OTSEM 2021 Abstract **Heli Alamaunu**

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Among the wise – antecedent conditions of group identification in Proverbs

Cultivation of wisdom and formation of wise character have been regarded as key concepts in Proverbs and have also received much scholarly attention during recent years. A less examined aspect is the role of social relations and, particularly, the general ability of an individual to join a group. By applying the insights of self-categorization theory by social psychologist John Turner and colleagues, this article attempts to study the antecedent conditions of group identification in Proverbs, i.e. how an individual is instructed to relate to others and to oneself and how these conditions enable joining a group. According to self-categorization theory, one of the basic processes that underlie group identification is depersonalization, which indicates that one needs to identify oneself as an interchangeable exemplar of a group to be able to join it. Hence, the present article studies how this kind of attitude or perception is described in the sayings of Proverbs as well as the possible perceptions that may hinder or prevent group identification. Further, the article discusses how these antecedent conditions of group identifications are represented in terms of character forming and the pursuit of wisdom.

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Among the wise – antecedent conditions of group identification in Proverbs

Focal points for the discussion

Dear reader,

This paper is an attempt to study four selected proverbs in light of two aspects of self-categorization theory, the concept of depersonalization and the levels of abstraction. It is written for the OTSEM seminar, and will be, in other form, part of my dissertation, where I study relational agency in Proverbs and in the Dead Sea Scrolls 1QS and 1QH^{a}.

I am now on the first year of my PhD project and this is my first presentation, hence, I am very interested to hear feedback specifically concerning 1) the theoretical perspectives and 2) how they work in the analysis. Of course, I am also grateful for all feedback.

Best wishes,

Heli

Among the wise – antecedent conditions of group identification in Proverbs

Heli Alamaunu

1. Introduction

The book of Proverbs presents a rich variety of sayings, poems, and teachings related to different areas of life. In biblical scholarship[1], studies conducted over the past decades have emphasized, for instance, questions of moral agency and the formation of wise character. Although it is widely acknowledged that community has an important role in the book of Proverbs[2], a less examined aspect, according to my understanding, is *the ability of an individual* to act in terms of a group or to identify with it, i.e. the antecedent conditions of group identification.[3] In the present article, I study these perceptions of an individual that precede one's joining a group. I apply two aspects of self-categorization theory, the concept of depersonalization and the levels of abstraction, and seek to explain those conditions that, from the standpoint of an individual, are represented as enabling, enhancing or preventing group identification and, thus, group membership.

In order to study the selected texts through principles of self-categorization theory, it is necessary to raise the question: How is it possible to study *self* or subjectivity in ancient texts? The question is basically the same both within the modern psychological studies and in the research of antique texts in that, in the analysis phase, the researcher does not have access inside the subjects' minds. In terms of studying antique texts, the situation includes also a great temporal distance. In addition, it is often difficult to elicit the author, and even if that person was evident, it is not clear that

[1] E.g. William P. Brown, *Character in Crisis: A Fresh Approach to the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), Jacqueline E. Lapsley, *Can These Bones Live? The Problem of the Moral Self in the Book of Ezekiel* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), Christopher B. Ansberry, *Be Wise, My Son, and Make My Heart Glad: An Exploration of the Courtly Nature of the Book of Proverbs*, BZAW (Berlin & Boston, 2010), William P. Brown, *Wisdom's Wonder: Character, Creation, and Crisis in the Bible's Wisdom Literature* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), Anne W. Stewart, *Poetic Ethics in Proverbs: Wisdom Literature and the Shaping of the Moral Self* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

[2] E.g. Carol A. Newsom, "Positive Psychology and Ancient Israelite Wisdom," in *The Bible and the Pursuit of Happiness: What the Old and New Testaments Teach Us about the Good Life*, ed. Brent A. Strawn (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 118–36.

[3] Ansberry, *Be Wise*, 91.

the first-person speech in the text portrays specifically this person.[4] Researchers in the book "Religion and the Self in Antiquity" approach the concept of self from a viewpoint, which assumes that ancient selves are "linguistic constructions, known only as they are described or as they express themselves in the texts."[5] In the present article, I apply a similar standpoint. Proverbs does not mostly deliver depictions of self from a subjective point of view, but instructions concerning, for instance, decisions and actions of an exemplary self. Thus, I ask how this exemplary self's ability to identify with the group of wise is presented. Hence, my study is located on textual and symbolic levels, and seeks to uncover the ways in which an individual is instructed to relate to others and oneself. Although we cannot reach the ways people categorized themselves, the theory helps to form hypotheses of those.

In the analysis, I apply the terms group and group membership. It is essential to note that I do not use the term group to refer to some fixed and stable set of people, but utilize a similar approach as the self-categorization theory:

> a psychological group is defined as one that is psychologically significant for the members, to which they relate themselves subjectively for social comparison and the acquisition of norms and values.[6]

The basic assumption in my research is thus that the wise in Proverbs represent this kind of group, whose norms and values are recommended to be adopted by the intended audience of the book. One could ask, why is it necessary to include the social dimension in the study of character formation and the role of an individual in Proverbs. Should these concepts rather be approached as separate distinctions? One core idea in the self-categorization theory is that the theory does not define *self* as a separate non-social concept so that one would be acting in terms of personal self when being alone and in terms of a group when participating a social activity. Instead, both individual and social behaviour are understood as "acting in terms of self". Hence, the theory proposes that the personal level, too, can be seen to have contents and functions that are social by nature.[7] Based on this premise, it is essential to explore how individual's ability to join a group is portrayed also in the studies of character formation.

In what follows, I will briefly present the principles of self-categorization theory, and the aspects that I will use in the analysis, depersonalization and the levels of abstraction. Then, I will shortly present some important questions discussed in the study of Proverbs in recent years before analysing four proverbs (Prov 15:31, 15:12, 10:12, 11:2) in terms of the principles of self-

[4] Saul M. Olyan, "The Search for the Elusive Self in Texts of the Hebrew Bible," in *Religion and the Self in Antiquity*, ed. David Brakke, Michael L. Satlow, and Steven Weitzman (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), 40–50 (40).
[5] David Brakke, Michael L. Satlow, and Steven Weitzman, "Introduction" in *Religion and the Self in Antiquity*, 1–11 (5).
[6] Turner, John C., *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-categorization Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), 1.
[7] Turner, *Rediscovering*, ix, 46.

categorization. In the final part of the article, I will sum up the results of the present analysis and discuss their implications.

2. Self-categorization theory

In the early 70s, the social psychologists Henri Tajfel and John C. Turner conducted with their colleagues a series of studies concerning group formation and intergroup behaviour.[8] Based on their early experiments they suggested that more attention should be paid to social identities instead of emphasizing solely individuals and their distinctive behaviour in groups. Thus, in the late 70s and 80s, their findings were introduced as *social identity theory*. Later John C. Turner and his colleagues developed *self-categorization theory* that was established in the 80s. The theory relies on the insights of the earlier work on social identity theory; nevertheless, its scope is slightly different. Whereas the focus in the social identity theory is on intergroup relations, self-categorization theory is intended to study the cognitive processes related to the general ability of individuals to form groups. Hence, the models' views on self-concept differ from one another in that social identity theory is applied to examine aspects of self derived from group membership, whereas the focus in self-categorization theory is on the processes that make group behaviour possible.[9] In addition, while social identity theory emphasizes the meaning of positive self-esteem, self-categorization theory underlines self-understanding.[10]

2.1 Levels of abstraction

When studying the antecedent conditions of group identification, it is essential to define the theory's view on *self*. According to self-categorization theory,

> cognitive representations of the self take the form, amongst others, of self-categorizations, i.e. cognitive groupings of oneself and some class of stimuli as the same (identical, similar, equivalent, interchangeable, and so on) in contrast to some other class of stimuli.[11]

Thus, self-categorization is formed as a result of groupings and comparisons of certain stimuli, and, as the definition indicates, some cognitive groupings are classified as, for instance, similar or

[8] Alexander S. Haslam, *Psychology in Organizations: The Social Identity Approach*, 2nd ed. (London: SAGE Publications, 2004), 18. In these experiments the participants were divided into two randomly formed groups and were asked to award points for others. Even in those minimal conditions they started to award points for people identified as ingroup members, i.e. the responses showed ingroup favoritism. In the second study they were allowed to choose a strategy that allowed them either the greatest reward for their own group or maximum difference to the outgroup. Again, the responses showed that the participants favored the maximum difference more than the greater reward.

[9] Turner, *Rediscovering*, ix.

[10] Steven J. Sherman, David L. Hamilton, and Amy C. Lewis, "Perceived Entitativity and the Social Identity Value of Group Memberships," in *Social Identity and Social Cognition*, ed. Dominic Abrams and Michael Hoggs (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 80–110 (88).

[11] Turner, *Rediscovering*, 44.

interchangeable. These self-categorizations may appear at different levels, each of which has its own characteristics: 1) the superordinate level of the self as human being, 2) the intermediate level of ingroup-outgroup categorizations, and 3) the subordinate level of personal self-categorizations. Thus, the main *levels of abstraction* indicate whether one identifies him- or herself mainly as a human being compared to other forms of life, an ingroup member in contrast to outgroup members or an individual, who has unique features compared to other ingroup members.[12]

However, a few remarks on how these levels operate are necessary. The overall nature of social self-concept is situation specific. The same concerns this hierarchical system of self-categorizations, which means that one situation during which one identifies him- or herself on a certain level does not cause a stable change that would have a permanent impact on one's identity.[13] However, when studying the sayings in Proverbs, it is relevant to consider the nature of these instructions[14] in a sense that they aim at instructing how one should continually behave in different situations. Hence, they most likely attempt to make a permanent impact, but also include at least to some extent situation specificity. Moreover, the hierarchy in this system does not operate in a way that one would advance from the subordinate level to intermediate level and finally achieve the superordinate level. The levels are not, thus, intended to contain any kind of superiority or rank order. This is because there is a "functional antagonism" between the levels, which means that the salience of one level prevents simultaneous perception of similarities and differences on the other levels.[15] In addition, even though the personal level is based on the perceived personal identity, it does not imply a more in-depth understanding of self that would be more significant than the other levels. Neither is the intermediate level the only one that reflects social identity. Instead, all of them can be defined as social by their contents and functioning.[16]

Although these comparisons on the main levels of self-categorizations do not follow a hierarchical order, there are certain connections between them that result from the way in which the self-categorizations become salient, i.e. cognitively prepotent. The basic principle is that "self-categories tend to become salient at one level less abstract than the self-category in terms of which they are being compared".[17] This means that, for instance, when comparisons are made on the intermediate level, the personal self becomes salient, and the salience of ingroup membership is

[12] Turner, *Rediscovering*, 45.
[13] Turner, *Rediscovering*, 44.
[14] Richard J. Clifford (1995, 6), *The Book of Proverbs and our Search for Wisdom* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1995), 6, discusses the nature of sayings in Proverbs and argues that they should not be understood as advice but emphasizes their truth-stating nature: "They invite the reader to become active, to make a judgment, to discern."
[15] Turner, *Rediscovering*, 49.
[16] Turner, *Rediscovering*, 45–6.
[17] Turner, *Rediscovering*, 48.

formed as a result of inter-species comparisons. Hence, the identity as human being becomes salient, when comparisons include several forms of life instead of only human species.

2.2 Depersonalization

In addition to self-categorization, a significant change in the self-perception is associated with the antecedent conditions of group membership. This change is referred to as *self-stereotyping* or *depersonalization*:

> The factors which enhance the salience of ingroup-outgroup categorizations tend to increase the perceived identity (similarity, equivalence, interchangeability) between self and ingroup members (and difference from outgroup members) and so depersonalize individual self-perception on the stereotypical dimensions which define the relevant ingroup membership. Depersonalization refers to the process of 'self-stereotyping' whereby people come to perceive themselves more as the interchangeable exemplars of a social category than as unique personalities defined by their individual differences from others.[18]

Thus, the terms *depersonalization* and *self-stereotyping* represent a process, where a person pays less attention to their personal characteristics than to the features that they share with the group. As a phenomenon this belongs to the most important phases in the self-categorization theory, since, firstly, it characterizes a basic process that underlies several group phenomena such as co-operation, empathy, and social influence. Secondly, in a broader sense, depersonalization of self-perception represents the profound condition for group behaviour, which means that the perception of individual self *changes* towards a direction that is more defined by the perceived group membership.[19]

Furthermore, even though depersonalization is defined as a state where one's unique personality is perceived less, it is important to note that this state is not permanent. Instead, the social self-perception is seen to "vary along a continuum from the perception of self as a unique person […] to the perception of the self as an ingroup category".[20] In other words, depersonalization does not represent a rare or unusual process but rather a situation specific phase that can occur frequently in daily life. Also, in terms of depersonalization it is important to consider the nature of the sayings. Even though one specific situation during which one depersonalizes does not cause a permanent change, a consistent habit to regard oneself as an exemplar of a group may have a greater impact as a mindset that enhances one's ability to identify with others.

[18] Turner, *Rediscovering*, 50.
[19] Turner, *Rediscovering*, 50–1. Several theories and instances define depersonalization in a somewhat different way. For example, the term is used to stand for feelings of disconnection to one's self or to the experience of being detached from oneself. However, in self-categorization theory depersonalization is not used to denote any kind of disconnection, loss or regression in terms of identity but only a change in perception or even a gain in identity.
[20] Turner, *Rediscovering*, 49.

In what follows, I move on to discuss essential questions related to character formation and its communal dimensions in previous studies of Proverbs. Thereafter, I analyse the four selected proverbs in the light of the introduced aspects of self-categorization theory, depersonalization and the levels of abstraction.

3. Character formation and groups in Proverbs

As mentioned earlier, the character formation of an individual and social behaviour are not to be understood as separate processes.[21] For this reason, it is important to look at some main trends in previous studies concerning moral agency and character formation in Proverbs.

According to Stewart, the overall meaning of Proverbs emphasizes wisdom and the formation of a wise character.[22] The shaping of one's character is strongly related to groups in that Proverbs includes multiple sayings which either depict the wise[23] in a favourable light or warn from following the foolish[24]. The decision-making and reasoning of an individual have been studied to some extent from the standpoint of moral agency.[25] In these discussions, one of the topics that has caused most controversy is the question of whether character is formed through one profound choice between wisdom or foolishness, which leads to a stable moral type, or if the formation of a wise character is a continuous and life-long process. John Barton has suggested that character should be understood as stable and nonchanging and, thus, the descriptions of the wise and the foolish in Proverbs refer to static moral types.[26] His view of static and unchanging nature of character has been criticized and challenged based on, for instance, the contents of several sayings in Proverbs in which wisdom is described as an entity that one should constantly seek and acquire more (e.g. Prov 1:5, 3:14, 4:5, 13:20, 16:16, 19:20, 23:23, and 23:14). In contrast, William P. Brown has argued that Proverbs indicate continuous formation of character within the student.[27]

The goal of this article is not to solve this dilemma. However, within the scope of this analysis, these topics concerning the nature of a wise character are of high relevance. In this respect, the most essential question is: How are these questions of character formation and its nature as unchanging or

[21] Ansberry, *Be Wise*, 84.
[22] Stewart, *Poetic Ethics*, 2. See also Clifford, *Book of Proverbs*, 43.
[23] Proverbs present, for instance, חכם (wise), צדיק (righteous), שכל (prudent) and צנע (humble) as favorable features of character.
[24] The negatively portrayed characters are, for example אויל (foolish), חטא (sinful), רע (evil), רשע (wicked), לוץ (mocker) and כסיל (dunce).
[25] E.g. John Barton, *Understanding Old Testament Ethics: Approaches and Explanations* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), Ansberry, *Be Wise*, Brown, *Wisdom's Wonder*, and Stewart, *Poetic Ethics*.
[26] Barton, *Understanding*, 67.
[27] Brown, *Wisdom's Wonder*.

constantly developing related to group identification and its antecedent conditions? In terms of studying the antecedent conditions of group identification, this is relevant in a sense that if character is stable, the sayings are not likely to describe any kind of links or associations between the pursuit of wisdom and joining the group of wise. Furthermore, if Proverbs signals only one simple[28] decision between wisdom and foolishness, which would automatically cause one's membership in the group of the wise, it would be most unlikely that the sayings would instruct how one should relate to others or imply that the social relations would have any kind of greater influence on one's life.

In terms of self-categorization theory and particularly group identification, many instructions and sayings in Proverbs are relevant. The basic notion in the self-categorization theory is that personal self-categorizations on the subordinate level are also social by nature. By means of multiple instructions that highlight helpful and reciprocal behaviour, Proverbs emphasizes that deeds towards others, particularly bad or wrong ones, backfire and a person ends up suffering from those by themselves.[29] In terms of the levels of abstraction, these sayings are similar to the categorizations on the subordinate level, where one compares him- or herself as an individual and one's unique features with others. In addition to these, Proverbs contain sayings that refer directly to groups and attitudes towards them. Next, I study the verses 15:31, 15:12, 10:12 and 11:2, which contain both direct expressions of the (group of) wise and attitudes that may prevent or enhance one's ability to relate to others. These proverbs contain words and figurative language that are obviously not isolated from their other occurrences in Proverbs or in the Hebrew Bible; hence, I also pay attention to their connections elsewhere. However, due to the scope of this article, I focus on their associations in Proverbs. In addition, when studying Proverbs and the meanings related to social relationships, it is important to note that the overall meaning of the book is strongly connected to cultivation of wisdom. Hence, in addition to the aspects of self-categorization I pay attention to the links between social conditions and acquiring wisdom.

4. Antecedent conditions of group identification

4.1 The rebukes of life

אֹזֶן שֹׁמַעַת תּוֹכַחַת חַיִּים בְּקֶרֶב חֲכָמִים תָּלִין׃	The ear that hears the rebukes of life dwells among the wise.[30]

[28] Katherine J. Dell, "*Get Wisdom, Get Insight": An Introduction to Israel's Wisdom Literature* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2000), 16.
[29] E.g. Prov 3:27–30, 10:12, 11:17, 25–6, 14:21, 17:17, 24:29, 25:21, 26:27, 28:27.
[30] Translations are my own.

The verse 15:31 contains a metaphorical expression, a somewhat common linguistic tool in Hebrew Bible[31], i.e. an expression, where a body part metaphor refers to a wider semantic range, often in a sense that a body part represents the whole self.[32] In this case, it likely also includes a functional association, where **אזן** (ear) as a representative of self refers to hearing, and followed by the verb **שמע**, especially to obedience.[33] According to Gillmayr-Bucher, when a body part is used in an expression that indicates a perception, for example seeing with one's own eyes, this highlights the perception and that the person is sure about it.[34] Thus, even though the verb **שמע** enables the meaning of hearing, the metaphorical body part expression emphasizes the meaning as obeying.[35] In terms of group identification, this verse is of high relevance, since it expresses belonging to the group of wise as a direct consequence of being obedient to the rebukes.[36] Hence, the meaning of **תוכחה** and its associations particularly in Proverbs are essential.[37] The semantic field of **תוכחה** includes meanings of, for example, rebuke, reproof, chastisement and correction; thus, all of them express some kind of change in one's attitude or behaviour.[38] In other occurrences in Proverbs, **תוכחה** is associated with obeying correction, instruction and reproof[39], but also, as a consequence of obedience, to being honoured and gaining more understanding and wisdom[40].

In terms of antecedent conditions of group identification, depersonalization and levels of abstraction, Prov 15:31 seems to be in line with depersonalization in that one's focus is described to shift away from oneself in direction to hearing others' words. Hence, it can be seen as an instruction not to focus on oneself as a unique person separated from others, i.e. in SCT's terms, not to self-categorize on the subordinate level. Instead, one is strongly advised to be open, hear and obey the rebukes.

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[31] For example, 5.7 % of the Psalms' words are body part terms. See, for instance, Susanne Gillmayr-Bucher, *Body Images in the Psalms* JSOT 28,3 (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2004), 301–26, for the use of body imagery in Psalms.

[32] Carol A. Newsom, "Woman and the Discourse of Patriarchal Wisdom: A Study of Proverbs 1–9," in *Rhetoric and Hermeneutics: approaches to text, tradition and social construction in biblical and second temple literature*, FAT (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 39–54 (48).

[33] Nicole L. Tilford, *Sensing World, Sensing Wisdom: The Cognitive Foundation of Biblical Metaphors* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2017), 70.

[34] Gillmayr-Bucher, *Body Images*, 302.

[35] See Tillford, *Sensing World*, 87, who argues that the frequent use of שמע is strongly combined with obedience; thus, the student is not only advised to listen to the teacher, but the instructions are also expected to be seen in one's behavior.

[36] In e.g. Prov 10:17 the rejection of תוכחה is described as leading astray or in 15:10 to death.

