושטוש] and Cleopatra, the two kingdoms were united as it is written "at the end of years they shall join themselves together; and the daughter of the king of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement" (Dan. 11:6). (MM 94:7 - 11)

…

1 This translation is preliminary and presented merely to allow the reader of the main article to get a general picture of how historical information is presented and used in *Megillat ha-Megalleh.* The footnotes cover mainly aspects that are necessary to the understanding of the text. Comments to the historical information itself will be given in my thesis.

2 References to Megillat ha-Megalleh (MM) are to the Berlin edition, eds. Guttmann and Posnanski, Mekize Nirdamim. References are to a page and a row.

It says “to make an agreement” as Cleopatra expected to be married to the Caesar, but he betrayed her, and killed her and all her escort, as it is written “she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begot her, and he that obtained her in those times” (Dan. 11:6). After her death there were wars between the Caesar of Rome and the people of the land of Egypt and Alexandria, for years and days, and finally the land ended under the rule of the king of Rome which is the king of North. (MM 94:13 - 17).

…

All these verses [Dan. 11:8-10] talk about the wars between the Greeks and the Romans in those days, that when Rome was ruled by the kings each of which was called Caesar. All these wars flooded over the Land of Israel, causing harm to it, and therefore it is proper to mention them, as it is written “the king of the south will be embittered, and go to war with him against the king of the north, who will raise a great multitude, and it will be given to him” (Dan. 11:11). The king of the north is surely the king of Rome, and the king of the South is the king of Babel, which too is south from the land of Edom, and the subsequent verses in this prophecy call the king of Babel king of south.

Because it is said here “go to war with him against the king of the north”,[3] we have said that the king of the south is the king of Babel that went to help the troops of Egypt, which is also called king of south, and they allied themselves against the king of the north. Therefore it is said “go to war with him against the king of the north.” And they prevailed against him and had a victory over him, as it is written “the multitude shall be carried away, his heart lifted up, and he will cast down myriads, but he shall not prevail” (Dan. 11:12).

These are the wars between Caesar the king of Rome and Shapur the king of Babel towards the end of the Hasmonean kingdom and at the time of Herodes, and at the end Caesar prevailed in these wars, as it is written “the king of the north shall again raise a multitude, greater than the previous one” (Dan. 11:13) and “in those days many shall stand up against the king of the south” (Dan. 11:14). As if to say that the troops of the king of the north stood up strong against the king of the south. And it is said “the impudent among your people shall lift themselves up to establish a vision, but they will stumble” (Dan. 11:14), these are the disciples of Jeshu, *Hatalui*,[4] the impudent ones who lifted hand on high to establish a false vision and a prophecy of lies, but they all fell and were killed by the sword or hanging.

Immediately after their [i.e. Jesus' disciples] death the evil Vespasian and Titus rose against Jerusalem and conquered it, as it is written “the king of the north shall come, cast up a mound, and conquer the well-fortified city” (Dan. 11:15). The well-fortified city is Jerusalem, the holy city. The verse says “the arms of the south will not stand” (ibid.) on the troops of Babel which had no power to help the Land of

3 Bar Hiyya is making use of the fact that the Hebrew text has the word עם 'with' twice in “נלחם עמו עם מלך הצפון” as if to say “fought with him with [i.e. against] the king of the north.

4 Literally, the hanged one. See E. ben Yehuda, Dictionary and Thesaurus of the Hebrew Language, vol. VIII p. 7764 on examples of this codename for Jesus. From these examples it appears that this usage is medieval.

Israel. And the verse “the one who comes shall do as he pleases, none shall stand before him, and the beauteous land will be destroyed by his hand” (Dan. 11:16). The beauteous land is Jerusalem, which he destroyed, and whose all inhabitants he sent to exile. It is said “he shall set his face to come with the strength of whole his kingdom, and the upright with him” (Dan. 11: 17), these are the remainder of the sages and the Sanhedrin, and the whole exile of the second temple, the upright who were dispersed by his hand to all the lands.

And these two nations, the northern and the southern, were idolatrous.

Around 220 years after the destruction [of the Temple] the Roman king Constantine [קוסטנטין] increased error upon error and came to believe in the blemished words of disciples of the evil Jesus, after that his kingdom had become strong and he had built the city called Constantina [קוסטנטינה] in his name. [This city] is amongst lakes and rivers as it is said “he shall set his face upon isles and take many” (Dan. 11:18). The construction of Constantina is similar to isles.