[37] With total 28 occurrences in the Hebrew Bible, of which 16 appear in Proverbs, תוכחה has a profound role in Proverbs. See also Stewart, *Poetic Ethics*, 86, who argues that "in some sense, the book of Proverbs as a whole is the functional equivalent of rebuke."

[38] David J. A. Clines, Philip R. Davies, and John W. Rogerson, eds., *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2011), 604.

[39] See e.g. Prov 1:23, 25, 30, 3:11 and 5:12.

[40] Prov 13:18, 15:32 and 29:15.

The actualization of one criterion for depersonalization, however, seems somewhat uncertain. To feel oneself as a member of the group, one needs to perceive oneself as an interchangeable exemplar of the group, i.e., not to define oneself as better or worse than the others. The rebukes, which are also combined with discipline[41], may cause feelings of inferiority, which obviously hinders or prevents feelings of similarity with others. However, the following verse 15:32, **פּוֹרֵעַ מוּסָר מוֹאֵס נַפְשׁוֹ וְשׁוֹמֵעַ תּוֹכַחַת קוֹנֶה לֵּב:** (the one who disrespects instruction despises his own soul but the one who hears rebuke gets understanding), does not support this interpretation. Both the MT and the LXX do not refer to external knowledge or wisdom as consequences of obedience to the rebukes, but rather signalize knowledge that is combined with increase of self-understanding and, in the case of the LXX, even stronger 'love for one's own soul'.[42] In this verse 15:32, thus, the use of **נפש** (soul, life) and **לב** (heart) seems to emphasize self as an entity that involves also one's emotional states.[43] Hence, these meanings which combine knowledge and self-understanding with increased wellbeing imply that the rebukes would not prevent one's ability to depersonalize and feel similarity with others. Rather, they seem more likely to enable it.

4.2 A scoffer does not go to the wise

לֹא יֶאֱהַב־לֵץ הוֹכֵחַ לוֹ אֶל־חֲכָמִים לֹא יֵלֵךְ׃	A scoffer does not love the one who corrects him and does not go to the wise.

The verse 15:12 belongs to the very few ones in Proverbs where approaching the wise is directly expressed. In addition to this one and the previously discussed verse 15:31 there is only occurrence, the verse 13:20, where the instruction contains a direct description of 'walking with the wise'. Considering the fact that Proverbs includes multiple sayings where one's attitude or relationship to others, i.e. the social ability of an individual, is portrayed, these three passages and their meanings are of special relevance.[44] Hence, essential is what kind of attitude this verse implies as preventing one's ability to 'go to the wise'.

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[41] E.g. Prov 29:15.

[42] A similar thought is expressed in Prov 19:8. See also Michael V. Fox, *Proverbs 10–31: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* AB 18B (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 604, who argues that rejection of תוכחה in Prov 15:32 refers to the destructive effect of self-hatred.

[43] See Carol A. Newsom, "Sin Consciousness, Self-Alienation, and the Origins of the Introspective Self," in *Rhetoric and Hermeneutics*, 225–37 (226–27), for the use of נפש and לב to refer to self.

[44] See Stewart, *Poetic Ethics*, 46, who discusses the terseness of Proverbs and states: "Only the best, most essential words will do." Hence, compared to genres, which use more descriptive language, individual words in Proverbs may more often carry significant meanings.

A person who does not love the one who rebukes him is called **לץ** (scoffer). With 18 occurrences in Proverbs (total 27 in Hebrew Bible), it belongs to the designations of such types of behaviour that one is strongly instructed to avoid. The root **ליץ** contains nuances such as to scorn, to make a mock, and to scoff.[45] In other occurrences in Proverbs, reproofing **לץ** causes reactions such as disgrace (Prov 9:7) and hatred (Prov 9:8). In terms of depersonalization and levels of abstraction, these kinds of stances represent views that prevent one's ability to join a group. For instance, 'to scoff' does not only include an isolating reaction, which in itself would hinder perceptions of interchangeability, but also at least verbally attacking behaviour. In addition, a mocking and despising stance towards others indicates that one regards him- or herself – at least on the subordinate and intermediate levels – as being different from or superior to them.

It is also important to note that the verb **אהב** (to love) is not directed towards the rebukes, but towards the person who delivers them. This feature may have a specific meaning since the theory assumes that a perceived similarity between oneself and the others does not need to concern several factors. Instead, liking causes one shared attitude, even if one at the same time does not approve the other person's values.[46] This may be the case here, since the other person's message, **תוכחה**, obviously contains correction, i.e. different or opposite views or values, which cannot be straightforwardly shared. Thus, if the corrector is perceived positively as a friend or at least as a person, who gives valuable insights, which help to acquire wisdom and self-understanding, one is more likely to accept their message as well. It is also noteworthy that in Prov 3:12, **תוכחה** is portrayed as God's love, which indicates that it is strongly linked with the themes of wisdom and one's relation to God that belong to the most recurrent topics in Proverbs. This may also explain the word choice of ἀπαίδευτος in the LXX, which refers to an uninstructed or unlearned person.

Up until now, I have discussed two verses, which rather directly express one's relation to the wise. In what follows, I analyse two verses, in which the focus is more specifically on the reactions or stances that may separate people from each other or, on the contrary, bring them together.

4.3 Love covers all sins

שִׂנְאָה תְּעוֹרֵר מְדָנִים וְעַל כָּל־פְּשָׁעִים תְּכַסֶּה אַהֲבָה׃ Hatred inflames strife, but love covers all sins.

[45] *DCH*, 544. LXX differs here in a sense that it applies the word ἀπαίδευτος, i.e. an uninstructed or unlearned person, thus, it expresses one's attitude more neutrally than the Hebrew text. However, in Prov 9:7 and 9:8 also LXX uses the words ἀτιμίαν (dishonour) and μισέω (hate).
[46] Turner, *Rediscovering*, 59, 63–5.

The verse 10:12 is crucial in terms of how Proverbs portray the social relations, since it contains contrary aspects, in the first colon the one which expresses strongly negative attitudes between people and in the second colon the most positive one, love. The word designating the negative view is here **שנאה** (hatred), which elsewhere in Proverbs is associated with lying (Prov 10:18), hiding (Prov 26:26) and with an emotion or reaction that separates people from each other (Prov 25:17). According to 10:18, if **שנאה** is hidden, it leads to lying, while 26:26 indicates that even if hatred is hidden it will eventually be exposed. The same root as a noun referring to a person **שנא** is applied, for instance, in 27:6. In this verse, one's enemy, whose kisses are deceitful, is compared to the wounds caused by a friend, which are described as faithful. Thus, hatred as an inner emotion is depicted as affecting negatively although one's purpose (kiss) was good. Furthermore, these passages show that hatred is portrayed as highly harmful, even if it is hidden.

From the viewpoint of the levels of abstraction, hatred appears as to be very negative and isolating since one defines others aggressively on both the intermediate and the subordinate levels. On the superordinate level, a person compares the features that are common between themselves and other people in contrast to other forms of life. Hence, if one perceives other people with hatred, categorizations on the superordinate level are likely not to exist. Also, in terms of depersonalization, if one has hostile thoughts towards others, the change of focus from oneself to the direction of others in a sense that one would be open to others' views, seems rather ambiguous. The theory also helps to understand those consequences of hatred that the verse 27:6 expresses, because it assumes that essential in terms of antecedent conditions of group identification is not primarily the behaviour, but an individual's cognitive groupings of oneself in contrast to others.[47]

Like in the verse 10:12, **שנאה** and **אהבה** (love) appear in several other sayings of the book that are antithetical in structure.[48] In 10:12, the influence of **אהבה** is particularly emphatic since it is described to cover all sins. Notable here is that the Hebrew term **פשע** (sin) typically refers to rebellion and sin against divine and human authorities[49], but according to the sayings in Proverbs, how **פשע** should be treated depends strongly on who is guilty of it. The verse 28:3 instructs one to confess his or her sins, while others' sins (Prov 19:11, 17:9) are advised to be overlooked. In the verse 17:9 **פשע** is associated with **אהבה** (love): the one who covers a sin is seeking love, which is contrasted with the one who repeats (arguing) on the matter and this way separates friends. Thus, an individual is instructed not to mind others' wrong deeds, even though **פשע** is portrayed as highly destructive and harmful behaviour in several occurrences (Prov 28:13, 28:24, 29:6) and **אהבה** is strongly characterized

[47] Turner, *Rediscovering*, 44.
[48] Love and hatred are contrasted also in, for example, Prov 9:8, 12:1, 13:24, 15:17, and 27:6.
[49] *DCH*, 792.

as an attitude that enhances one's ability to maintain a connection to other people. This perception best corresponds to categorization on the superordinate level, where one does not focus on differences between individuals or groups. Self-categorizations become salient at one level less abstract than the level in terms of which they are being compared; hence, ingroup identity becomes salient through inter-species comparisons on the superordinate level. The attitude emphasized in this verse enhances one's loving or caring perception of others and, therefore, the ingroup identity.

4.4 Arrogance comes with shame

בָּא־זָדוֹן וַיָּבֹא קָלוֹן וְאֶת־צְנוּעִים חָכְמָה׃	When arrogance comes then comes shame, but wisdom is with the humble.

The verse 11:2 presents **קלון** (shame) as a direct consequence of **זדון**, which involves connotations of presumptuousness, arrogance and impudence.[50] These emotions represent such attitudes that prevent one's identification with others by causing comparisons where a person perceives themselves as above others instead of categorizing them as similar. As for other occurrences of **זדון** in Proverbs, it is worth noticing that arrogance is strongly associated with a mocking attitude **לוץ** in Prov 21:24 as well as with strife and contention in Prov 13:10. Furthermore, **קלון** contains nuances of shame, dishonour and disgrace, and the term is linked with scorn in Prov 18:3 and with scoff and strife in Prov 22:10.[51]

In sum, both arrogance and shame are portrayed as causing isolating and aggressive attitudes. However, it is relevant to look at the meaning and associations of **מדון** (strife), since it is combined with both **קלון** and **שנאה** (hatred) in the previously discussed verse 10:12. One of the word's occurrences is found in the highly enigmatic verse 18:19: the proverb expresses figuratively that an offended brother, **אָח נִפְשָׁע,** is like a fortified city, whereas **מדונים** (quarrels) are like bars of a castle. There is no full agreement that **פשע** is used here to indicate offense towards the brother. However, Fox points out that this verse is most often interpreted in this way and suggests that the expressions of fortified city and bars of a castle imply emotional exclusion.[52] This interpretation is supported by Prov 25:28 where a city wall is metaphorically used to refer to an individual's ability to control one's temper. Thus, offense or insult is described to cause a state, where one isolates oneself from others,

[50] *DCH*, 82.
[51] *DCH*, 255. LXX reads the verse as: ἀδελφὸς ὑπὸ ἀδελφοῦ βοηθούμενος ὡς πόλις ὀχυρὰ καὶ ὑψηλή, ἰσχύει δὲ ὥσπερ τεθεμελιωμένον βασίλειον, which implies basically the opposite to the Hebrew text: a brother helped by a brother. See, for instance, Richard J. Clifford, Richard J. (2009). "Reading Proverbs 10–22," Interpretation JBT 63 (2009): 242–53 (252), who argues that the Greek version is unlikely.
[52] Fox, *Proverbs 10–31*, 644.

and quarrels are portrayed as the bars that keep the castle inaccessible, i.e. ensure the emotional exclusion. Hence, attitudes such as arrogance, hatred, insult, and disgrace are represented as highly harmful and destructive emotions, which may at worst lead to quarrels that keep one emotionally isolated from others. Finally, in terms of depersonalization, emotional exclusion can be understood as a total concentration on oneself, which is virtually a complete opposite of a depersonalized state where one's focus is changed in the direction of others.

The second colon reinforces wisdom's importance: arrogance and shame are contrasted with the humble, with whom the wisdom is. The root **צנע** contains meanings of being modest or humble or acting in a humble way.[53] Since there are only two occurrences of **צנע** in the HB, they do not reveal much information of how the was associated in ancient Israel. However, it may notable here how **חכמה** (wisdom) is expressed, since it may reveal how strongly humbleness as stance is connected with it. While several verses in Proverbs deal with pursuing (Prov 4:5) or learning (Prov 30:3) wisdom, the beginning of wisdom (Prov 4:7, 9:10), walking or being in the way of wisdom (Prov 4:11), and seeking (Prov 14:6) or buying (Prov 17:16) wisdom, the verse 11:2 portrays wisdom as an entity. Hence, humbleness represents an attitude or stance that is strongly related to a wise character. Also, in terms of depersonalization and the levels of abstraction, modesty or humbleness serve as attitudes that enhance one's ability to perceive similarities and shift the focus from oneself to others.

5. Conclusion

In this article, I have explored antecedent conditions of group identification in Proverbs by focusing on two aspects of self-categorization theory, depersonalization and the levels of abstraction, and by analysing four proverbs in more depth as case studies. These verses and their associations show several attitudes, reactions and behaviours that prevent or improve one's ability to depersonalize or categorize in a way that enhances one's aim to join the group.

The connection between the aforementioned two aspects of self-categorization theory and the selected verses is obvious in several proverbs. The most evident links between depersonalization and levels of abstraction appear in proverbs that emphasize the meaning of rebukes and the loving attitude towards others. Both are also straightforwardly connected to being with the wise. Obedience to rebukes requires an attitude where one needs to be open to others' words and possibly change one's own perception. This shift is clearly compatible with depersonalization, in which an individual changes one's perception in the direction of others. According to the levels of abstraction,

[53] *DCH*, 136.

categorizations on the superordinate level, where one perceives similarity with others, enhance ingroup identification. This appears clearly in a way that one is instructed to perceive others lovingly, overlook their sins, and love the one who rebukes them. This is also similar to the theory's core assumption that liking or loving others may create an identification, even if one does not share their values. In addition to the clear similarities between the theory's principles and the proverbs' message, the meanings in proverbs imply several attitudes or emotions, such as hatred, shame, insult and arrogance, that may prevent one's ability to join a group by causing either focus on oneself or negative and thus isolating behaviour towards others.

One of my aims was also to explore whether meanings related to group identification are connected to wisdom and the formation of a wise character. This appears clearly in the associations and consequences of rebukes, which in several occurrences in the MT as well as in the LXX are represented as adding to one's wisdom and self-understanding. Also, several instructions, which focus on one's attitudes and relations to others, imply that the social aspect of one's self is highly relevant regarding the formation of a wise character.

Although the scope of the present article only includes a small selection of proverbs that relate to community, groups or one's social agency, the above-discussed verses and their multiple associations challenge the assumption of a static moral type by explicating the importance of one's relation to self and others. Furthermore, they imply rather demanding thinking and behaviour: one is advised to overlook others' wrong deeds and to humbly receive and obey rebukes. These emphases cast doubt to the interpretation of Proverbs as simplistic wisdom, or the decision between wisdom and foolishness or righteousness and wickedness as simple and binary, since one is not only required to control or pay attention to one's own attitudes, emotions and reactions. Instead, one is exhorted even to change them and adjust one's behaviour in order to consider others.

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OTSEM 2021Summary

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In my paper "Among the Wise – Antecedent Conditions of Group Identifications in Proverbs" I study four selected proverbs and explore how they reflect an individual's ability to join a group. I apply two aspects of self-categorization theory, depersonalization and the levels of abstraction, to seek to explain those conditions that, from the standpoint of an individual, are represented as enabling, enhancing or preventing group identification. Depersonalization represents a process, where a person pays less attention to their personal characteristics than to the features that they share with the group and consider themselves more as a typical group member. The levels of abstraction indicate whether one identifies him- or herself mainly as a human being compared to other forms of life, an ingroup member in contrast to outgroup members or an individual, who has unique features compared to other ingroup members. In addition to these aspects, I pay attention to how they are expressed in terms of one of the main themes in Proverbs, the formation of wise character.

My PhD project

The aim of my PhD project is to examine relational agency, i.e. the capacity to relate to others and to oneself, by using psychological and social scientific models in Proverbs and in the Dead Sea Scrolls 1QS and 1QH^{a}. I apply psychological and social scientific theories and models developed mainly in cognitive linguistics. Psychological theories and models have been applied in biblical studies for a few decades. Also, in my work the psychological models, dual-process theory and self-categorization theory, provide a tool to examine the inner world of the texts and how they reflect social dynamics. Methodologically the study is based on models from cognitive linguistics, conceptual metaphor and blend, as well as on comparative method. The core idea in these cognitive models is that the textual and cultural representations in texts reflect thinking patterns.

In order to study both the subjective and social dimensions of agency, an essential part of my study is to form an integrative model of two psychological theories, dual-process theory by Jonathan St. B. T. Evans and Keith Stanovich and self-categorization theory by John Turner. Evans' and Stanovich's dual-process theory includes the idea that human thinking is produced by two forms of processing, fast intuitive processes and slower reflective processes. In my research, one of the most essential questions is related to the interaction between fast, intuitive type 1 and slower, reflective type 2 processes. Self-categorization theory is a part of social identity approach (SIA), which includes social identity theory developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner in late 70s and 80s and self-categorization theory by John Turner and his colleagues in late 80s. In my research I apply mainly the insights of self-categorization theory, which is developed to study the cognitive processes related to the general ability of individuals to form groups. In my source material I examine how the texts reflect one's relation to self and to others, i.e. dialogical speech towards self, decisions, choices and thinking and focus mainly on expressions of inner conflicts. One aspect in them is perfection as individual's chance to change. These standpoints encapsulate largely the situations of decision-making and deliberation as well as depict one's relation to other people.

A Sign of Life: *Kābôd* in Isaiah 35:1-10

Scott Bickle

Abstract

This paper explores the semiotic function of the *kābôd* (כבוד) (commonly translated as "glory") of YHWH in Isaiah 35. Semiotics defined as simply as possible is the study of signs and symbols and how they communicate meaning. This paper operates on the understanding that the *kābôd* of YHWH should be understood in its proper context as analogous to the Akkadian concept of *melammu* (the tangible eminence of a deity reflecting their power). This image is the basic interpretation of *kābôd* which signifies YHWH's presence in the text. This paper offers a semiotic structural exegesis of Isaiah 35 to understand the effects of YHWH's *kābôd* and the way it functions in the text for deeper semantic effect.

Signs are highly contextual and communicative by their very nature. This paper utilises a semiotic structural exegesis first formulated by A.J. Greimas in: *Structural Semantics: An Attempt at a Method* (1983) to understand how these signs communicate on a deeper level of meaning through the rhetoric of the text.

This paper will show that the effects of YHWH's *kābôd* (כבוד) in Isaiah 35:1-10 are deeply imbedded in the structural element of the text creating a semantic-effect whereby *kābôd* becomes a literary symbol of restoration. It signifies YHWH's salvific abilities over creation and the people of God. The effects of YHWH's *kābôd* are shown through its function as the catalyst of restoration and the reversal of judgment. YHWH's *kābôd* in the narrative functions as a sign of his presence and as a sign of spiritual restoration for the people of God.

A Sign of Life: *Kābôd* in Isaiah 35

OTSEM Conference 2021

Scott Bickle

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A Sign of Life: Isaiah 35:1-10

1. Introduction

YHWH's *kābôd* (כבוד) in Isaiah 35:1-10 is a literary symbol of restoration. It signifies YHWH's salvific abilities directed towards the people of God and creation. This semiotic structural exegesis concludes that the effect of *kābôd* reverses judgment by restoring the personified landscape and by reversing the obduracy of the people from Isaiah 6. Theologically, this suggests YHWH's presence as a catalyst of restoration and safety akin to that of the biblical Exodus narrative, and offers the hope of spiritual restoration from death to life.

2. Translation

1 The wilderness and dryland will exult,[1] and let the desert rejoice and bloom like a meadow saffron. **2** It will surely bloom and let it rejoice with joy and singing. The *kābôd* of Lebanon[2] will be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They[3] will see the *kābôd* of YHWH and the majesty of our God.

3 Strengthen the hands of the weak, and make firm[4] the knees of the stumbling. **4** Say to those with an anxious heart, "Be strong; do not fear!" Behold, your God will

[1] LXX is an imperative: (Ευφρανθητι), signifying that the landscape is ordered to exult. The LXX throughout Isa. 35:1-2 uses a chain of imperatives where the MT and 1QIsa[a] use the jussive. This seems to be an editorial decision that understands the first two verses follow the imperatives in v. 3 in the Hebrew manuscripts. The MT and 1QIsa[a] are the more significant readings and seem to attest the more original text.

[2] 1QIsa[a] lacks the definite article for Lebanon. Given that it agrees with the MT attesting the definite article for both Carmel and Sharon, it seems to be a scribal error. The presence or absence of the definite article does not alter the translation in this instance, rather indicates the locations as proper placenames.