The scriptures continue with “a captain shall cause the his shame to cease, [yet] his shame shall return to him” (Dan 11:18) [5]. This captain is Constantine, who exchanged a shame to another. And from that time onwards the kingdom of Edom was divided into two kingdoms, the kingdom of Rome and the kingdom of Constantine: A kingdom for the Romans and a kingdom for the Greeks. Afterwards it was further divided to some kingdoms. The scriptures allude to all these matters, because of the harsh decrees placed on Israel in the time of this evil Caesar, his mother and all his people in their entry into the error of *Hatalui*.

Approximately 340 years after that these evil people adopted this error, the wicked M*eshugga*[6] rebelled in the lands of Ishmael, conducted himself in this evil manner, and exchanged error with an error, shame with a shame. On him it is written “in his place shall stand a despised person, upon whom the glory of royalty had not been given. He shall come in peace, and take the kingdom by slipperiness.” (Dan. 11:21) The scriptures mention his deeds because of the many evils that fell upon Israel in his days. This *despised* is the *Meshugga* that was despised by his own people and called in their language Muhammad, which has meanings of 'desirable' and 'praise' in the language of Ishmael.[7] The verse changed his name to be more appropriate by calling him *despised*, as it had done with the Pharaoh by

5 Note the problematic text in the original (see BDB sv, etc). TODO: Check later!!!!

6 Literally, the madman. On the use of this word for Muhammad, see Goshen-Gottstein, Syntax and Vocabulary of Medieval Hebrew, Jerusalem 2006, p. 416 - 417. It appears, that the Jews have picked up an Arabic word, meaning 'the brave', making use of the different meaning of the word in Hebrew. According to Goshen-Gottstein, the first to use the word for Muhammad was Sherira Gaon, and probably the most famous was Maimonides, in his Letter to Yemen.
See also J. Kafih in his edition of Rabbi Moshe Ben Maimon, Iggerot, Jerusalem 5744, p. 22. Kafih says in a footnote that משוגע is a common epithet in the East for Muhammad, and argues that this is not an allusion to epilepsy, as had been claimed by 'the one who wrote *words of old women*', but used for anyone inclined to prophecy. In support for this Kafih presents evidence from the Hebrew Bible. The reference to old wives' tales could be to al-Farabi, who is known to have used this expression, but this is just a guess.

7 TODO: Where is the logic here? Despised versus praise. Is bar Hiyya thinking of some special meanings of hamud and shevah. Covetuous? Gain? NOTE: he then says that the scriptures changed the name to be more appropriate

calling him Hofra (Jer. 44:30) … [Here] it says 'despised and to whom the glory of royalty had not been given", as he was not from the nobility of his country, not eligible for a royal position, and he obtained the kingdom by slipperiness, by much fraud and by word-splitting.[8]

And "the arms of the flood" (Dan. 11:22) are the Arabic and Hagaric troops which gathered against him, fought with him, flooded against him and were victorious against him, until they broke his teeth, beat his jaws and wounded him. [But] finally he prevailed over them, flooded them, and the were shattered before him, as it is written "the arms of the flood shall be swept away before him, and broken" (Dan. 11:22).

It also says "prince of the covenant" regarding the Jews who lived in the surroundings of his city. Many people of the Hagarites gathered (against Muhammad's people?) and converted to Judaism, and they ruled in those days in many villages and towns, that is in more than 12 towns in the surroundings of the town of the despised. When the Ishmaelite troops went to war against the despised *Meshuggeh*, all the Jews of this province together with the proselytes accompanied them, besieging and holding the gates of the city for many days. But at the end he prevailed and conquered their land and devastated it, as it is written "shall be swept away before him, and broken" (Dan. 11:22). These are the troops of Ishmael and prince of the covenant are the Israelites accompanying them.

After that he had prevailed over the troops that had besieged him, many of his people joined him, and from that time his power increased greatly as it is written "after the joining together with him, he will make fraud, and rise and become great with a little nation" (Dan. 11:23). It says "make fraud" because of the degradation, as he built his religion with fraud and falsehood. It further says "become great with a small nation" because the Arabs and the Ishmaelites were very few in those days, as compared to the nations that were their enemies.

In the beginning of their kingdom, directly after the death of the despised one, the evil person who was his deputy, rose against the land of Israel and conquered it from Edom, as it is written "in the security and fatness of the city, he will come and do what his ancestors have not done: spoil and plunder" (Dan. 11:24). After taking the land of Israel, his armies moved to the land of Babel in the days of his evil companions that ruled after him, and fought great wars against the king of Persia. The Persian king met them with a very powerful army, consisting according to their words of four thousand elephants, and on each of the elephants forty men were riding wearing a military outfit, aside of the horses, mules and the chariots without counting. He fought against the Ishmaelites that came against him, but was beaten and fleed to the land of Ashur and died there. The Ishmalite troops conquered all the lands he had ruled.