[3] LXX reads, "my people" and likewise Tg. Isa. "the house of Israel," in what appears to be an editorial decision based on clarifying the subject of the verse who "sees." The more difficult reading is attested in the MT and 1QIsa[a] and is therefore preferred as the more original.

[4] LXX does not list this second verb, rather, the modifying verb of "feeble knees" is connected to the same "make strong" (ἰσχύσατε) which modifies "hands" using a consecutive "and" (καὶ). The MT and 1QIsa[a] should be considered the more original and are preferred.

bring[5] vengeance, he will bring[6] the recompense of God and save you. 5 Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf will be opened. 6 Then the lame will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb will sing for joy, because waters break through in the wilderness, and streams in the desert. 7 And the scorched ground will become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water. In the habitation of jackals, their resting place,[7] the grass will become reeds and rushes.

8 And a highway will be there, and it will be called[8] The Way[9] of Holiness. The unclean will not pass over it,[10] but it will be for those who walk on the way, and fools will not wander on it. 9 No lion will be there, nor violent beast go up on it, they will not be found there, but the redeemed will walk there. 10 And YHWH's ransomed will return and come to Zion with singing, and joy everlasting will be on their heads; they will attain joy and gladness; and sorrow and sighing will flee.

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[5] 1QIsa[a] attests the hiph. impf.: (יביא) meaning "will bring" as opposed to the MT qal impf. (יבוא) meaning "will come." It is evident that the variants consist of a single consonant causing the disagreement either a *yod* (י) or *vav* (ו), and that this is an easy copying error to either read or write given the similarity of the letters. Neither version is out of place in the context of the passage, but 1QIsa[a] must be preferred as the older and more significant witness.

[6] See previous note.

[7] 1QIsa[a] does not attest the feminine suffix: (רבצ) as compared to the MT: (רבצה); cf. Kutscher, *Language and Linguistic Background,* who argues the two forms have a synonymous meaning and results from an influence of the Aramaic tradition; further, while 1QIsa[a] is the more difficult reading since it does not clarify whose "resting place" is being referenced, it could easily be a scribal omission. Therefore, the MT is preferred.

[8] The MT attests: "it will be called" (יקרא) while 1QIsa[a] reads: "they will call it" (יקראו). Kutscher, *Language and Linguistic Background*, 401-3; Muraoka, "Approach to the Morphosyntax of Syntax of Qumran Hebrew," 200-1; Qimron, *Grammar of the Hebrew Dead Sea Scrolls,* 398-9; and Parry, *Exploring the Isaiah Scrolls,* 42, 242, all note the phenomenon whereby the singular passive is replaced with the plural active in 1QIsa. The version in the MT is thus preferred.

[9] 1QIsa[a], Syr. do not attest the double "way" (ודרך) found in the MT. The LXX attests the adjective "pure," (καθαρα) possibly to amend the MT. This appears to be a dittography and the shorter version of 1QIsa[a] is preferred.

[10] The MT and 1QIsa[a] disagree here on gender of the road. Previously in v. 8 both attested the third-feminine singular (לה) when referencing the name of the road, but now here the MT uses the masculine suffix: "pass over it (him)" (יעברנו), while 1QIsa[a] keeps the feminine suffix: "pass over it (her)" (יעוברנה).

3. Textual Analysis

This section shows that Isaiah 35 is contextually dependent upon the preceding chapters (33-34) and is grammatically and thematically closely related to the contents of deutero-Isaiah. It also concludes that Isaiah 35 consists of three parts.

3.1. Context

Isaiah 35 continues the description of the theme of the day of YHWH from 34:8.[11] The day of YHWH is both in this context, and more generally across the Hebrew Bible, as an eschatological arrival of YHWH on earth to both judge and renew the earth and its inhabitants.[12] YHWH's judgment begins in Isaiah 33, where Lebanon, Sharon, Carmel and Bashan are all judged by YHWH (v. 9), and fear grips the sinners in Zion (v. 14). Conversely, the righteous (v. 15) await YHWH's salvation (v. 22). In Isa. 34, YHWH then sets out to judge the host of heaven (v. 4) and the inhabitants of Bozrah and Edom (v. 6). It is from this context of cosmic judgment and the salvation of the righteous that Isaiah 35 begins.[13] The following content of Isa. 36-39 is introduced as a new narrative section with, "and it happened..." (ויהי).[14] The narrative contents are centred around King Hezekiah and are unrelated to the narrative in chapters 34-35. This, coupled with the lexical signifier of a new literary section, gives strong indication that Isa. 36-39 should not be read as closely connected to Isa. 34-35. The context of Isaiah 35 then is related to the immediately preceding chapter (Isa. 34) but not what follows.

Despite its lack of continuity with Isaiah 36-39, research has long noted the connections between Isaiah 34-35 and Deutero-Isaiah (ch. 40-55).[15] It is important to briefly highlight some of these correlations for adequate contextualisation of our own research goals. Broadly speaking the connections between Isaiah 35 and Deutero-

[11] Clements, *Isaiah 1-39*, 271; Childs, *Isaiah*, 257.
[12] See: von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, II:119–25; also: Hiers, *ABD 2*: 82–83.
[13] Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 380.
[14] Arnold and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §3.5.1c, 86.
[15] See for example especially: Scott, "The Relation of Isaiah, Chapter 35, to Deutero-Isaiah," 178–91; and: Pope, "Isaiah 34 in Relation to Isaiah 35, 40-66," 235–43; also: Smart, *History and Theology in Second Isaiah*; Steck, *Bereitete Heimkehr*; Mathews, *Defending Zion*; Quinn-Miscall, *Isaiah 34-35*; Hagelia, "The Holy Road as a Bridge," 38–57.

Isaiah are made through lexical and imagery similarities. Rare terms like "scorched ground" (שׁרב) (35:7; 49:10),[16] as well as "pool" (אגם) (35:7; 41:18; 42:15), "spring" (מבוע) (35:7; 49:10), and "deaf" (חרשׁ) (35:5; 42:18-19; 43:8), as well as the paralleled verses of 35:10 and 51:11, all suggest a link between Isaiah 35 and 40-55. The imagery of the celebrating wilderness (35:1; 42:11; 51:3; 52:9), streams in the desert (35:6-7; 41:18; 43:19-20; 44:3), the desert blooming (35:1-2; 41:19), a holy way/road (35:8; 40:3; 43:19; 49:11), and the reversal of obduracy (35:5-6; 42:7, 16) also intimately connect Isaiah 35 to deutero-Isaiah. The result of these similarities means that when reading Isaiah 35, we should be aware of the contextual links with Isaiah 40-55 and any insights we might glean on an intertextual basis.

3.2. Outline

The content of Isaiah 35 may be understood as consisting of three sections relating to the day of YHWH: the transformation of the wilderness (vv. 1-2), encouragement for the downtrodden (vv. 3-7), and the description of the highway of holiness (vv. 8-10).[17]

Isaiah 35 describes the personification of the landscape in the text. The wilderness and desert are depicted as rejoicing (שׂושׂ) and blossoming (פרח) (vv. 1-2), and the landscape receives the *kābôd* (כבוד) of Lebanon, the majesty (הדר) of Carmel and Sharon, and "they" see (ראה) the *kābôd* (כבוד) of YHWH, the majesty (הדר) of "our" God (v. 2).

Then a command is given to strengthen weak hands, steady feeble knees, and encourage those with an anxious heart (vv. 3-4). After this, the eyes of the blind are opened, and deaf ears are unplugged (v. 5). The lame leap and the mute sing for joy, since water breaks forth in the wilderness and the desert has streams of water (v. 6).

[16] This term only occurs in Isaiah.

[17] Most scholars structure the chapter into three parts, but use different section breaks throughout. So: Clements, *Isaiah 1-39*, 275, reads this section as a complete unit concluding ch. 1-33. Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 454-55, divides the section into three parts: vv. 1-2; 3-4; 5-10; Watts, *Isaiah 34-66*, 539-42, divides the chapter: vv. 1-2, 3-7, 8-10; Oswalt, *Isaiah: 1-39*, 621-22, separates the text into three sections: vv. 1-4; 5-7; 8-10; Sweeney, *Isaiah 1-39*, 447-48, separates the text into two major sections: vv. 1-2; 3-10.

The hot sand transforms into a pool, the parched ground into springs of water, and the grass in the dwelling of jackals becomes reeds and rushes (v. 7).

Beyond the transformation of dry land into fertile ground, the installation of a highway called, "the Way of Holiness" (ודרך הקדֹשׁ) becomes a reality (v. 8). Those deemed "unclean" (טמא) are denied access, but rather it is a roadway for those who, "walk on the way" (הלך דרך), even fools will not stray (v. 8). Lions and ravenous animals are not allowed on the highway, but only those "redeemed" (גאולים) walk on it (v. 9). This highway becomes the path on which the "ransomed of YHWH" (יהוה ופדויי) travel to Zion with song and joy; they are glad and joyful, while sorrow and sighing flee (v. 10).

3.3. Genre

It should be noted that the text of this paper is not considered historical narrative (stories that recall, or are presented in a way that mimics historical events), but it is in its own way 'narrative.' This means that it tells a story, drawing the reader into a world, whether historically evident or not, through the use of vivid imagery and literary techniques which advance the plotline of the text.[18] Powell defines narrative as, "any work of literature that tells a story."[19] The 'narrative' assessed in this paper then tells a story of the theophany of YHWH.

4. Semiotic Exegesis: From Nature to Nurture

This section applies a semiotic structural exegesis to determine the effect of the *kābôd* of YHWH in Isaiah 35. It will show that the Model Author employs the standard notion of *kābôd* as signaling the presence of YHWH in the narrative. Beyond this standard semiotic function, the Model Author structures the narrative, its characters and themes in order to apply deeper semantic meaning to the function of YHWH's

[18] Cf. Dutcher-Walls, *Jezebel*, 1–2; Bodner, *After the Invasion*, 5–6.
[19] Powell, *What Is Narrative Criticism?*, 23.

kābôd. In the narrative of Isaiah 35 *kābôd* functions as a sign of YHWH's presence, and signifies his salvation for the people as well as his role as the actant[20] of salvation.

4.1. Figurative Analysis

This section will assess the figurative elements of the text in three stages looking at actors, space, and time. These are the figures who make up the narrative actants and are related through opposition as relayed through modalities.[21]

4.1.1. Actorialisation

Characterisation defines role in Isaiah 35. The over- or under-development of character progression is highlighted by the Model Author to determine meaning in the narrative. This section will show how the characters of Isaiah 35 are developed in relation to the narrative quest of YHWH and the effect of his *kābôd*. The main actors in the text are the narrator, YHWH, the personified landscape, the people, the unclean, and finally lions/ravenous beasts.

The narrator is an unidentified character, but the Model Author implies that the character Isaiah is the one narrating, since our text is in a book attributed to the prophetic character. The narrative remains mostly descriptive, meaning the narrator tells the story with no direct quotations only relaying the progression of actions. There is one moment where the narrator is the active voice calling into action the transformation of the people (v. 4).

YHWH is the main actor in the text. His missive is to save and return the redeemed people to Zion. He is called "our God," a designation tying him to the covenantal relationship with the people of biblical Israel. The use of his proper name, YHWH, also further designates his relationship to the people of Israel as his name was revealed in the process of that covenant relationship (cf. Ex. 3:13-15). He is characterised through the attributive elements which are unique to him in the

[20] An actant is a character whose actions in a narrative cause change or progress the plot, so: Greimas and Courtés, *Semiotics and Language:* 5.

[21] Modality is the process of modifying a predicate (or what causes an action to take place), so: Greimas and Courtés, *Semiotics and Language:* 193–94.

narrative. YHWH is depicted visually in the text through the advent of his majesty and his *kābôd* (v. 2). He also possesses "vengeance" and "recompense" and the ability to "save" (v. 4). His character is a positive one in the text as his actions result in celebratory and life affirming acts in the text.

The personified landscape designated as the "wilderness," "dryland," and "desert" functions as a character in the text of Isaiah 35. The initial state of the personified landscape is ambiguous, as the locales could either have negative or positive connotations given their application which we will assess later. Likewise, they are the recipients of the *kābôd* of Lebanon and the splendour of Carmel and Sharon, places which are also ambiguous since they have both positive and negative connotations in the context of biblical Israel. The positive reference is building materials for palaces and temples (cf. 1 Kgs. 5:6-14), the negative is as places where non-Yahwistic worship takes place (cf. 1 Kgs. 18), as well as having been the subjects of YHWH's judgment in the previous chapters of Isaiah 33-34. For now, the landscape is characterised through the personified state of being, "glad" (v. 1) and the correlated actions of "rejoicing," "blossoming" (v. 1), and "singing" (v. 2). These characterisations are because of YHWH's actions over the landscape. The multiple levels where they share similarity with the people in the chapter as objects of YHWH's work including restoration, celebration, and song, and being affected by YHWH's *kābôd* and are all indications from the Model Author to the Model Reader that the characters should be compared and contrasted. This comparison will be essential to illuminate the landscape's personification in the narrative and will take place both at the narrative and thematic levels in the coming sections.

The people are portrayed as characters subjected to character the restorative authority of YHWH's *kābôd* in Isaiah 35. They are segmented by the narrator into two groups based on abilities (to be discussed under modalities). They are characterised by their physical abilities, or more specifically the initial lack thereof. Upon the salvific arrival of YHWH, the blind and deaf, lame, and mute are healed and celebrate according to what YHWH has done to restore the desert and wilderness. The

progression from being told to get ready for YHWH's arrival (v. 4), to the removal of their physical ailments (v. 5), celebrating the restored landscape (vv. 6-7) and finally their use of the highway to return to Zion under the titles of "redeemed" and "ransomed" (vv. 9-10), shows that their development as characters is directly correlated to the restoration of the personified wilderness and desert.

The final group of characters are those portrayed negatively in the text, the lion, the ravenous beasts, and the unclean. They are unable to access the highway to Zion and are therefore deemed as belonging to a group outside of those that characterise inhabitants of Zion. The more significant semiotic context for these characters which will be highlighted in the narrative analysis is their function as symbols of judgment (lion), spiritual or physical danger (ravenous beasts), and unholiness (unclean).[22]

4.1.2. Spatialisation

Space is utilised in the narrative of Isaiah 35 as intricately linked with the narrative's progression. The two main spaces are Zion which is at the end of the narrative both literally and figuratively and that which is not Zion, the wilderness, dryland, and desert. The landscape outside of Zion is transformed throughout the narrative to become an acceptable place to house a highway to the space which signifies the telos[23] of the narrative–Zion. Thus, these two elements are highlighted as significant semantic figures which will require special attention as we move forward with the analysis.

4.1.3. Temporalisation

Isaiah 35 utilises the passage of time to describe the future promises of the narrative as immanent and thus drives the present imperative commands. The narrative is overwhelmingly cast into the future with only a small segment (v. 4a) placed in the present. This temporalisation ultimately betrays a possible addressee for the message of the text. The future actions promised in the narrative (vv. 1-2, 4b-10) surround the active command from the narrator to ready the people for the coming of YHWH (v. 4a) and the fulfillment of the passages promises. The future promises are addressed

[22] These symbols will be explained and expanded upon later.

[23] That is, the end result or final outcome of the narrative.

to the people of God, who are apparently awaiting salvation (v. 4) and a return to Zion (v. 10).

4.1.4. Actantial Oppositions

Semiotics asserts that opposition (or difference) is the foundation on which meaning takes place.[24] The oppositions of actants (or the way they relate to one another/themselves) in Isaiah 35 can be related in terms of transformations of states of being, of power, and of knowledge (called modalities).[25]

YHWH is opposed to the landscape and the people as he exerts direct authority or power over them to transform their states from arid to lush. Likewise, YHWH exerts his power over the people and restores their physical ailments. This is a positive exertion of power in that it benefits the recipients, but it still highlights the ability of YHWH to implement change. This is opposed to the lack of ability in the personified landscape or people to either resist the change should it become evident that these changes are negative, or if they are positive, the lack of ability to change oneself.

As a result, the landscape and the people are respectively opposed to their previous states of being. At this initial stage, this indicates their original status as in a state of want or lack which is opposed to their transformed states. Some of the people in the text are opposed to others in the same group as evidenced through their ability assist in transformations (vv. 3-4). To be called to strengthen weak hands, make firm weak knees, and speak to anxious hearts indicates those commanded by the narrator are opposed to others in the community of people not having such ailments.

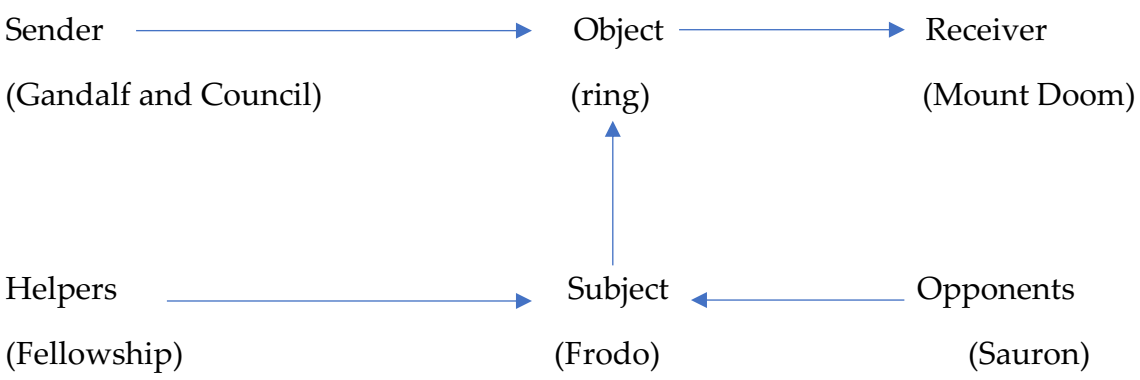
Finally, there is an opposition of knowledge between the narrator and the people. The narrator relays not only commands to the people but also the knowledge of the arrival of YHWH (v. 4). This knowing and conversely not knowing and the revelation of knowledge is an important semantic feature as it has the potential to illuminate the knowledge the Model Author seeks to relay to the Model Reader. This

[24] Greimas and Courtés, *Semiotics and Language*: 220.
[25] Modality is the process of modifying a predicate (or what causes an action to take place), so: Greimas and Courtés, *Semiotics and Language:* 193–94.

will again be expounded in the later stages of analysis but this initial recognition of opposition is crucial to determine those elements which are employed in the text to convey meaning.

4.2. Narrative Analysis

The narrative analysis is comprised of two aspects of semiotic exegesis namely narrative programmes and narrative syntax. A narrative programme is the overall trajectory of a text, that is a quest that needs to be fulfilled.[26] For example, in J.R.R. Tolkien's: *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring, The Two Towers, and The Return of the King (1954)*, the main narrative programme is Frodo's quest to destroy the ring in the volcano Mount Doom. The narrative programme is understood through the actantial model where the features of sender, object, receiver, subject, helper and opponent make up the framework of the model. In our example from *The Lord of the Rings,* those positions are filled accordingly: Elrond and Gandalf send the subject Frodo on his quest with the object (the ring) to the receiver (Mount Doom). Frodo is helped by the Fellowship of the Ring, and is opposed by the forces of Sauron who seek to stop his quest. This narrative programme is displayed through the following diagram of the "actantial model":[27]



[26] A narrative programme is the overall plot progression towards its completed aims, so: Greimas and Courtés, *Semiotics and Language*: 245-6, for wider project context, the narrative quest of YHWH and the narrative programme of the texts I explore to this point in my research always coincide with one another. This is unsurprising given the nature of the texts but is still worth noting for theological considerations.

[27] See: Greimas and Courtés, *Semiotics and Language*: 6.

A narrative programme will not always have a clear sender, helpers, or opponents and thus the basic makeup of a narrative programme is related to the subject, object, receiver relationship.[28]

The narrative syntax that comprises the overall programme is made up of actions which can be understood as basic units of transformations between objects and receivers. Frodo first received the ring from Bilbo (the sender) in order for the quest to initialise and can be portrayed through the following scheme: S(O--->R) or Bilbo(ring--->Frodo). Obviously, many subsequential transformations take place beyond this initial one to fulfill the narrative programme. In some instances, a transformation can take place reflexively and so the most basic relation of transformations is best described through the object to receiver relationship and noting when a specific sender is involved.[29] The basic transformations (syntactical units)[30] in any narrative programme can be understood in the following way:

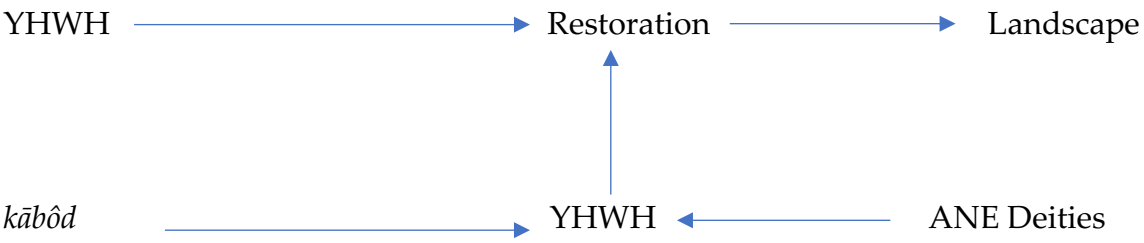
(O--->R) object to receiver
(non-O--->R) wrong object to receiver
(O--->non-R) object to unintended or wrong receiver
(O-/->R) object does not go to receiver
(non-O--->non-R) the wrong object goes to the wrong receiver
(non-O-/-non-R) the wrong object does not go to the wrong receiver.

In Isaiah 35 there are two narrative programmes which find fulfillment in the text, The restoration of the landscape (NP1) and the return of the people on the road in that landscape to Zion (NP2). The first narrative programme is accomplished in order to fulfill the second and is therefore related to the second in terms of subordination. The first is seen when YHWH's *kābôd* restores the landscape and people in order to complete the narrative programme. This is accomplished through the portrayal of YHWH's *kābôd* having power to restore ANE cultic sites previously

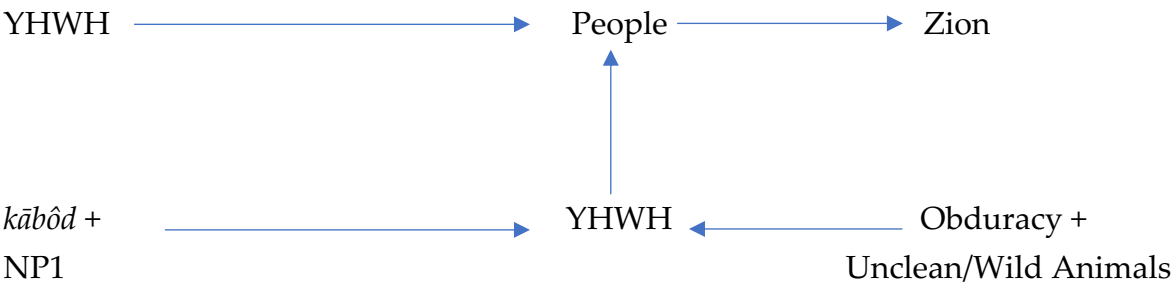
[28] Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts*, 57.
[29] Cf. Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts*, 57.
[30] cf. Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts*, 55, for those more familiar with a semiotic approach, this is also referred to as "syntactic systems" or "syntagmatic systems." I do not deviate from the language of "narrative syntax" or "transformation" for ease of clarity.

judged by YHWH and to repurpose that restoration to another locale. YHWH's *kābôd* also reverses the judgment of the people in Isaiah 6, restoring physical ailments of the people, allowing them to travel on the road to Zion. The actantial models for both are shown here:

Narrative Programme 1 (NP1)



Narrative Programme 2 (NP2)



Our analysis below will go through the narrative structure and syntax (transformations) to assert these narrative models. The result will uncover themes in these structural elements that will be assessed on the semiotic square.[31]

Water-Park Revival (vv. 1-2)

Since our aim is to understand the visible manifestation of YHWH's *kābôd* in the passage, then we must analyse the setting of the transformed desert and wilderness where the *kābôd* is witnessed in the narrative. The first question concerns the significance of barren landscapes becoming areas abundant with water and growth.

[31] The tool used to contrast elements of a semantic axis. A semantic axis is the plane used in semiotic analysis where comparisons are drawn between like-concepts to differentiate and ultimately uncover deeper rhetorical meaning. This type of comparison happens at the basic level of signification and is often referred to colloquially in everyday situations as "comparing apples to apples," that is, two suitable correlating concepts, see: Greimas and Courtés, *Semiotics and Language*: 308–9.

While the simple answer might see the metaphor of something dry and barren becoming lush and hospitable as an encouraging sign of YHWH's provision, it still begs the question of motive.[32]

The first section of narrative in Isaiah 35 (vv. 1-2) is reliant upon parallel structure. In verse 1, the future promise of the personified wilderness (מדבר) and dry land exulting (שׂושׂ) is paralleled with the personified desert (ערבה) rejoicing (גיל) and in bloom (פרח). Isa. 35:2 recapitulates the rejoicing and blossoming of the desert, adding that it will be doing so with song (רנן).

By contrast to the restoration that takes place in Isaiah 35, chapters 33 and 34 detail the destruction of Lebanon, Sharon, Carmel and Edom. These areas have received judgment from YHWH, and as a result Lebanon decays (קמל), Sharon is like a desert (ערבה), and Carmel loses its leaves (נער) (33:9). Edom is also dismayed at the hand of YHWH, as it offers an ironic fertility to the land and to YHWH's sword, as YHWH sates them with the fat and blood of all living things (34:5-7). Likewise, the language of the desert (ערבה) singing (רנן) and rejoicing (גיל) contrasts with the motif of the land mourning (אבל) and being feeble (אמל) in 33:9.[33] The verb sing (רנן) is the same word used elsewhere in Isaiah for praising YHWH's visible return to Zion (52:8) and by creation for the redemption of his people (42:10-11; 44:23; 49:13; 51:11; 54:1). Further, the thematic revegetation of desolated areas of Zion is found in Isa. 51:3 whereby YHWH makes Zion's wilderness like Eden and her desert like the garden of YHWH (וישׂם מדברה כערן וערבתה כגן־יהוה). The intertextual links then depict a clear picture that YHWH's renewal is taking place. Here the Model Author reveals the theme of salvation that will pervade the rest of the text.

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[32] Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 173, understands this passage as reflecting YHWH as a weather-god providing fertile soil, and argues that more explicit imagery evidencing the storm-god manifestation was removed in the 6th century BCE. The problem with this interpretation is it ignores the other elements of the text in favour of the storm-god hypothesis. If there is any plausibility to this argument, then it must be noted that the contents of Isaiah 35 in the post-exilic setting we are assessing were considerably developed to different rhetorical ends beyond the edits Cross proposes.

[33] Fabry, *TDOT 14*: 54.

Isaiah 35 continues by mentioning Lebanon, Carmel, and Sharon by name, asserting that the *kābôd* (כבוד) of Lebanon and the splendour (הדר) of Carmel and Sharon are given to the desert (v. 2a). That the personified desert is offered these qualities of those locales as a gift to aid in saturation indicates that they have been restored to their former "glory" as well-known fertile regions.[34] Even more astonishing than this, the personified desert, dry land, and wilderness see YHWH's *kābôd* (כבוד), and the splendour (הדר) of God (v. 2b). Several scholars suggest that the identity of "they" (3rd masc. plr.) in 35:2 should not be read against the immediate context of the passage but rather that the subject of the clause is Israel/Judah/the remnant.[35] However, the subject of Isaiah 35 to this point has been the personified landscape (Lebanon, Carmel and Sharon/The desert, wilderness, and dry land) and the masculine plural could be used as a culminative to refer to the masculine wilderness, and the feminine dryland and desert.[36] The clarification of the identity of the masculine-plural subject as the people YHWH will save and redeem becomes clear in the subsequent verses,[37] but to this point the Model Author seems to use the ambiguity to their advantage to introduce the structural aspects of the chapter. This will be expanded upon, but for now it is worth mentioning the nature to human correlation and how the contrast between them develops through the structure of the narrative:

Natural world	vv. 1- 2a
People	vv. 2b-6a
Natural world	vv. 6b-8a
People	v. 8b
Natural world	v. 9a
People	vv. 9b-10

[34] Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 173; Kaiser, *Isaiah 13-39*, 363; Smith, *ABD 4*: 269–70.
[35] Clements, *Isaiah 1-39*, 275–76; Quinn-Miscall, *Isaiah 34-35*, 94; Oswalt, *Isaiah: 1-39*, 623; Roberts, *First Isaiah*, 441.
[36] Sweeney, *Isaiah 1-39*, 448.
[37] Those being saved by YHWH are addressed through the masculine-plural "you" (v. 4), as are the "redeemed" in v. 9 and the "ransomed" in v. 10.

The use of this cyclical pattern by the Model Author reveals the first general character axis[38] of comparison between human and nature and their restoration (transformation) trajectories.

The initial ambiguity about who "sees" YHWH's *kābôd* in v. 2b alerts the Model Reader to the relationship that will be developed in the text between the rest of created order and the people. Beyond the immediate context of Isaiah 35, Mathews rightly notes that this ambiguity, in tandem with similar themes including the restored wilderness, indicates the relationship of Isaiah 35 with that of Deutero-Isaiah and thus invites, "the reader toward the context of Deutero-Isaiah for understanding the poem."[39]

The parallel structure of 35:2 invites us to read the connection between the *kābôd* (כבוד) of Lebanon with the *kābôd* (כבוד) of YHWH, and the majesty (הדר) of Carmel and Sharon with the majesty (הדר) of God.[40] Two of these regions mentioned are associated with the presence of other ANE deities. Lebanon, the mountain of cedars, is said to be the home of the gods (specifically the storm-god Mēr=Adad/Baal)[41] in the Epic of Gilgamesh. For instance, Enkidu and Gilgamesh pause to take in the transcendence of the grove of cedars in Lebanon:

> "They stood marvelling at the forest,
> Gazing at the lofty cedars, gazing at the forest's entrance…

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[38] An axis in semiotics is the plane on which characters or terms can be properly compared.

[39] Mathews, *Defending Zion*, 130.

[40] Cf. Ortlund, *Theophany and Chaoskampf*, 166; Oswalt, *Isaiah: 1-39*, 622, rather concludes that this refers to some sense of God wanting, "to share his glory with creation" which only happens through first offering YHWH glory through veneration. While this makes the passage unproblematic in a traditional theological sense, it fails to recognize the function of the motif of glory in the wider book; Goldingay, *Isaiah*, 196, argues the glory and majesty of God outweighs the glory and majesty of the landscape here; Likewise, Quinn-Miscall, *Isaiah 34-35*, 94, notes the "possible relations between the glory and splendor of nature and of divinity" but sees it only as confirming the supremacy of the latter; Ellis, *EDB*: 332-3, argues that this is an example of when, "nature displays glory by virtue of divine creation."

[41] See: Dossin, "Inscriptions de Fondation Provenant de Mari," 156–57; and: Herrmann, *DDD*: 132-9, it should also be noted here that Adad/Hadad and Baal were either the same weather god or two separate traditions that eventually merged into referencing the same deity. Either way, the end result is that the Mountain of Cedars/Lebanon was the abode of a storm-god; Many scholars see no distinction between Adad/Hadad and Baal, so: Smith, *The Early History of God*, 56–60; Moon-Kang, *Divine War in the Old Testament and the Ancient Near East*, 115, 179, 197; Mettinger, "YHWH Sabaoth," 117; Green, *The Storm-God in the Ancient Near East*, 174–75.

They saw the Mountain of Cedar, seat of the gods and goddesses' throne.
[On the] face of the mountain the cedar proffered its abundance,
Its shade was sweet and full of delight."
(Tablet V: 1-3, 6-8)[42]

Carmel is the location where YHWH and Baal battle for the control of the rains (1 Kgs. 18).[43] Conversely, Lebanon is also the place where Solomon gathers the cedars to build the temple of YHWH (1 Kgs. 5:6-14).

The Model Author's portrayal of these foreign cultic regions is semiotically significant. They have previously been judged by YHWH to the extent that Lebanon was decayed (קמל), Sharon was like a desert (ערבה) and Carmel stripped of its foliage (Isa. 33:9). Now, in Isa. 35:2, the desert (ערבה) is given the *kābôd* and majesty of these places, indicating a reversal of their judgment. That reversal coincides with the *kābôd* of YHWH and the majesty of God being seen by people. The structure of the verse and the contextual significance of the landscape reveals the function of these correlated images.

The apparition of YHWH's *kābôd* signals the end of judgment and favourable restoration for the landscape under the authority of a new deity. The Model Author thus offers the Model Reader the understanding that YHWH has judged and restored these locales in order to take possession of them and gift them to another. YHWH is depicted as the God whose *kābôd* carries the ability to invade and repurpose the abodes of other deities. The Model Author has therefore also introduced the semiotic of witnessing the *kābôd* of YHWH as a vehicle of restoration and renewal in the personified desert.

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[42] All citations of The Epic of Gilgamesh taken from: George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*; cf. Mulder, *TDOT 7*: 447–57, Lebanon is specifically mentioned in the Babylonian version of the Epic of Gilgamesh.

[43] Wray Beal, *1 & 2 Kings*, 243; This mountain is also historically linked to the worship of an uncertain ANE god, so: Mulder, *TDOT 7*: 325–36; also: Clifford, *The Cosmic Mountain in Canaan and the Old Testament*, 134 who is likewise tentative about the identity of the deity who possesses the mountain named "Baal-Shamem."

YHWH and the Downtrodden (vv. 3-7)

Isaiah 35:3-7 turns abruptly from the restoration of the arid landscape to the narrator commanding the encouragement of the downtrodden, specifically to strengthen (חזקו) weak hands, make firm (אמצו) the weak knees, and to verbally encourage the anxious heart saying, "be strong (חזקו), do not fear (אל־תיראו)." This chain of imperative plural verbs indicates that a group of individuals is to actively engage in the restoration process of the people.[44] This encouragement is assured through the promise of beholding God (הנה אלהיכם) who brings (יביא) vengeance (נקם) and recompense (גמול) in order to save (וישׁעכם) (v. 4).[45] The nature of God in this instance allows us to posit the identity of characters in the text to a certain extent. The Model Author is commanding the hearty to encourage the feeble in the community of God.[46]

The particle "then" (אז) which begins verse 5 indicates that the contents of Isa. 35:1-4 are portrayed as directly related to the full revival of the people.[47] The arrival of YHWH's *kābôd* first heals the landscape (v. 2), and then accordingly opens the eyes of the blind, and unplugs the ears of the deaf (v. 5).[48] Isa. 35:6 again uses the particle "then" (אז) to indicate further causality.[49] After the effects of obduracy are removed, the lame leap like deer, and the mute sing (ותרן), because (כי) water breaks out in the wilderness (מדבר) and streams (נחל) in the desert (ערבה).[50] This clause (v. 6b)

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[44] Cf. Roberts, *First Isaiah*, 441.

[45] Mendenhall, *The Tenth Generation*, 100, rightly notes despite the use of vengeance the text is focused on the salvific aspect of God's arrival since, "there is not a hint in the poem of satisfaction in the form of seeing opponents or oppressors punished or exterminated."

[46] Mathews, *Defending Zion*, 121.

[47] Mathews, *Defending Zion*, 121; Quinn-Miscall, *Isaiah 34-35*, 104.

[48] Clements, "The Unity of the Book of Isaiah," 125, notes the recurrence of the motif of obduracy from Isaiah 6; also: Aitken, "Hearing and Seeing"; and Hagelia, "The Holy Road as a Bridge," 45, both correctly understand this to be the reversal of judgment in Isaiah 6; The Targums to Isaiah (35:5) understand this as specifically blindness to the law and deafness to the prophets. While the Model Author may not be overtly suggesting this in the passage, the link to the motif of obduracy in Isa. 6 still functions to undergird the authority of the prophetic word. See: Chilton, *The Glory of Israel*, 54.

[49] Mathews, *Defending Zion*, 121; Quinn-Miscall, *Isaiah 34-35*, 104.

[50] Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 457, notes the "literal removal of disabilities" is evidenced through the bodily restoration of the lame. This however does not diminish the clearly metaphorical aspect of the reversal of obduracy as well, so: Sweeney, *Reading Prophetic Books: Form*, 107, who connects this reversal of obduracy to Isa. 6:9-10.

explaining the celebratory actions of v. 6a is not what one might expect to find. The celebration occurs because of what the *kābôd* of YHWH has done through his restoration (transformation) of the desert and wilderness, not as a direct result of the healing of physical ailments.

It is clear now that those who "see" (יראו) YHWH's *kābôd* (כבוד) (v. 2), are the people of God and not the personified landscape.[51] Still, the people rejoice because (כי) of the work of YHWH's *kābôd* on the restored landscape, furthering the connection between humanity and the rest of creation. Both the personified land and people sing (רנן) (vv. 2, 6) on account of the restoration of the land, making an important distinction about the semiotic function of the *kābôd* (כבוד) of YHWH to this point in Isaiah 35: that it signifies restoration in the narrative and is also tied to the structural framework of the narrative through the interconnected narrative programmes mentioned earlier.

Isaiah 35:7 continues expanding upon the revival of the personified landscape. The water in the wilderness and streams in the desert of verse 6b are parallel with v. 7a where burning sands become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water. This oasis revival uses the same language found in Deutero-Isaiah where it is made explicit that YHWH is restoring his relationship with his chosen people through these types of works (cf. Isa. 41:18; 43:19-20; 44:3). Further the mention of "the haunt of jackals" (נוה תנים) (v. 7b) are directly correlated to events in Isaiah 34. The haunt of jackals is a term used to describe the earlier judgment of Edom (34:13) and is now in Isaiah 35:8 a place where reeds and rushes grow.[52] This reversal is further evidence that in Isaiah

[51] Kaiser, *Isaiah 13-39*, 363; Fabry, *TDOT 14*: 54.

[52] The imagery of 34:14-15 has long been noted to carry demonic notions. The night demoness Lilith (sometimes portrayed as a bird) inhabits the desolated Edom with a list of other animals. Lilith (לילית) is etymologically related to the Hebrew word for night (לילה) and is akin to wind-storm divinities in Mesopotamia. The inference for Isaiah 35 is that that metaphorical locale has been renewed and reclaimed by YHWH and the natural world is being brought back under YHWH's creative care. See: Hunter, *DDD*: 520–21.

35 the Model Author is stressing that YHWH has ceased his judgment and is enacting salvation through his *kābôd*.

YHWH's *kābôd*, whose initial function signifies his presence, now also signifies salvation for the personified landscape and people. The Model Author structurally correlates the salvation of the landscape enacted through the advent of YHWH's *kābôd* in the narrative with the reversal of the effects of obduracy upon the people.

Adopt a Highway (vv. 8-10)

The final section of Isaiah 35 introduces the new theme of a highway. In Isaiah 35:8, the highway is in an abstract location described in the text as simply "there" (שָׁם). This abstract locale may be loosely contextualised to the restored wilderness and desert as they have been the only setting of Isaiah 35. While Deutero-Isaiah mentions a way in the wilderness (במדבר דרך) (49:13 cf. 40:3), the motif also appears in another passage where the road is created from mountains (49:11) which does little to advance any determined location in Isaiah 35. The indeterminate is once more purposefully employed by the Model Author to a rhetorical end. The location of the way is not relevant for the passage's interpretation structurally, rather the function of this newly introduced setting is determined by its usage in the continuation of the text.[53]

The highway is named the Way of Holiness (ודרך הקדשׁ) on which YHWH's ransomed will return to Zion (vv. 9-10).[54] While the imagery which denotes salvation in Isaiah 35 is quite inclusive, those deemed 'unclean' (v. 8) and predacious animals are excluded from accessing the highway (v. 9).[55] These characters are neither properly introduced nor are they developed beyond their excluded status. By mentioning then, the Model Author structurally introduces them as characters of opposition and therefore opposed to YHWH's narrative quest, but their fleeting portrayal indicates

[53] Mathews, *Defending Zion*, 135, rightly notes that the theme of "the way" found throughout Isaiah does not have a constant representation. This leads us to understand the general salvific nature of the motif without overburdening the concept in literalization.

[54] Berges, "Personification and Prophetic Voices of Zion," 63, rightly argues this reunion also signifies the personified Zion's salvation.

[55] Cf. Ortlund, *Theophany and Chaoskampf*, 167, who suggests this, "directly contrasts the monstrous inhabitants of the wasteland in 34:11-15."; Oswalt, *Isaiah: 1-39*, 626, Mathews, *Defending Zion*, 13, 136.

the implausibility of their success to thwart YHWH's quest.[56] Thus, their assured neutralisation as characters and anti-quest actants (opponents) is already evidenced in the structural elements of the narrative, thwarted by the fulfillment of YHWH's quest. Their characterisation introduces the second major theme of inclusion/exclusion, which we will expand on in the thematic analysis. This further evidences the notion that judgment has ceased for God's ransomed.[57]

The highway is said to be the exclusive property of, "those who walk on the way" (v. 8). This mention of those who walk on the "way" (דרך) coupled with the abstract location of the desert and wilderness suggests a figurative journey rather than a literal trajectory. Egyptian tradition maintains this same figurative sense of the meaning of "way" as a life-trajectory according to the will of the gods.[58] This same sense is also found in Isaiah, specifically with the return from exile, which not only denotes the literal return from exile but also their spiritual commitment to life under YHWH.[59] The "fools" who will not wander (תעה) there only reinforces this figurative concept of "way" (v. 8). Wandering (תעה) in a restored wilderness (מדבר) setting recalls the wandering (נוע) of Israel in the wilderness (מדבר) in the Exodus (Num. 32:13). Moreover, the appearance of YHWH's *kābôd* over the wilderness preparing the "way" for a return to Zion contains strong parallels to the biblical Exodus tradition.[60] There too, YHWH's *kābôd* (כבוד) led the people through the wilderness to the Promised Land (Ex. 16:10).[61] This Exodus imagery is made even more explicit in the Targums' interpretation as it reads in Isa. 35:10 that, "A cloud of glory will

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[56] A narrative quest is the desired outcome or *telos* of a character in a narrative.