8 The verse says that the kingdom was taken by חלקלקות (*halaklakot)* , the meaning of which is not very clear. Bar Hiyya seems here to connect this expression to the word חליקה which is not complete clear to me either. Perhaps some vernacular expression lies behind his interpretation here?
Millas-Vallicrosa translates bar Hiyya here 'amb afalcs, amb moltes mentides' i.e. through flattery and many lies. Saadia had translated חלקלקות to Arabic as אלחילה 'stratagem', implying malice (Alobaidi p. 641), Yefet ben Eli as flattery or trickery (Angels and Fire, p. 188.) I have not seen the Arabic text of Yefet ben Eli.

(MM 94:21 – 97:3)

...

The whole prophecy talks about two wicked kingdoms, Edom and Ishmael, that have dominated in the land of Israel in turns. When one kingdom has vanished from this land, the other has dominated it instead. It is on them that [the scripture] says "both kings have their hearts set on evil" (Dan. 11:27), they bring evil to Israel and oppress them. "They shall speak lies at one table" (ibid.) because both of them are inclined towards false messengers, an unjust law and futile words. "They will not succeed", as the Holy One, blessed be He, will not let them succeed but will destroy them and their names shall be lost. "There remains still time for the appointed period (*moed)*" (ibid.). This means the end of the first *moed* out of the two and a half, that are mentioned at the end of the prophecy. This [first] *moed* began from the destruction of the Second Temple and ended when the land of Israel went from the hands of Edom to the hands of Ishmael. This is [the meaning of] "both kings have their hearts set on evil", both the king that had the land in his hands and the king that took the land to his hands.

The beginning of the second *moed* is the beginning of the kingdom of Ishmael. Therefore [the scripture] returns to describe the manner of the kingdom of Ishmael from its beginning, as it is written "he shall return to his land with great riches, his heart on the holy covenant, and he will do and return to his country" (Dan. 11:28). These are the kings of Ishmael, that returned to their lands after conquering the lands of Israel and Babel, and established their royal throne in their countries which are Mesha and Mekhoza.[9] "Their hearts[10] on the holy covenant", could refer to the evil of their expelling the Israelites from the land of the Hagarites and not letting any Jews to dwell there. It could also refer to the better, when during a short period they established their royal throne in Damascus, and all that time that their kingdom was in Damascus, they were not so wicked towards Israel.

The verse says "at the appointed time (*moed*) he shall return and come to the south" (Dan. 11:29) to the royal throne that they later established in Babel, transferring it from Damascus and Mesha, during the rule of the sons of Abbas, after 130 years of the kingdom of the despised. And the scripture says "the first times are not like the latter times" (ibid.), as the kingdom in Babel does not act in the manner of the earlier time when they conquered Babel from the Persians, or in the later times when it will be taken from them at the end of the second *moed*.[11]

And it says "the nomads[12] of Kittim shall come against him and he shall be stricken", this refers to remote people living in the desert that had adopted this error. From this time on their kingdom

9 מישא ומחוזה Mecca and Hejaz? Millas Vallicrosa in his translation p. 159. See also Tsurat ha-Aretz, ed. Münster, p. 40 where bar Hiyya places Mesha in the second *aqlim* together with the desert of Paran, the Sea of Reeds, and the Nile.

10 Bar Hiyya himself uses plural here.

11 At this point bar Hiyya is extending his discourse from purely historical into a speculation of the future based on the prophecy.

12 See Millas-Vallicrosa, Llibre Revelador p. 160, see also BDB p. 850

diminished and lost power. We have seen that from the time of the kingdom of the sons of Abbas, relatives of the despised *Meshugga,* the kingdom of Ishmael was split in two and later into several kingdoms. At the same time, their hatred towards Israel increased. As it is written "he shall be stricken and return and be angry towards the hole covenant" (Dan. 11:30), from the time that they were weakened, they have crushed and oppressed Israel and stirred up hatred towards it. (MM 97:11 – 98:9)

...

"Arms shall stand" (Dan. 11:31), arms of those who have forsaken the holy covenant will rise and "profane the temple" (ibid.). These are the armies of the evil Edom, that conquered the land of Israel from the kings of Ishmael, like it is in their hands today. (MM 98:12 - 15)