[57] Newsom, *Daniel*, 195, "Lions are regularly used in biblical and Mesopotamian texts as images of vicious forces arrayed against a suffering person."

[58] Bergman, *TDOT 3*: 273-4.

[59] Koch, *TDOT 3:* 290; cf. Oswalt, *Isaiah 1-39*, 620, who argues this is more likely a spiritual desert revival, not the crossing back from Syria, but still notes the poetic reality of multiple meanings; also: Goldingay, *Isaiah*, 199, who notes the tension between the likely literal and metaphorical return to Zion.

[60] On the typology of a "second Exodus" in Isaiah see, for example: Anderson, "Exodus Typology in Second Isaiah," 177–95; Kiesow, *Exodustexte Im Jesajabuch*; Barstad, *A Way in the Wilderness*.

[61] Further, in the song of Moses the verb 'passover' (עבר) is used to describe the journey of the Israelites to safety (Ex. 15:16); the same verb used in Isaiah 35:8 (עבר) as a restriction on the highway for those deemed unclean.

overshadow your heads."[62] Through this imagery, the Model Author gives this new "Highway of Holiness" and those who access it a positive mental reference to previous acts of YHWH's salvation.[63]

Those taking this journey are called redeemed (גאל)[64] (v. 9); a key verb denoting salvation in Deutero-Isaiah (cf. Isa. 43:1; 44:22-23; 48:20; 52:9) as well as an attribute of YHWH as redeemer in the participle form (cf. 41:14; 43:14; 44:6; 47:4; 54:5; 48:17; 49:7, 26;).[65] Johnson links the usage of redeem (גאל) between the biblical Exodus (cf. Ex. 6:6; 15:13) and the "new Exodus" in the book of Isaiah, and notes that due to the verbs familial and kinship connotations throughout the HB (cf. Lev. 25:26ff.; Ruth 4:6; Jer. 32:7) that when YHWH's redemption is being undertaken it too connotes that familial bond: "Yahweh and his covenant people are one, and, this being the case, He is their proper Protector and they are properly His *protégés*; and, as the correlative to this, that is He who has the power to safeguard the integrity of the individual and that of society in however material a way this may be contemplated or however spiritually it may be viewed."[66] The Model Author's use of this verb thus explicitly introduces YHWH's narrative quest of salvation which has been implicit through the previous images. Accordingly, YHWH's ransomed return to Zion singing (v. 10).[67] The term ransomed (פדה) in this context, like redeemed, carries the connotation of YHWH's liberation and thus salvation.[68]

These individuals are described with the same joy (שׂוש) and songs of praise (רנן) as that of the restored wilderness (v. 2), and those healed from the afflictions associated with obduracy (v. 6). The verb sing (רנן) is the same word used elsewhere in Isaiah for praising YHWH's visible return to Zion (52:8) and by creation celebrating

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[62] Chilton, *The Glory of Israel*, 75.
[63] Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 173; Sweeney, *Isaiah 1-39*, 453.
[64] The same verb is used in the song of Moses to describe the people YHWH saves from Egypt being returned to the place of YHWH's dwelling (Ex. 15:13).
[65] Ringgren, *TDOT 2*: 354.
[66] Johnson, "The Primary Meaning of √גאל," 76–77.
[67] Zion can refer to the eschatological mountain or the people of God. Here context denotes the former.
[68] Stamm, *TLOT 2*: 969.

the redemption of his people (42:10-11; 44:23; 49:13; 51:11; 54:1). Here too then, song and praise are best understood as the redeemed people joining in with the desert and wilderness praising the restoration of YHWH accomplished through the advent of his *kābôd*.[69] It should be noted that verse 10 is nearly identical to Isa. 51:11.[70] There, the context is of YHWH's mythic defeat of the Dragon and the sea (51:10-11), making a road (דרך) for the redeemed to pass over (עבר). If the Model Author is indeed pointing the Model Reader to Isaiah 51:9-11, then the inference of the reference may be to further highlight the redemptive aspects of the biblical Exodus as well as the return from exile.[71]

Earlier we discussed how the structural flow of the chapter began a cycle of the description of the restoration of nature and people. This intricate structural link betrays a deeper semiosis actualised through character progression. This nature, then nurture cycle, not only signifies that the work of YHWH's *kābôd* in the wilderness and desert should be expected upon the people and for their benefit as well, but that the progression cycle suggests analogous states of being. The restoration of the desert and wilderness anticipates the restoration of the spiritually dry people and so structurally the people are restored to greater purpose through YHWH's *kābôd* as if they were a wilderness blossoming or a stream or pool becoming an oasis of water. The earlier ambiguity of who sees YHWH's *kābôd* is now revealed as part of the analogous structure of the narrative. While ultimately referring to the people, the initial suggestion of the Model Author that it might be the personified landscape becomes another level of structural semiosis which intimately ties the personification of the terrain to the spiritual revival of the people. Both the people and the personified landscape are aligned with YHWH's narrative quest and they celebrate their salvation

[69] Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 173, notes the praise and restoration of nature in the text is classic storm-god poetry.

[70] The texts are identical apart from the addition of the conjunctive *vav* (-ו) on the verb "to flee." 35:10 reads (ונסו) as opposed to 51:11 (נסו).

[71] Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 108.

and healing but are not active participants, rather as those restored by the advent of YHWH's *kābôd*.

The *kābôd* of YHWH functions semiotically as a sign of YHWH's presence and subsequently his salvation, renewal, and the end of judgment in Isaiah 35:1-7. The final section of Isaiah 35 combines these semiotic functions through imagery of the biblical Exodus which fulfills YHWH's narrative quest. The restorative work of his *kābôd* on both the personified landscape and the people (vv. 1-7) actualises his missive to return the people to Zion in safety and security (vv. 8-10). The biblical Exodus imagery is utilised by the Model Author to signify YHWH's *kābôd* enacting a spiritual renewal.

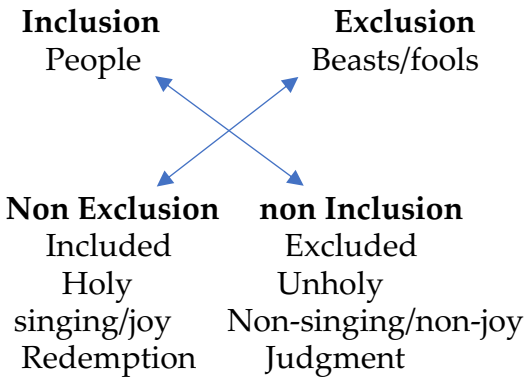
4.3. Thematic Analysis

Our narrative and figurative analyses have uncovered two major themes which pervade the Isaiah 35 narrative. These themes of inclusion/exclusion and salvation/renewal will be first assessed before we discuss their relationship to the semiotic function of *kābôd*.

The theme of exclusion in the narrative of Isaiah 35 is centered around the highway of holiness and who can access the roadway. The initial level of semantic meaning finds its counterpart in inclusion, whereby the people are included in the highway processional while the unclean, lions and ravenous beasts are excluded. The true semantic axis[72] for comparison in this theme is found through the decoded language of the text. The excluded category includes lions, which as noted earlier, act as a symbol of judgment and danger, and ravenous beasts which also no doubt identify with danger or threat to those on the road. The exclusion of judgment and danger is coupled with the exclusion of the unclean. The unclean are obviously opposed to the sanctified status of the highway and its termination at YHWH's cultic

[72] A semantic axis is the plane used in semiotic analysis where comparisons are drawn between like-concepts to differentiate and ultimately uncover deeper rhetorical meaning (also called a semiotic square). This type of comparison happens at the basic level of signification and is often referred to colloquially in everyday situations as "comparing apples to apples," that is, two suitable correlating concepts.

abode in Zion. The true deeper semantic axis where inclusion and exclusion can be better understood is the level of holy and unholy. Those who access the highway and by default the cultic locale of Zion are holy, and those who are excluded are unholy. The Model Author thus uses the theme of inclusion and exclusion as an identity marker for the Model Reader to decipher in their current post-exilic state. The Model Reader is encouraged to identify with the people accessing the road, and that they will be protected from any spiritual judgment, danger, or unclean status. The application of the theme can be shown on the semiotic square like so:



The *kābôd* of YHWH is intimately connected to the theme of inclusion and exclusion in Isaiah 35. YHWH's *kābôd* enacts the restoration of the landscape and people to allow for the highway of holiness and its usage. More significantly, the restorative actions of *kābôd* initialise the process of inclusion and exclusion. The restored personified landscape and people both undergo the transformative power of YHWH's *kābôd* before becoming the locale for the highway and users of it respectively. Thus, the semiotic import of *kābôd* in Isaiah 35 becomes one of identifying those included in YHWH's narrative quest. Those aspects of the narrative restored by YHWH's *kābôd* become included in the completion of YHWH's narrative quest to return to Zion with joy and singing, those who are not are excluded from the conclusion of the narrative programme. The Model Author indicates to the Model Reader through the theme of inclusion and exclusion that they are to identify with the

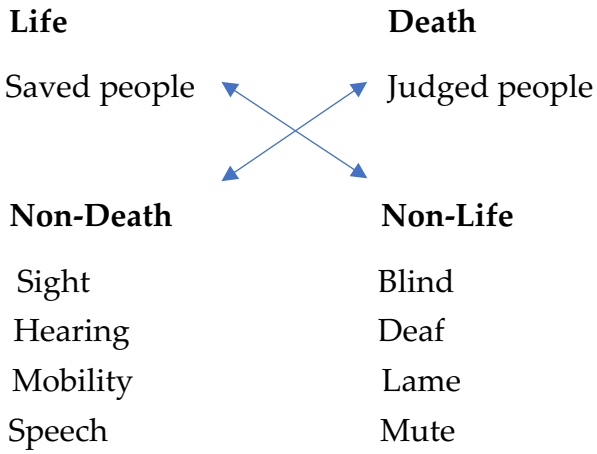
people in Isaiah 35 who have been included on the figurative road to redemption.[73] The semiotic import of YHWH's *kābôd* indicating inclusion or exclusion is ultimately placed before the Model Reader as an invitation to celebrate, alongside the people and restored landscape, the advent and work of YHWH's presence signified by his *kābôd* in the narrative. The *kābôd* of YHWH in Isaiah 35 thus semiotically extends spiritual safety to those who have taken the journey on "the way."

The second major theme in Isaiah 35 is salvation. The narrative of Isaiah 35 is replete with salvation and images of renewal. We have already discussed the Model Author's thematic application through the narrative's content and structure. This is evidenced through: the restoration of the personified landscape (vv. 1-2a), the repurposing of traditional ANE cultic sites (v. 2b), the hydration of the wilderness and desert (vv. 6-7), as well as the reversal of obduracy (vv. 5-6), the singing and rejoicing of the people and landscape (vv. 2, 6), and the narrative's progression towards a highway of holiness to return to Zion (vv. 8-10). The progress of salvific imagery pinnacles upon the highway with the redeemed and ransomed of YHWH. The people characterised as redeemed especially denotes not only salvation but also the benefits of that salvation implied through the term. YHWH and the people are characterised through the verb "redeem" (גאל) as denoting familial and kinship bonds, which adds to the notion of salvation, the concept of reunification, which indicates the success of YHWH's narrative quest.

All the salvific work of YHWH in the text through his *kābôd* is linked to the end of judgment and the reversal of obduracy. Those themes we first encountered in Isaiah 6[74] are the necessary counterpart to the theme of salvation being enacted through YHWH's *kābôd* in Isaiah 35. If those themes were not already reflected in the people and personified landscape, YHWH's quest could not be actualised. The theme of salvation progresses through the narrative as the desert, wilderness, and people are

[73] Howell, "A Closer Look," 80.
[74] In the wider project the analysis of Isaiah 6 concludes that those themes are connected to the effect of YHWH's *kābôd*.

all positively affected by YHWH's *kābôd*. The semantic axis of this theme is ultimately not the abstract term salvation, but the specific examples of spiritual death and life in the narrative. Though we encounter those characters in a state of transition, they are still initially categorised through signs of spiritual death where the personified landscape is called "wilderness" (מדבר), "dry land" (ציה), and "desert" (ערבה) (v. 1). The people are categorised through their ailments being blind (עורים), deaf (חרשים), lame (פסח), and mute (אלם) (vv. 5-6). It is their encounter with YHWH's *kābôd* that manifests the transformation and so YHWH's *kābôd* is the causation behind all this spiritual death to spiritual life, undergirding the theme of salvation. The semiotic import of the *kābôd* of YHWH in Isaiah 35, beyond a sign of his presence and generic salvation, signifies spiritual rebirth. This theme is represented in the semiotic square thus:



The renewal of both the personified wilderness and the people intersects on the highway of holiness where YHWH's narrative quest is completed. The Model Author carefully progresses the narrative through the ambiguity of identity and locale to the determined transformation of spiritual death to spiritual life in Zion, YHWH's cultic locale. Thus, even the overall narrative programme of Isaiah 35 mirrors this progression from spiritual death to life which underpins the theme of salvation. The Model Reader is left with the understanding that their salvation is found in YHWH and the work of his *kābôd* bringing them from an indeterminate state of spiritual death into a determined state where they are no longer like the arid personified landscape

or under the effects of obduracy, but rather they have taken the figurative journey on the highway of holiness with joy and singing (v. 10). The elements of obduracy result in a literal exile in Isaiah 6, and so now the reversal of those effects in Isaiah 35 signify the hope of a literal return from exile as well.[75]

5. Summary

Through a structural semiotic exegesis of Isaiah 35, this paper has shown that YHWH's *kābôd* evokes in the implied reader a manifestation of God in the wilderness as in the tradition of the biblical Exodus. The effect of *kābôd* in Isaiah 35 moves well beyond this initial function, however. The *kābôd* becomes the catalyst for the restoration and repurposing of creation previously decimated by YHWH's judgment.

This appearance of *kābôd* also introduces the reversal of the obduracy of Isaiah 6, where the visual *kābôd* now offers relief from judgment. Finally, *kābôd* also signifies a spiritual journey from death to life, where those who have been freed from obduracy return to YHWH's cultic abode in Zion. By figuratively restoring the personified landscape and reversing the effects of obduracy on the people, Isaiah 35 reimagines the effect of *kābôd* beyond signifying YHWH's presence to that of active spiritual restoration and safety for the people and the reversal of previous judgment.

[75] For the sake of space in this paper the issue of exile and return has been hinted at but not fully developed.

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Paper and Project Summary OTSEM 2021

My dissertation explores the effects of YHWH's *kābôd* in the prophets. The method utilised in this project is a semiotic one. Semiotics, simply defined, is the study of signs and symbols. The use of signs is highly contextual, as any sign to be properly interpreted requires the sender and receiver of the sign to operate under the same cultural and linguistic assumptions (a semantic universe) for any communication through signs to be successful. This process is conceptualised through a Sender to a Receiver or an enunciator to an enunciatee. For this dissertation, we have borrowed the terms Model Author and a Model Reader (terms from Umberto Eco's *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts* (1981)) to properly contextualise and decode the text and the signs deployed in our chosen texts.[1] The Model Author is the hypothetical producer of a text where they have employed a communicative code for a Model Reader that they assume has the ability to interpret and thus decode effectively. The text used by Our Model Author and Model Reader is conceived of in an advanced literary form.[2]

The project operates on the understanding that the *kābôd* of YHWH should be understood in its proper context as analogous to the Akkadian concept of *melammu* (the tangible eminence of a deity reflecting their power). This image is the basic interpretation of *kābôd* for the thesis, which hypothesises that the standardised image functions as a literary sign in the narratives explored by the project for deeper semantic effect (*i.e.*, explores the effects of *kābôd* in the text).

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[1] These terms denote the same concept as that of "Sender" and "Receiver" or "enunciator" and "enunciatee" but draw a much clearer picture of the type of relationship referred to here. This is in no small part due to the confusing nature of overlap these terms have in the field of semiotics, where both sets of terms are used interchangeably with this idea and the concept of "senders" and "receivers" in the text itself (normally, but not always, differentiated using capitalisation when referring to the writer/reader relationship and written in lowercase when referring to the processes in the text).

[2] See: Trotter, *Reading Hosea in Achaemenid Yehud*; cf. Nissinen, "The Historical Dilemma of Prophetic Studies," 104.

The method used to address this hypothesis applies semiotic structural exegesis first introduced in A.J. Greimas': *Structural Semantics: An Attempt at a Method* (1983). This method has been applied to biblical texts by scholars seeking to uncover the way the structure of a text communicates meaning.[3] The method has three stages of content analysis: narrative, figurative, and thematic. The figurative analysis observes figurative, spatial and temporal features in a text and how they are portrayed. The narrative analysis addresses the narrative programme (the overall plot) through the application of the figures in the text and the narrative syntax (elements which progress the plot) and how these features of a text are combined to relay meaning as it pertains to the semantic universe of the text. The thematic analysis assesses the themes of the text uncovered by the first two stages, and is ultimately used to address the purpose for the production of a text.

This paper concludes through a semiotic structural exegesis that the effects of the *kābôd* of YHWH are crucially interwoven into the structural makeup of the text of Isaiah 35. YHWH's *kābôd* contributes to the meaning-effect of the text through its application as a sign first signalling his presence, and then as an active figure in the text which causes the progression of the narrative and the transformations which combine to fulfill that narrative. The hope for this paper and indeed the wider project is to show the benefits of decoding the text through this semiotic method to better understand how YHWH's *kābôd* is employed in the text to communicate meaning.

This paper is a section of my dissertation and can be thought of as a testcase where the aforementioned method is applied to understand the effect of YHWH's *kābôd* in Isaiah 35. It belongs to a larger chapter that explores the semiotic function of *kābôd* in Isaiah 6, 35, 40:1-11, 60, and 66. The wider project deals with texts from Isaiah, Ezekiel and Habakkuk (where the *hôd* of YHWH is considered).

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[3] For example, see: Patte, *The Gospel According to Matthew*; Patte, *Thinking in Signs*; Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts*; Hobyane, "Clashing Deities in the Book of Judith"; Hobyane, Kanonge, and Jordaan, "Gender and Leadership in Judith".

THE SEPTUAGINT PROBLEM OF JEREMIAH

AND ITS BEARING ON THE NEW COVENANT PASSAGE (JEREMIAH 31:31–34)

Abstract

The Masoretic Text (MT) of Jeremiah differs from the Septuagint (LXX) version more than any other book of the Hebrew Bible. Not only is there a discrepancy in the order of the book, but there is also a significant discrepancy in length. In an attempt to explain the cause of these differences, scholars have put forth four major theories: 1) *abbreviation theory*–the MT represents the original text, whereas the LXX is a later (inferior) text that was abbreviated and/or corrupted during translation (Jerome, Spohn, Graf, Lundbom); 2) *expansion theory*–the LXX is a translation of the original Hebrew *Vorlage*, whereas the MT is a later (inferior) text that underwent expansion (Janzen, Tov, Schenker); 3) *editorial theory*–the MT is the final, latest edition of the book produced by Jeremiah, whereas the LXX was the earlier edition (Eichhorn); 4) *mediating theory*–assigning priority to the LXX or MT should be avoided, and each reading should be examined on an individual basis (Duhm, Giesebrecht, Thompson). While no outright consensus has been reached, the second of these theories—the *expansion theory*—has gained widespread support in recent decades.

In this paper, I will argue that adopting the mediating theory leads to the best solution to textual problems that appear in Jeremiah 31:31–34 (= LXX 38:31–34). To illustrate this, the following textual problem in the new covenant passage will be considered: ואנכי בעלתי בם (usually translated as, 'although I myself was a husband to them') in the MT versus καὶ ἐγὼ ἠμέλησα αὐτῶν ('and I myself was unconcerned for them') in the LXX.

THE SEPTUAGINT PROBLEM OF JEREMIAH

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THE SEPTUAGINT PROBLEM OF JEREMIAH

AND ITS BEARING ON THE NEW COVENANT PASSAGE (JEREMIAH 31:31–34)

Introduction

The Masoretic Text (MT) of Jeremiah differs from the Septuagint (LXX) version more than any other book of the Hebrew Bible. Not only does the MT differ in order from the LXX,[1] but it also differs in length. Due to a relatively large number of minuses in the LXX, the MT is significantly longer.[2] This discrepancy has drawn comments from biblical scholars as early as Origen and Jerome. While Origen and Jerome offered some speculation as to the cause for these differences,[3] it was not until modern scholarship that the relationship between the MT and LXX of Jeremiah was considered in depth. And while this debate began prior to the discovery of the fragments of Jeremiah among the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), the discovery of these DSS fragments—some of which support the MT reading, others of which support the LXX reading—has revived the discussion.

In an attempt to explain the relationship between the MT and LXX of Jeremiah (and thus to identify the cause for the differences), scholars have put forth four major theories, which are summarized here[4]: 1) *abbreviation theory*–the MT represents the original text, whereas the LXX

[1] This discrepancy is largely due to two differences: the placement of the group of prophecies known as the 'oracles against the nations' (OAN) *within the book* (cf. MT: chs. 46–51 with LXX: chs. 25–31) and the order of the nations that are addressed *within the OAN section* itself.

[2] Scholars have estimated that the LXX is between one-sixth and one-eighth shorter than the MT. See: Emanuel Tov, *The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research*, 3rd ed. (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2015), 208; J. Gerald Janzen, *Studies in the Text of Jeremiah*, Harvard Semitic Monographs 6 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), 187.

[3] See: Sven Soderlund, *The Greek Text of Jeremiah: A Revised Hypothesis*, JSOT Supplementary Series 47 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1986), 1, 11.

[4] The names of these categories are taken from Soderlund. See: Soderlund, 11–12.

is a later (inferior) text that was abbreviated and/or corrupted during translation (Jerome, Spohn, Graf, Lundbom)[5]; 2) *expansion theory*–the LXX is a translation of the original Hebrew *Vorlage*, whereas the MT is a later (inferior) text that underwent expansion (Janzen, Tov, Schenker); 3) *editorial theory*–the MT is the final, latest edition of the book produced by Jeremiah, whereas the LXX was the earlier edition (Eichhorn)[6]; 4) *mediating theory*–assigning priority to the LXX or MT should be avoided, and each reading should be examined on an individual basis (Duhm, Giesebrecht, Thompson). It should be noted that while no outright consensus has been reached, the second of these theories—the *expansion theory*—has gained increasing support in recent decades, due in part to the influential work of Tov and Janzen[7].

Each of the above theories has its strengths and weaknesses in explaining the relationship between the MT and LXX. Yet when it comes to exegeting passages within the book of Jeremiah—especially one as critical as the new covenant passage (Jeremiah 31:31–34)—how should these theories be applied? Should one's view of the relationship between the MT and LXX of Jeremiah color his or her conclusion as to which of these texts should be preferred when exegeting the passage, as the abbreviation theory and expansion theory would suggest? For many scholars, the answer to this question is yes, if not in theory then at least in practice.

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[5] Soderlund writes: 'The theory implies that the LXX was translated from a basically similar or identical Vorlage to that of the MT; normally it also holds as original the MT order and arrangement of the OAN section' (11). Reasons for an abbreviated text vary. Whereas Jerome and Lundbom posit an error on the part of the copyists, Spohn and Graf posit an error on the part of the original translator. See: Soderlund, 11.

[6] This theory holds that two different editions/recensions of the book were produced by Jeremiah himself. The LXX was translated from an earlier Hebrew edition of the book in Egypt. The MT represents a reworked, later copy of the book that Jeremiah sent to Babylon and which was brought back to Palestine during the return of the exiles. See: Eichhorn, *Einleitung in Das Alte Testament*, 3rd ed., (1803) 137ff. Eichhorn's view went out of favor but has recently been modified by Overholt (CBQ 30 (1968), 43–45) and van Selms (*VT* 26 1976, esp. 112).

[7] Janzen, *Studies in the Text of Jeremiah*.

Scholars who advocate for the abbreviation theory consider the MT to be a superior text to the LXX. Thus, these scholars usually explain the new covenant passage in light of the MT reading, often giving only brief mention of variant LXX readings before dismissing them for various reasons. For example, Jack Lundbom, a proponent of the abbreviation theory, gives preference to the MT over the LXX throughout his discussion of Jeremiah 31:31–34. His reason for doing this is part of his larger conclusion that 'the longer MT of Jeremiah is far and away the better text' and that 'what we have...in Jeremiah is not so much proto-MT expansion by busy scribes in Babylon, but proto LXX loss by careless and inattentive scribes in Egypt.'[8]

On the other side of the fence stand scholars who are proponents of the expansion theory. These scholars consider the LXX to give the superior (or at least more original) reading, and thus tend to explain the new covenant passage based on the LXX reading. For example, in a relatively recent monograph dealing with Jeremiah 31:31–34, Adrian Schenker, himself a proponent of the expansion theory, argues that the LXX represents the original Hebrew *Vorlage*, whereas the MT represents a later version. Schenker goes even one step further when he suggests that the best way to explain the differences between the MT and LXX is that the MT is a deliberate reworking of the original Hebrew *Vorlage* that stood behind the LXX. The goal of this reworking, in Schenker's view, was to give an entirely different interpretation of the new covenant.[9]

Thus, whereas Lundbom considers the LXX reading to be unreliable in one sense (in that it was in large part a corrupt translation), Schenker considers the MT reading to be unreliable in a completely different way (namely, in that it was a later, intentionally reworked text). Yet when

[8] For Lundbom, these 'careless and inattentive scribes' were guilty of frequent haplography. See: Jack R. Lundbom, "Haplography in the Hebrew Vorlage of LXX Jeremiah," *Hebrew Studies* 46 (2005): 301.

[9] Adrian Schenker, *Das Neue am neuen Bund und das Alte am alten: Jer 31 in der hebräischen und griechischen Bibel, von der Textgeschichte zu Theologie, Synagoge und Kirche*, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 11–12.

conducting an exegesis of Jeremiah 31:31–34, should the exegete privilege either the MT or LXX, as Lundbom and Schenker have done, respectively? In other words, does one have to adopt either the abbreviation theory or the expansion theory in order to conduct sound exegesis? What would an exegesis of the text look like if the mediating theory was applied? That is, what would it look like to come to the text without a bias towards the MT or LXX, but simply in an attempt to understand the most likely original text in this passage?

In the following paragraphs, I will work through one of several textual problems in Jeremiah 31:31–34. I will argue that approaching the text from the vantage point of the mediating theory results in a more satisfactory exegesis, at least when it comes to an exegesis of the new covenant passage of Jeremiah 31:31–34 (= LXX 38:31–34). The textual problem I have chosen occurs in Jeremiah 31:32 and is presented in short here: ואנכי בעלתי בם (often translated as 'although I myself was a husband to them') in the MT versus καὶ ἐγὼ ἠμέλησα αὐτῶν ('and I myself was unconcerned for them') in the LXX.

A Textual Problem: Was Yahweh 'A Husband' (בעלתי) or 'Unconcerned' (ἠμέλησα)?

A major difference between the LXX and MT in the new covenant passage of Jeremiah 31:31–34 (= LXX 38:31–34) appears in verse 32. The entire verse in each version is shown below for ease of reference.

LXX of Jeremiah 31:32[10]	**MT of Jeremiah 31:32**[11]
οὐ κατὰ τὴν διαθήκην, ἣν διεθέμην τοῖς πατράσιν αὐτῶν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπιλαβομένου μου τῆς χειρὸς αὐτῶν ἐξαγαγεῖν αὐτοὺς ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου, ὅτι αὐτοὶ οὐκ ἐνέμειναν ἐν τῇ διαθήκῃ μου, καὶ ἐγὼ ἠμέλησα αὐτῶν, φησὶν κύριος·	לֹא כַבְּרִית אֲשֶׁר כָּרַתִּי אֶת־אֲבוֹתָם בְּיוֹם הֶחֱזִיקִי בְיָדָם לְהוֹצִיאָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם אֲשֶׁר־הֵמָּה הֵפֵרוּ אֶת־בְּרִיתִי וְאָנֹכִי בָּעַלְתִּי בָם נְאֻם־יְהוָה:

As shown above, the final clause in the verse[12] yields a significant textual problem. Whereas the LXX gives the reading καὶ ἐγὼ ἠμέλησα αὐτῶν ('and I myself was unconcerned for them'), the MT gives the reading ואנכי בעלתי בם, which is often translated as 'although I myself was a husband to them'.[13] In the context of this passage, the two readings seem to be quite at odds with one another. Was YHWH's relationship to the house of Judah and Israel such that he remained their בעל ('husband/master/lord'), even though they had broken his covenant? Or did their act of breaking the covenant cause YHWH to be 'unconcerned' for them?

Lundbom, a proponent of the abbreviation theory, deals with this textual problem by briefly mentioning the alternate LXX reading, but adopting the MT reading instead. One of his reasons for doing so is that '...the LXX translation is still not vindicated and is rightly rejected by both commentators and the modern Versions.'[14] Schenker, on the other hand, a proponent of the expansion theory, concludes that „der Übersetzer hier nicht das Verb בעל vor sich hatte."[15]

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[10] Rahlfs edition of the LXX is used here. There are no significant differences between Rahlfs edition and the Göttingen edition in this passage. The only differences involve a minor spelling difference (φησι rather than φησιν).

[11] The text of BHS is shown here.

[12] The relevant portion of the final clause has been noted with green font for ease of reference.

[13] See, e.g. the major English translations, including the NRSV, NASB95, NKJV, and NIV.

[14] Jack R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah 21-36: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible 21B (New York: Doubleday, 2004), 467.

[15] Schenker, *Das Neue am neuen Bund und das Alte am alten*, 22.

Instead, he proposes מאס or שלח as more likely candidates for the Hebrew verb that the LXX translator had before him.[16]

To be fair, both scholars make their points as part of a wider argument. Interestingly, both use Jeremiah 3:14 to support their arguments. In this verse the phrase כי אנכי בעלתי בכם appears, a phrase very similar to the phrase in consideration here. However, whereas Lundbom uses the appearance of this similar phrase elsewhere in Jeremiah to support the MT reading in 31:32 as the superior reading, Schenker uses the fact that the LXX translation of the phrase in 3:14 (διότι ἐγὼ κατακυριεύσω ὑμῶν) differs from the translation of the almost identical phrase in 31:32 to suggest that Hebrew *Vorlage* in 31:32 must have contained a different word. Otherwise, why wouldn't it have been translated the same way as in 3:14?

Despite their supporting arguments that draw on Jeremiah 3:14, the fact remains that both scholars rely too much on their presupposition of a superior text (for Lundbom the MT, and for Schenker the LXX). Not only this, but neither Lundbom nor Schenker deal sufficiently with this textual problem. In Lundbom's case, the legitimacy of the LXX reading in this verse is too easily dismissed. Both the NT (Hebrews 8:9)[17] and Syriac version[18] support the LXX reading of 31:32, thus giving a legitimacy to the reading that makes it worthy of more serious attention than Lundbom gives it. On the other hand, Schenker's solution—namely, that the LXX translator

[16] Schenker, 23.

[17] The entire passage of Jeremiah 31:31–34 is quoted in Hebrews 8:8–12. It is significant here that its quotation of 31:32 follows the LXX rather than the MT. Furthermore, it should be noted that this reading is also found in P^{46}, a very early NT manuscript.

[18] The Peshitta reads: *w'p 'n' bsyt bhwn*. The BHS apparatus notes the following regarding the Syriac reading of *bsyt*: = געלתי vel MT? McKane compares this reading to the LXX reading and concludes that both readings are 'discerning a neglect or loss of regard for Israel and Judah as a consequence of their breaking of the covenant made at Sinai'. See: William McKane, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah: Commentary on Jeremiah XVI–LII*, vol. 2, International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), 819.

must have had a *Vorlage* containing a word other than בעלתי before him—seems rather speculative, especially when both of the verbs he proposes (מאס and שלח) as replacements are without any manuscript support. Another solution to this textual problem is needed, one that takes seriously both the MT and the LXX readings.

Yet where do we begin in solving this textual problem? A good first question to ask is whether the readings בעלתי ('I was a husband') and ἠμέλησα ('I was unconcerned') can be reconciled. This is an appropriate question to ask, because if the relatively large number of minuses and transpositions are left aside, the LXX translation style of Jeremiah is relatively literal.[19] Thus, unless the readings are irreconcilable, seems more likely that the MT and the Hebrew *Vorlage* of the LXX had the same reading rather than a different one.

To return to the question at hand. Is it possible to reconcile the MT reading of בעלתי and the LXX reading of ἠμέλησα? In short, yes. In fact, at least two good possibilities for reconciling these readings exist. The first involves a matter of meaning, and the second involves a matter of orthography. These possible solutions will be discussed in this order.

The first possibility for reconciling the MT and LXX readings in Jeremiah 31:32 involves the meaning of the verb בעל. While בעלתי is often translated as either 'I was husband to them' (see, e.g. most modern English translations) or 'I was lord/master over them' (see, e.g. Aquila's translation and Jerome's translation in the Vulgate), it is also possible for the verb בעל to have the meaning of 'to loathe'.[20] It is this third meaning that the LXX translator could have had in mind

[19] For a brief discussion on the translation style of Jeremiah, see: Albert Pietersma and Mark Saunders, *Ieremias*, ed. Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright, vol. A New English Translation of the Septuagint (New York ; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 876.

[20] See BDB, 127.

when he chose to translate בעלתי as ἠμέλησα. Yet which of these meanings of בעלתי in the passage is most likely?

In support of the first two meanings of the word—'I was husband over them' or 'I was lord/master over them'—are the following three points. First, since the Mosaic covenant is clearly presented as a suzerain-vassal type covenant (and it is clearly the Mosaic covenant that is in view in Jeremiah 31:32), understanding בעלתי בם as 'I was lord/master over them' is entirely appropriate, especially in view of a broken covenant. Second, as previously mentioned, this reading has the support of both the Vulgate (*et ego dominatus sum eorum*)[21] and Aquila (*και εγω ειμι εκυριευσα <εν αυτοις>*). Third, as Lundbom, Holladay, and other commentators point out, a nearly identical phrase—אנכי בעלתי בכם—is found in Jeremiah 3:14. In 3:14, it seems clear that בעלתי carries one of the first two meanings. From this, one could argue by way of internal use and verbal link that בעלתי in 31:32 should be understood in the same sense.[22]

It should be noted here that whether one understands בעל as 'master'/ 'lord' or 'husband', the difference is minor. Each of these terms is appropriate in a covenant context, and the only difference is that 'master' and 'lord' stress the suzerain-vassal aspect of the covenant relationship, whereas 'husband' emphasizes the kinship (by marriage) aspect of the covenant relationship. Kimḥi similarly gives both 'Lord' and 'husband' alongside one another in his commentary on this verse. However, in view of Jeremiah's frequent use of the marriage metaphor to describe Yahweh's covenant relationship with Israel and Judah, understanding בעלתי בם as 'I was a husband to them' seems the more likely of the two, especially if this passage

[21] 'and I had dominion over them' (my translation).

[22] See: William Lee Holladay, *Jeremiah: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah*, ed. Paul D. Hanson, vol. 2, Hermeneia—A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Augsburg Fortress, 1989), 198.

is intended to be connected to 3:14.[23] It seems that the Targum follows this interpretation as well, although it gives a more paraphrastic and subjective interpretation: ואנא אתרעיתי בהון ('although I took pleasure in them').[24] That is, in the Targum 'I was a husband to them' is translated as 'I took pleasure in them' in the sense that a husband is one who takes pleasure in his wife.

Yet against this interpretation, several scholars adopt the third meaning of בעלתי given above and understand בעלתי בם to mean 'I loathed them'.[25] Various explanations have been given to arrive at this meaning. First, as mentioned above, it is possible that the text as it stands in the MT (בעלתי בם) has the meaning of 'I loathed'.[26] Thus, the LXX reading of *καὶ ἐγὼ ἠμέλησα αὐτῶν* ('and I was unconcerned for them')[27] could simply be an interpretation/translation of בעלתי. If this meaning of the verb בעל is understood, then the MT, LXX, NT, and Peshitta stand in agreement; it is the Targum, Vulgate, and most English translations of the Bible that have misunderstood the meaning of בעלתי.

A second possibility exists for reconciling the MT and LXX readings: that of a scribal error involving orthography. In the Hebrew script of the 2nd century B.C., ג and ב were very similar to one another.[28] Thus, it is entirely possible that one of two scribal mishaps could have

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[23] See especially chs. 2–3. Jeremiah's borrowing of this concept from Hosea is well documented.

[24] For this translation, see: Robert Hayward, *The Targum of Jeremiah*, vol. 12, The Aramaic Bible (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1987), 134.

[25] See, e.g., the list of scholars given by McKane: McKane, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah: Commentary on Jeremiah XVI–LII*, 2:819.

[26] See BDB See McKane for a brief list of scholars (which includes Giesebrecht, Duhm, and Cornill among others) who adopt this position. McKane, 2:819.

[27] NETS translation.

[28] Compare, e.g., the letters in the table provided by Ada Yardeni: Ada Yardeni, *The Book of Hebrew Script: History, Palaeography, Script Styles, Calligraphy & Design* (Jerusalem: Carta, 1997), 2.

occurred. First, it is possible that געלתי rather than בעלתי stood as the original reading. The scribe of the (proto-)MT could have miscopied this as בעלתי, resulting in the later MT reading. In support of this possible original reading of געלתי stands the appearance of this word in Leviticus 26:43–44. These verses are part of a wider passage (Lev. 26:40–45) that Jeremiah seems to have drawn from (at least in part) for his conception of a new covenant.[29] Because of this passage's relevance for the discussion here, it is worthwhile to briefly discuss.

Leviticus 26:40–45 follows a list of curses for disobedience that runs from 26:14–39. Following this list of curses is a promise of restoration in 26:40–45. This restoration will come at a time when Israel is not inhabiting the land, but rather in exile among the nations of their enemies (26:43–44). Furthermore, the restoration will come when Israel confesses her iniquity and the iniquity of her forefathers (26:40). When this confession happens, YHWH promises that he will remember his covenant with the patriarchs (26:42) and states that even in spite of all these curses having fallen on the house of Israel and the house of Judah, '...I will not reject them and I will not abhor/loathe them so as to destroy them by violating my covenant with them, for I am YHWH their God' (לא מאסתים ולא געלתים לכלתם להפר בריתי אתם כי אני יהוה אלהיהם...). One significant point to note from this verse YHWH's statement לא געלתים לכלתם ('I will not abhor loathe them so as to destroy them'). This declaration seems to imply that there was a previous time that *he did* געלתים, especially since his response here is to be prompted by Israel's future confession of her iniquity in a time when all the covenant curses have fallen upon her (26:40). Thus, one could argue that Leviticus 26:40–45 supports the LXX understanding of Jeremiah

[29] The language of not only Leviticus 26:40–45, but Leviticus in general, appears elsewhere in Jeremiah. This is not surprising, since Jeremiah was of priestly background. Jeremiah also draws on Deuteronomy 30 to inform his concept of the new covenant.

31:32 in that it speaks of a time when YHWH did געל Israel, even though in the future, following their confession, he would not געל them.

The second possibility of a scribal error involving orthography is that the original reading was בעלתי, and the LXX translator misread it as געלתי and translated it accordingly. Either of these possibilities—i.e., that the Hebrew Vorlage to the LXX had either בעלתי or געלתי as the original reading—seem more likely to have been the case rather than the Hebrew Vorlage to the LXX containing an entirely different word as suggested by Schenker. (Indeed, it is surprising that Schenker presents the verb מאס, but not געל as a possibility for the Hebrew *Vorlage* to the LXX, especially as both verbs appear alongside one another in Leviticus 26:44.)

Either of these possibilities then—i.e., that בעלתי meant 'I loathed'/'I was unconcerned' or that the original Vorlage read געלתי rather than בעלתי—could serve to reconcile the MT and LXX readings and point to the legitimacy of the LXX reading (yet not at the expense of the MT reading). If this understanding of the verse is adopted, a radically different understanding of the new covenant passage of Jeremiah 31:31–34 results. In this case, v. 32 functions not to contrast YHWH's covenant faithfulness with Israel's violation of the covenant; rather, it is to show the disastrous results of the former covenant relationship. Under the terms of the previous covenant relationship, not only was Israel unable to keep the covenant, but their unfaithfulness had caused Yahweh to 'loathe' them/'be unconcerned' with them. With results like this, the need for a new covenant in the future becomes obvious. Furthermore, this reading of the verse arguably makes a stronger case that the new covenant spoken of in this passage is not merely a renewal of the Mosaic covenant, but rather the cutting of an entirely 'new' covenant. That is, because under the previous covenant, not only was Israel guilty of covenant violation, but as a result of this

Yahweh was unconcerned with them.[30] Under the new covenant, however, a covenant that YHWH would cut 'after those days' (אחרי הימים ההם), the covenant relationship would be restored to an ideal state: YHWH would be their God, and they would be his people (31:33).

The above discussion has sought to demonstrate that the MT reading ואנכי בעלתי בם can be reconciled with the LXX reading of καὶ ἐγὼ ἠμέλησα αὐτῶν. Due to the relatively literal translation style of the LXX translator(s) of Jeremiah (again, this is leaving aside the issues of transposition and minuses in the text), it seems to me that both versions should be used to illuminate each other rather than either version being written off (pun intended) as an inferior text.

Before concluding this paper, I would like to make two more points. The first point is really a highlighting of a point that was just made: the LXX reading can give valuable insight to the Hebrew text. The second point is that the exegetical impact of adopting expansion theory and abbreviation theory does not just influence v. 32 in the new covenant passage, but another significant verse as well. These points will be discussed in this order.

One benefit of adopting the mediating theory in exegesis is that rather than approaching either the MT or LXX with skepticism from the outset, one can approach textual problems in a way that seeks to use both the MT and LXX to gain mutual understanding about the texts. One further example of this in v. 32 will be examined here. The table at the top of p. 6 will be of aid again, with the relevant clause appearing in grey-blue font.

[30] Schenker comments on this aspect of the LXX reading when he writes that 'von beiden Seiten her der Bund dahin fiel!' Yet because he considers the MT reading to be a later, intentionally reworked text, he can also say that the opposite is true in the MT. That is, although Israel and Judah have broken the covenant, 'JHWH *bleibt* ihr Herr und Gebieter oder auch ihr Gemahl. Der Bundesbruch seitens der Menschen vermag Gottes einmal geschaffenes Verhältnes zu seinem Volk nicht aufzuheben! Es ist bei JHWH in Sicherheit.'[30] By understanding the MT and LXX as being descended from two entirely different Hebrew texts, Schenker is able to avoid the tension of a major textual (and theological) problem in Jeremiah 31:32.

In the MT of Jeremiah 31:32, the second subordinate clause introduced by אשר poses a problem. Whereas the first אשר is clearly understood as introducing a relative clause modifying the noun ברית (which immediately precedes אשר), understanding the second אשר as introducing a parallel relative clause with the same referent of ברית leads to an awkward and difficult syntax.[31] If אשר does not introduce a relative clause here, then what kind of subordinate clause is intended?

One option is to understand אשר as introducing a temporal clause, and thus to translate it as 'when'.[32] This translation has the advantage of following along with the time referent (ביום) in the subordinate clause that immediately precedes it. Furthermore, this translation would make a point that Jeremiah and other prophets make elsewhere—namely that the Mosaic covenant had been broken from the earliest of times.

Another option is to understand אשר as introducing a causal clause, and thus to translate it as 'because'.[33] This translation has several advantages. First, it resolves the syntactical difficulties and awkward reading that remain if one chooses to understand this second אשר clause as a relative clause modifying ברית.[34] Second, it provides a seamless and logical transition to both

[31] Holladay's conclusion that this second אשר 'can only be parallel with אֲשֶׁר in the first half-verse' and that 'both subordinate clauses thus modify "the covenant" at the head of the verse' is unsupported. (He goes on to conclude that the translation 'That covenant of mine' is best for בריתי...אשר.) While this is certainly one possible understanding of the second אשר, it is not the only understanding (nor, as I will argue below, is it the best understanding). See: Holladay, *Jeremiah*, 2:197–98.

[32] See GKC §164d.

[33] See: GKC §158b.

[34] Two of these syntactical difficulties are as follows. First, בריתי is clearly the direct object of the verb הפרו, as indicated by the object marker את. If אשר is understood as a relative pronoun, then an awkward and redundant syntax results: '(It will) not (be) like the covenant that I cut with their fathers...that which they themselves broke my covenant...'. Second, the *atnach* under מצרים is a disjunctive. If אשר is understood as a relative pronoun, then this second relative clause is dissociated from the noun it modifies. The following verse (v. 33) shows that the Masoretes had no problem with placing the *atnach* in a position that resulted in a very 'uneven' division of the verse. Their primary concern was sense.

the final clause in this verse and the following verses (vv. 33–34). The future new covenant will not be like the Mosaic covenant *because* even their ancestors had been guilty of breaking the covenant. Third, translating the second אשר clause in this way has the support of the LXX,[35] which translates the first אשר as ἣν,[36] a relative pronoun, but the second אשר as ὅτι, a subordinating conjunction that can mark a causal clause.[37] In the absence of this third point, the most likely meaning of אשר is difficult to discern. If the LXX translation of this text is trusted, however, it tips the balance to favor understanding אשר as a causal subordinating conjunction rather than a relative pronoun. The care (and not carelessness) of the LXX translator(s) is highlighted by this example, showing how the LXX translation can provide valuable insight for exegesis.

The second point I would like to briefly make before concluding is that the exegetical impact of adopting expansion theory or abbreviation theory does not influence v. 32 alone in the new covenant passage. Another significant verse, 31:33, is affected as well. In this verse, the singular 'my law' (תּוֹרָתִי) appears in the MT, whereas the plural 'my laws' (νόμους μου) appears the LXX. Space does not permit me to deal with this textual problem and its significance for one's understanding of the new covenant. However, the comments of Barry Joslin in regard to this verse will serve to illustrate the point that too often the LXX reading is disregarded (without adequate text critical reasons) out of mere assumption that it is an inferior text: 'Scholars do not frequently mention the LXX rendering of the singular תורה with the plural νόμους in Jeremiah

[35] Two significant variants exist, as noted in the Göttingen edition. Aquila reads, *οτι <αυτοι> διεσκεδασαν*, and Symmachus and 86 read, *αυτοι γαρ διελυσαν*.

[36] The grammatical case, number and gender of ἣν show that it clearly modifies τὴν διαθήκην.

[37] See: BDAG, 732. The LXX translator's choice of ὅτι, which often functions as a causal subordinating conjunction, rather than ὅτε or ὅταν, both of which are temporal conjunctions, also lends its support to this interpretation

31:33, and of the few that do, even fewer offer suggestions as to the purpose behind the unusual alteration.'[38]

Conclusion: An Argument for the Mediating Theory

The Septuagint problem in the book of Jeremiah has caused scholars to take a variety of approaches in their exegesis of the text. Two of these approaches—the abbreviation theory and the expansion theory—presuppose a relationship between the LXX and MT that makes exegesis 'easier' in that it establishes a preferred text at the expense of what is viewed as an 'inferior' or 'later' text. Thus, when exegetes who are proponents of either of these theories encounter a textual problem, as in the case of the ostensibly different readings given in the MT and LXX of Jeremiah 31:32, a valid solution is to simply dismiss the 'other' reading as unreliable (or, in the case of Schenker, to explain the LXX and MT readings as intentionally distinct readings, since he considers the MT to be a later, reworked version).

Yet these theories are not without disadvantages. These theories tend to encourage the exegete to simply dismiss textual problems as a matter of textual difference rather than encourage the exegete to seek a solution that best accounts for the tensions in the texts. Thus, by adopting one of these theories (consciously or unconsciously, I might add), one is more likely to prematurely establish what he or she views as the 'superior' text on the basis of an overarching theory rather than on the basis of the text itself. Such a premature establishment of the text inevitably leads to incomplete and inaccurate exegesis, at least according to sound principles of textual criticism. Furthermore, although the expansionist theory has gained increasing support in recent decades (largely due to the work of Tov and Janzen), it has by no means won full support.

[38] Barry Clyde Joslin, *Hebrews, Christ, and the Law: The Theology of the Mosaic Law in Hebrews 7:1-10:18*, Paternoster Biblical Monographs (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008), 199.

Several scholars still question the expansion theory, including not only scholars like Lundbom who advocate for the abbreviation theory, but also scholars like Soderlund, who suggests that Janzen's conclusions go too far.[39]

This is not to say that these theories do not have their use. Indeed, the relationship between the MT and LXX of Jeremiah remains a significant issue in biblical studies. However, as the DSS fragments of Jeremiah have demonstrated, for now there is insufficient evidence to establish either the MT or LXX as the superior text. (It is important to remember that the earliest manuscript evidence we have, after all, is the DSS evidence, which is split, supporting both the MT and LXX.)

In view of the above, I suggest that the mediating theory is the preferred theory for conducting exegesis in the book of Jeremiah, at least until the debate as to the relationship between the MT and LXX of Jeremiah is settled (if it ever is). Adopting the mediating theory encourages more critical exegesis that focuses on the texts that we do have. Furthermore, with this approach the standard principles of textual criticism are given a proper opportunity to account for the textual differences rather than a one-size-fits-all answer of 'inferior text'. In a book like Jeremiah, where the translation style is relatively literal, more 'typical' solutions should be sought to explain textual differences before resorting to less likely solutions (e.g. like changes in the text motivated by theological agenda). This should be especially true in passages as significant as the new covenant passage of Jeremiah 31:31–34.

[39] See Soderlund's work, *The Greek Text of Jeremiah.* Especially relevant is chapter 5, which critiques Janzen's conclusion as to the relationship of the LXX to the MT. Yet also of relevance is chapter 4, where Soderlund critiques Tov's theory of multiple revisions.

Summary of OTSEM Paper

The differences between the Masoretic Text (MT) and Septuagint (LXX) of Jeremiah pose a significant problem to exegesis of passages within this book. In this paper, I will argue that adopting the mediating theory leads to the best solution to textual problems that appear in the new covenant passage of Jeremiah 31:31–34 (= LXX 38:31–34). To illustrate this, the following textual problem in the new covenant passage will be considered: ואנכי בעלתי בם (usually translated as, 'although I myself was a husband to them') in the MT versus καὶ ἐγὼ ἠμέλησα αὐτῶν ('and I myself was unconcerned for them') in the LXX.

Summary of PhD Project

Two major research questions serve to guide my thesis. First, how should Jeremiah 31:31–34 be interpreted in its original context? Is this passage best understood as presenting a 'new covenant' (ברית חדשה) that is entirely distinct from the Mosaic covenant, or rather as a renewal of the Mosaic covenant? What is the content of the *torah* (תורה) of the new covenant? Is it identical (in whole or in part) to the *torah* of the Mosaic covenant? Or is it an altogether new 'instruction' (תורה), no longer tethered to the *torah* of the Mosaic covenant? And is it even possible to answer these questions definitively, or is the meaning of this passage ambiguous, leaving room for various interpretations?

The second major research question revolves around the early reception of Jeremiah 31:31–34 by the Qumran and early Christian communities as evidenced in the sectarian literature of the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) and the New Testament (NT), respectively. The writings of these communities are unique in that they contain the only known explicit mentions of the term new covenant in ancient Judaism outside of Jeremiah 31:31–34. Yet while both communities write

about the new covenant, it seems that both interpreted it very differently. That is, while it seems that the NT authors interpreted the new covenant of Jeremiah 31:31–34 as a radical break from the Mosaic covenant (at least this seems to be the case with the author of Hebrews in Hebrews 8–10 and Paul in 2 Corinthians 3), the scholarly consensus is that the Qumran community interpreted it as a renewal of the Mosaic covenant.

Yet how is it that such different interpretations of Jeremiah 31:31–34 could arise from the Qumran and the early Christian communities, especially given that both were erudite interpreters of Scripture and that both communities branched off from the same stream of Second Temple Judaism? Is there indeed enough evidence to definitively conclude that these communities had different interpretations of the same new covenant of Jeremiah 31:31–34? As at least a couple of scholars have suggested, should we be so quick to understand the use of the term new covenant (ברית חדשה) in the Qumran sectarian literature as necessarily linked to the prophecy of Jeremiah 31:31–34? Or do all of the NT passages that take up the topic of the new covenant interpret the new covenant as a break from the Mosaic covenant? If both of the above are indeed the case, how then should we account for such differences in interpretation? Is this variance to be explained by the use of different texts of Jeremiah 31:31–34—i.e., the use of the LXX by the early Christian community and the use of the proto-MT by the Qumran community—, as some scholars have argued? Or are there other reasons for this discrepancy that have yet to be explored? These questions are worth exploring.

This exegetical and reception history study will rely upon standard exegetical methods (e.g. textual criticism, literary criticism, historical criticism, etc.) to evaluate the texts under consideration. ‘Newer’ methods like delimitation criticism have been/will also be applied.

Esther Brownsmith
OTSEM Abstract, 2021
Paper: “Love and Eunuchs: Esther and Ishtar as Queer Queens”

Many scholars note the uncanny similarity between the biblical names Esther and Mordecai and the Mesopotamian deities Ishtar and Marduk — but the connection often stops there. Yet the story of Esther takes place in a court setting populated by eunuchs and concubines, while Ishtar was famously attended by gender-transgressive priests. Moreover, Esther herself dons "feminine drag" during her elaborate transformation from good Jewish girl to sexually alluring queen-to-be, and her dual political loyalties are mirrored by this ambiguity in gender performance. Does Esther — like the eunuchs surrounding her, and like Ishtar — embody gender fluidity? And if so, how does that shape our understanding of the relationship between the characters of Esther and Ishtar, and of the author who chose such an evocative name for a Jewish heroine?

I address these questions using the lenses of fan fiction theory (which highlights the reuse of characters and the affective mode of writing) and queer theory (which encourages the deconstruction of gender categories and links closely to the text's sexual ambiguities), particularly engaging with Tamber-Rosenau's recent work. Both lenses, and the book of Esther itself, also hearken to Bakhtin's theories of the carnivalesque and its burlesque, binary-bending sense of play. By reading Esther as a manifestation of Ishtar, the queer queen of the Mesopotamian world, we can more richly understand the Book of Esther's excesses and cruxes alike.

Love and Eunuchs: Esther and Ishtar as Queer Queens

Dr. Esther Brownsmith • OTSEM Seminar, Aug. 2021

The book of Esther is a deeply queer book, going by the popular meaning of queer: that is, it contains multiple non-binary[1] gender identities and non-heterosexual innuendo. While the book does not explicitly portray a non-heterosexual erotic relationship, it nonetheless undermines heteronormativity on multiple fronts. In this section of my forthcoming monograph, I examine some of those fronts, then turn to the goddess Ishtar and her own non-heteronormative associations. Next, I survey the many queer elements of fan fiction, then combine the three elements. In short, I argue that the book of Esther is queer both because it reproduces Ishtar's gender-bending character, *and* because the practice of fan fiction writing invites queerness as an approach; the two influences converge harmoniously to produce a profoundly queer text.

1. The Queerest Book in the Bible?

Resistance to heteronormativity can come in many forms, and the book of Esther contains many of them. The examples included here are intended to illustrate, not to encompass; the excesses and sly winks throughout the book of Esther invite reading it "on the slant," uncovering new forms of subversion with every verse. Still, a few examples of queerness particularly stand out. They include the widespread presence of eunuchs; the homosexual innuendo around the king and his parties; the hints of gender-fluidity around Mordecai; and Esther's childlessness. (The performativity of Esther's femininity, itself a queer situation, will be addressed later.) Notably, all these manifestations of queerness occur with characters coded as good (Esther,

1. In this work, I use "non-binary" and "genderqueer" fairly interchangeably as synonyms; cf. Monro, "Non-binary and Genderqueer," for a discussion of the overlap between the terms.

Mordecai) or neutral (the king, the eunuchs); the most heteronormative character, content to live with his wife and sons, is the villainous Haman. The book of Esther has a message for normative cisheterosexuality,[2] and its message is one of resistance.[3]

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2. An initial note of caution is appropriate. Queerness manifests very differently in different cultures and time periods, and modern associations of queerness cannot be naively projected back onto an ancient text. As a superficial example, a modern Western man wearing a skirt is queering gender normativity in some form, while ancient Near Eastern men wore skirt-like clothing with no such implications. A more pertinent example is the lavish attention to fashion and decorations present in the first chapter of Esther. Bailey concludes that it "is almost as though the narrator is signaling the reader that the king is auditioning for a cast slot on 'Queer Eye for the Straight Guy.'" (Bailey, "That's Why," 235) His observation is witty but unsubstantiated; is the narrator really signaling that fashion-sensitivity implied queerness, or is the modern association between gay men and fashion so entrenched that the implication seems natural in our minds? As I discuss below, many of Bailey's other observations are highly illuminating, but this one overly blurs the distinction between queering as a narrative strategy and queering as a reading strategy. In the discussions that follows, I focus on the former: situations where, by our best understanding of ancient Jewish norms, the characters diverge from the text's cultural norms of cisheterosexuality.

To be clear, I welcome the many fertile interpretations that apply queering to the Bible as a reading strategy. Such interpretations can be a crucial tool for marginalized groups to see themselves in the text—and they are no more specious than conservative attempts to uncover what the Bible "says" about modern topics like abortion. My own argument is simply that we should differentiate between the "historicist plane" and the "presentist plane" of philological interpretation, to use Pollock's terms (Pollock, "Philology in Three Dimensions," 401), when we apply a queer lens; and in this particular study, I am primarily interested in the historicist plane.

3. In this, I diverge strongly from Bailey's argument that the book "employs heterocentrism as a way of emasculating ... [and] as a way of discrediting." (Bailey, "That's Why," 246) His explanation of why the text would emasculate and discredit all its "heroes" is that its narrator is "negatively caricaturing the assimilationist Jews who get totally enmeshed in the colonizer's culture." (Ibid, 244. A similar viewpoint is presented by Stern in "Where is God in Esther?", though with respect to the text's religiosity rather than its queerness.) I follow his reasoning to a point, but I find it more helpful to return here to the idea of Bakhtin's carnival, in which laughter "is also directed at those who laugh. The people do not exclude themselves from the wholeness of the world." (Bakhtin, *Rabelais*, 12) In other words, the book of Esther is not written from the perspective of a smug outsider to its proceedings, mocking its assimilated heroes and foreign villains alike from the perspective of a "true" Jew. Rather, the book issues from a spirit of playfulness and riotousness, in which hero and villain alike cannot escape the topsy-turvy, queer carnival—and neither can the author or the readers.

1.1 The Hand of the Eunuch

> [I]dentifying castrated males as of indefinite gender leads to one of two troubling conclusions: either they are to be placed outside the realm of the human in order to maintain a binary construction of gender, or else binary gender must be recognized as a fiction that does not account for all human bodies.[4]

"No commentary (especially a queer one) on the book of Esther would be complete without an emphasis on the role of eunuchs."[5] Thus begins Mona West's one-page discussion of the eunuchs in the book of Esther. Eunuchs do indeed occupy a prominent role in the story, yet most commentaries gloss over the eunuchs' presence; they are background characters, not points of inquiry or interest. In this section, then, I turn my focus to the omnipresent eunuchs and the intersectional dimensions of their portrayal.

But let us pause and step back to ask what, exactly, these eunuchs do. Viewed as a whole, their actions involve being *intermediaries*, in various senses of the word. The word "intermediary" is a peculiar one, etymologically speaking; in its Latinate origins, "*inter*" means "between," while "*medius*" means "middle." So how does one go *between* the *middle*? Sometimes it implies oscillation: an intermediary goes back and forth between two sides, like the eunuchs who deliver messages between Esther and Mordecai (Est 4:5) or Vashti and Ahasuerus (Est 1:10-12). Other times, an intermediary represents a middle position, neither this nor that; the eunuchs Hege and Shaashgaz have authority over the king's two harems, because they are neither women (who lacked authority)[6] nor men (who might usurp the king's privileged access to

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4. Burke, *Queering the Ethiopian Eunuch*, 109. For other modern, queer-sensitive discussions of eunuchs, cf. Arvas, "Early Modern Eunuchs," Lemos, ""Like the eunuch who does not beget,'" Solevåg, "No Nuts? No Problem!," and the various essays in *Intersex, Theology, and the Bible* (ed. Cornwall).

5. West, "Esther," 284.

6. It is worth noting that this fantasy may have been more complex in actual historical harems.

his women). Sometimes an intermediary is one who occupies a middle space, quite literally; the eunuchs conspiring against the king, Bigthan and Teresh (Est 2:21), are those who "watch over the threshold" (מִשְׁמְרֵי הַסַּף), "liminal" in the Latin origin of the word. And finally, an intermediary can simply be a middleman, one who acts on behalf of another, like the eunuchs who fetch Haman on behalf of the king in Est 6:14.

Eunuchs therefore function in the book of Esther as vessels of *inter-mediation*, liminal in their identity, their location, and their actions. Returning to West's assessment, her conclusion is worth referencing:

> The eunuchs in the book of Esther function as a 'third term' or more precisely as a 'third mode of articulation'. Their ability to cross boundaries of gender, power and physical space articulate spaces of possibility for the plot. ... For all of the story's decrees and messages, the eunuchs seem to be the only ones with all the information in the story. Indeed they are the ones with the real power.

I agree with West's argument, by and large, and I find it worth unpacking—particularly the phrase "third mode of articulation." I believe that West here is referring to Garber's work *Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety*. There, Garber notes that cross-dressing "offers a challenge to easy notions of binarity,"[7] which opens the door to conversations about a "third sex" outside the conventional two. The crux of Garber's argument comes a few pages later:

> [T]he apparently spontaneous or unexpected or supplementary presence of a transvestite figure in a text ... that does not seem, thematically, to be primarily concerned with gender difference or blurred gender indicates a *category crisis elsewhere*, an irresolvable conflict or epistemological crux that destabilizes comfortable binarity, and displaces the resulting discomfort onto a figure that already inhabits, indeed incarnates, the margin.[8]

For instance, Queen Shibtu of Mari seems to have had authority over the royal harem herself, based on the letters between her and her husband; for instance, he wrote to her, urging her to isolate a woman sick with an infectious disease (ARM 10 129). Moreover, the Mari harem was "guarded by females inside and by males outside" (Stol, *Women*, 490), not by eunuchs, as far as we are aware.

7. Garber, *Vested Interests*, 10.

8. Ibid, 17, emphasis author's.

Over twenty years later, Sean Burke would make a surprisingly similar argument about eunuchs in particular—this time using the now-dominant language of "queering." In his study focused on the New Testament story of the Ethiopian eunuch, he concludes that "[A]ncient discourses produced a social construction of eunuchs that had the potential to destabilize ancient constructions of masculinity. Wherever eunuchs are present as figures in texts, then, there is the potential for them to function rhetorically in ways that queer ancient constructions of masculinity."[9] This queering capacity, he notes, goes beyond categories of gender, encompassing "male/female; penetrator/penetrated; free/slave; and citizen-or-native/foreigner."[10]

So, returning to the book of Esther, if the eunuchs are a "third mode of articulation," that has two implications for the broader text. First, those eunuchs *destabilize* the text, calling into question the binaries that they intermediate between: male/female, palace/city, ruler/ruled, et cetera. But second, the eunuchs reflect an *already existing instability*, a narrative "discomfort" stemming from crisis elsewhere in the text. That discomfort becomes manifest in the prominent, ever-present bodies of the eunuchs.

The eunuch's reflection of instability is most prominent in the final mention of a eunuch in the book of Esther—a scene where the eunuch is not, in any ordinary sense, playing an intermediary at all.[11] After Esther has revealed Haman's plot, the king departs in anger, then returns to find Haman prostrating himself on the queen's lap, which he takes as a sexual assault. The eunuch Harbona speaks up: "Look! The gallows[12] that Haman made for Mordecai, whose words helped the king, is standing at Haman's house—fifty cubits high." (Est 7:9) The

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9. Burke, *Queering the Ethiopian Eunuch*, 119

10. Ibid, 120.

11. West argues that Harbona's suggestion "becomes the gateway for the reversal of fortunes of the Jews," but this feels to me like a stretch of the notion of liminality. (West, "Esther," 285)

12. Or possibly "stake"; it's debated whether the structure is intended for impaling or hanging.

implications are clear enough, and Ahasuerus immediately orders Haman killed. In this scene, Harbona is in the middle of the action, and he speaks to the king of his own volition. His prominence calls into question the binary assumptions of the scene.[13] Neither king nor queen is guiding the narrative; neither male nor female is dictating the response to sexual violation. The marginal actor has taken center stage.

But this is not the only place where the book of Esther makes that point. I pause now on a study of the simple word יד, "hand." In biblical Hebrew, the hand can be literal, or a metaphor for power and authority, or a euphemism for the penis,[14] as well as various idiomatic uses.[15] A particularly relevant parallel, though, comes from the Ugaritic, when Ilu makes a sexual advance toward his wife Athiratu: "Perhaps the 'hand' of Ilu the King excites you, / the love of the Bull arouses you?"[16] "Hand" here functions as a layered metaphor, connoting both the power of the king and the sexuality of his offer.[17] Likewise, we see the king's hand (יַד הַמֶּלֶךְ) mentioned twice in the first two chapters of Esther. The first is in Est 1:7, when the royal wine at the king's banquet is as "great as the king's hand" (רַב כְּיַד הַמֶּלֶךְ). Then, in Est 2:18, to celebrate Esther's coronation, he gives "gifts like the king's hand" (מַשְׂאֵת כְּיַד הַמֶּלֶךְ). In both cases, "like the king's

13. The rabbis' discomfort with this departure from normality may be seen in the fact that in Pirque de-Rabbi Eliezer, an 8th/9th c. Jewish work, Harbona is actually the prophet Elijah in disguise—and his eunuch status goes unmentioned. (McDowell, "Rabbinization of Non-Rabbinic Material," 382)

14. Cf. Is 57:8. While the Bible lacks many other unequivocal instances, it may be at play in Song 5:4, and it is certainly present in Qumran (1QS 7:13) and in Ugaritic (KTU 1.23:33-34).

15. Cf. the discussion in Alexander, "יָד."

16. hm.yd.'il mlk / yhssk.'ahbt.ṯr.t'rrk (KTU 1.4 IV:38-39, translation mine).

17. Cf. the discussion in Smith and Pitart, *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle*, 521-522 for the detailed philological breakdown of this sexual advance. Though a direct textual relationship between the Ba'al Cycle and the book of Esther would be difficult to sustain, this passage demonstrates the rich metaphoric potential of "the hand of the king" in the Semitic milieu.

hand" is used as a synonym for "bountiful, enormous"—and a phallic undertone is hard to avoid. Just as the king's "hand" is big, so is his generosity.[18]

Yet these sly insinuations are not the only "hands" that appear in the book. While no mention is made of the hands of Esther or Vashti, the text contains frequent allusions to eunuchs' hands: delivering messages (Est 1:13,15), supervising Esther (Est 2:3,8,14), or plotting against the king (2:21, 6:2). The hands of eunuchs are active indeed in the text, working both for and against royal interests. One recalls Isaiah 56:3-5 here, a passage essential to any biblical discussion of eunuchs, in which the prophet affirms that faithful eunuchs will receive יָד וָשֵׁם טוֹב מִבָּנִים וּמִבָּנוֹת: "a hand and a name better than sons or daughters." Most translations understand "hand" as a metaphorical term for "memorial," but in the context of eunuchs and children, a double entendre seems likely: those who have lost functioning in their "hands" will receive a metaphorical "hand," better than the original.[19]

The text thus presents a multi-layered portrait with its allusions to "hands." In its opening chapter, it depicts the king as a hyperbolically manly man, confident in the size of his "hand." But as the narrative proceeds, it shows that the king and his kingdom are dependent on the hands of "hand"-less eunuchs. The eunuchs are the ones who act, while the king bloviates and the queens are acted upon. This is an upside-down kingdom, at least where the eunuchs are concerned. The old binaries and hierarchies no longer apply.

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18. Notably, the only other place in the Bible where the phrase "like the king's hand" appears is 1K 10:13, when Solomon satisfies the Queen of Sheba's desires—another innuendo-laden passage that has inspired considerable post-biblical speculation.

19. Blenkinsopp calls this a *lusus verborum*, a pun: "so the eunuch is promised a *yād* [hand/penis] that will not be cut off." (*Isaiah 56-66*, 139) Of course, not all ancient eunuchs literally had their penises cut off—crushing or removal of the testicles was a less dangerous alternative—but his point stands.

1.2 "The Pleasure of a Man and a Man"

At the beginning of the book of Esther, King Ahasuerus holds a lavish banquet for everyone in the citadel of Susa: "all the people ... from great to small." (Est 1:5) (As we learn in verse 9, "all the people" really means "all the men," for Queen Vashti holds a separate banquet for the women.) The king's banquet is marked by extraordinarily lavish decorations and unrestrained drinking, as verse 8 makes clear:

וְהַשְּׁתִיָּה כַדָּת אֵין אֹנֵס כִּי־כֵן יִסַּד הַמֶּלֶךְ עַל כָּל־רַב בֵּיתוֹ לַעֲשׂוֹת כִּרְצוֹן אִישׁ־וָאִישׁ׃

> And the drinking followed the rule, "no limits!" For the king had established that every official in his palace should act according to each man's pleasure.

As it is, the presence of this statement in an all-male context is innuendo-laden; as Bailey puts it, "It appears that this king is being eroticized, or, more specifically, queered, by holding an all-male orgy with those who are drinking and doing whatever they desire."[20] Moreover, if we go back to the Hebrew, the queerness is further amplified. The king has commanded for his officials to act "כִּרְצוֹן אִישׁ־וָאִישׁ": "according-to-pleasure-of man-and-man." This final phrase, "man-and-man," is usually read as "each man"—a reasonable enough stance, given that the book of Esther uses this syntactic structure of repetition elsewhere.[21]

But that is not the only way to read this particular phrase. In Genesis 7:2, as part of the Flood story, Noah is instructed to take seven pairs of clean animals, אִישׁ וְאִשְׁתּוֹ ("a male and its mate"). If we take the "man-and-man" just as literally, then the king is commanding that his officials act "according to the pleasure of a man and a man"—i.e. homosexual pleasure. This

20. Bailey, "That's Why," 236.

21. As Moore puts it, "The repetition of a single word to express totality ('all') emphatically or a distributive sense ('each, every') is quite characteristic of Esther, for example, 1:22, 2:11, 3:4, 14, 8:9; see GKC § 123c." (Moore, *Esther*, 5)

reading is not *necessary*, but it is *plausible*; if he wished to avoid the innuendo, the author of Esther could just as easily have used "כָּל" to indicate "every," as he did earlier in that same verse.

As Bailey details, the queer innuendo is not limited to the description of the banquet. Three times in the book of Esther, we see groups of people who "attend" (שׁרת) the king: the seven eunuchs in Est 1:10, and a group of "youths of the king" (נַעֲרֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ) in Est 2:2 and 6:3. (These young men are even present in the king's bedroom late at night, according to 6:3.) Bailey points out that this same verb appears in 1 Kgs 1:4, when an "extremely beautiful" young woman "attends" the aged king David in his bed. 1 Kgs 1:4 specifies that the woman attended David, but "he did not know her"; the implication seems to be that she initiated sexual intimacy, but that David was unable to achieve intercourse with her. Thus, we may postulate that in a sexual context, "to attend" (שׁרת) means "to engage in sexual behavior other than standard intercourse."

In fact, there is an even closer (though less overtly sexual) parallel than Bailey mentions: the story of Joseph. After Joseph is bought by Potiphar, a סָרִיס (either "officer" or "eunuch") of Pharaoh, Gen 39:4 says that Joseph "found favor in [Potiphar's] eyes and attended him" (וַיִּמְצָא יוֹסֵף חֵן בְּעֵינָיו וַיְשָׁרֶת אֹתוֹ). The rabbis picked up on the homoerotic implications of this verse when they wrote, "[Potiphar] **purchased** the handsome Joseph **for himself**, for the intended purpose of homosexual intercourse."[22] Scholarship has noted the parallels between the Joseph story and the Esther story, both tales in the "Jew in a foreign court" genre,[23] but it has not noticed that both clauses of this quote are reused in the book of Esther: Esther finds favor in everyone's eyes (Est

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22. Sotah 13b 12. Translation by *The William Davidson Talmud*. See also Bereshit Rabbah 86:3 and Rashi's commentary on Genesis 41:45, which makes the homosexual aspect explicit. Cf. Harris, "Sexual Orientation in the Presentation," for a discussion of homoerotic themes in the Joseph narrative more broadly.

23. For instance, cf. Berg, *The Book of Esther: Motifs, Themes and Structure*; Berlin, *Esther*; Koller, *Book of Esther in Ancient Jewish Thought*; Levenson, *Esther*; Talmon, "Wisdom in the Book of Esther."

2:15) and particularly the king's (2:17), but it is the eunuchs and young men who *attend* the king. This thus represents an inversion of the Joseph tale: Joseph attended a eunuch, but Ahasuerus has eunuchs attending him. In both cases, the situation is distinctly queer.

1.3 Mother Mordecai

Mordecai is, by some accounts, the hero of the book of Esther;[24] by all accounts, he plays a significant role in the story. His behavior—specifically, his unexplained refusal to bow down to Haman on multiple occasions—has elicited both praise and condemnation from scholars.[25] But what has received less attention is the extent to which Mordecai himself is a genderqueer character. Indeed, from the first introduction of Mordecai, readers are already cued to view his gender and sexuality as transgressive, and his later appearances only further that impression.

The first thing that readers learn about Mordecai is his ancestry; he comes from the tribe of Benjamin—literally, the "son of the right hand." Ironically, this tribe is particularly associated with left-handedness, as seen in Judges 3:15, 20:16, and 1 Chr 11:2. "Left-handed" is a longstanding English euphemism for "homosexual,"[26] and it even has a scientific basis: numerous studies show that homosexual men and women are statistically more likely to be left-handed.[27] But do we dabble in anachronism by speculating that Mordecai's Benjaminite heritage hinted at his sexuality? Possibly—but possibly not.

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24. E.g. Fox, *Character and Ideology*, and Moore, *Esther*. Cf. the discussion of "Who Is the Protagonist of Esther?" in Grossman, *Esther*, 27-35.

25. Cf. Fox's discussion in *Character and Ideology*, 191-195. See also the lengthy discussion in Horowitz, *Reckless Rites*, 63-80, for an overview of historical reception of Mordecai's decision not to bow to Haman.

26. *The New Partridge Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*, 1376.

27. Cf. Lalumière et al, "Sexual Orientation and Handedness," for a summary of various studies.

One of the most prominent tales about Benjaminites in the Bible is Judges 19, the story of the "outrage at Gibeah," in which the town's Benjaminite inhabitants sought to gang-rape a male traveler and brutalized his female companion instead. The story has several links to the tale of Sodom and Gomorrah,[28] particularly around the mob seeking to rape a man. Philo overtly links the destruction of Sodom to "men who lusted after each other,"[29] as would countless commentators after him.[30] It is no stretch to imagine that the author of Esther would similarly have viewed Benjaminites as entwined with homosexual rape.

Moreover, Miller and Park have both suggested a link between queerness and the Benjaminites' left-handedness. Miller's study of "verbal feud" notes that "The claim that the Benjaminites were left-handed thus implicitly attributed impure features to them, including, very possibly, femininity and associated sexual deviance."[31] He sees the theme as an taunt in Judges 19-20, but a counter-response in Judges 3, where the hero Ehud is left-handed. "The story [of Judges 3] thus contains a warning that anyone (Ephraimites included) who attributes homosexuality or other defects to the Benjaminites by virtue of their left-handedness risks experiencing the kind of retribution that a fierce, left-handed Benjaminite warrior is capable of exacting."[32] But the very presence of subversion indicates that there was something to subvert—namely, an association between Benjaminites, left-handedness, and queerness. Park reiterates Miller's reading and connects it to the book of Judges' allusions to Saul:

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28. Cf. Lasine, "Guest and Host," and Niditch, "The 'Sodomite' Theme."

29. Philo, *On Abraham*, 135-137.

30. To be fair, there is substantial debate over when ancient interpreters focused on the homosexual aspects of these stories; elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, the crime of Sodom was linked to other sins, such as stinginess (cf. Ezek. 16:49). That said, Esther was almost certainly written later than the other Sodom references, closer to the time of Philo.

31. Miller, "Verbal Feud," 113.

32. Ibid, 116.

> By twice mentioning the bound-on-the-right feature of the Benjaminites, the text overrides the name of the tribe (son of the right) and asserts that, contrary to their name, the Benjaminites truly are of the left. Thus, Saul, though he may be called a son-of-the-right, is really "bound on the right" or of the left—the side associated with the feminine. ... Saul, as a member of this effeminate, deviant, left-handed tribe, is not manly enough to be considered a true king.

If these associations for Saul were in the mind of the author(s) of Judges, then they may well also apply to Mordecai. Indeed, most commentaries note the links between Mordecai and Saul[33]—not only are they from the same tribe, their great-grandfathers share a name—but they do not fully explore what the Saul connection might have connoted: an innuendo of femininity and homosexuality.

That innuendo does not end with Mordecai's lineage. We next learn of his connection to Esther: he "was foster father" to her (JPS), he "had brought [her] up" (NRSV). But the verb here (אמן) is an unusual one; in the feminine, it means "to nurse" (2 Sam 4:4, Ruth 4:16), and even in the masculine, it seems to have similar implications.[34] In short, by a plausible reading of the verb, Mordecai is acting as Esther's wet-nurse, and the rabbis picked up on exactly that implication:

> But did Mordechai feed and sustain? R. Yudan said, "One time he went to all the wet nurses but could not find one for Esther, and thus he nursed her." R. Berekiah and R. Abbahu in R. Eleazar's name said, "Milk came to him and he [himself] nursed her [always]." When R. Abbahu expounded this publicly, the congregation laughed. He said to them, "Is this not a mishnah? R. Simeon b. Eleazar said: The milk of a male is pure."[35]

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33. E.g. Beal, *Esther*, 26; Levenson, *Esther*, 56-57.

34. Compare Num 11:12 and Isa 49:23, where a nursing man is depicted as a counterfactual: Moses insists that his job is not to nurse the Israelites (cf. Graybill, *Are We Not Men?*, 33-34 for a broader discussion of the complex gender dynamics at play in this passage), while Deutero-Isaiah promises that kings and queens will be humiliated before Israel, becoming their wet-nurses. The only counterpoint is 1 Kings 10:1,5, in which Jehu seeks the loyalty of "הָאֹמְנִים אַחְאָב", usually translated as "the guardians of the sons of Ahab." However, it could instead refer to the other meaning of the verb אמן (to be faithful) and mean "those men faithful to Ahab."

35. *Genesis Rabbah* 30:8, translation in Kessler, "Let's Cross That Body," 335.

As Kessler notes, this passage "simultaneously subverts male gender boundaries but sustains gender binaries."[36] It imagines Mordecai as someone who does the traditionally female task of nursing a child, but it affirms that he is inherently male, hence a source of *pure* milk. In short, "men can do that which women are supposed to do, perhaps even better."[37] Kessler's observation is an important reminder that a text can simultaneously queer its characters while reinforcing binary norms. Nevertheless, I would argue that the Masoretic Text *is* queering Mordecai here—and not just because of a semantic connotation, or a later midrashic interpretation. Even if we interpret אמן in a very neutral sense of raising a child, Mordecai is raising that child alone, without a mother or female caretaker in the picture—something literally unprecedented in the Hebrew Bible.[38] Mordecai occupies the social role of motherhood, whether or not he literally breast-feeds his child.

Beal argues, along similar lines, that "Mordecai's own sexual identity is ambiguous, insofar as he is unmarried and has no children of his own—an uncommon position for a male subject in the Hebrew Bible."[39] Moreover, Beal brings up two additional points in his argument for the "feminization" of Mordecai, which I will address in turn: his narrative parallels with Vashti, and his close association with eunuchs and their liminal realm.

Two major refusals drive the plot of the book of Esther: Vashti's refusal to come before the king's banquet, and Mordecai's refusal to bow to Haman. As Beal observes, "the pattern of Mordecai's refusal, Haman's rage, and his return to happiness after legislating the exscription of

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid, 337.

38. The only rough parallel is Lot and his daughters (Genesis 19), but they were already sexually mature when they lost their mother.

39. Beal, *Book of Hiding*, 115.

all Jews, closely parallels the pattern of events involving Vashti and Ahasuerus in Esther."[40] The connections that Beal notes are both structural and semantic; for instance, "Mordecai's refusal fills Haman with 'rage' (*hemah*), the same rage that burned in Ahasuerus when he heard about Vashti's refusal."[41] The result is, in Beal's words, "a kind of 'feminization' of Mordecai and 'Judaization' of Vashti."[42] Boundaries become blurred when a foreign woman receives the same narrative treatment as a Jewish man.[43]

Beal also examines Mordecai's actions beyond opposing Haman, and he finds a similar genderqueerness (though he does not use the term) in Mordecai's association with the eunuchs. Mordecai clearly spends significant time around the eunuchs, enough to be aware when they are plotting against the king (Est 2:22). Moreover, when he appears in the narrative, he appears in the same liminal spaces that the eunuchs occupy: the gate (Est 3:2), the entrance to the harem (Est 2:11). The text thus encourages readers to think of Mordecai alongside the eunuchs; "Mordecai himself appears to have one foot on the threshold with Bigthan and Teresh and the other eunuchs, and one foot in the throne room with Esther."[44] Or, as Bailey playfully puts it, "one has to wonder: Why is Mordecai hanging around with the eunuchs?"[45]

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40. Ibid, 47.

41. Ibid, 55.

42. Ibid, 47.

43. There is a fascinating implication here when a feminist lens is combined intersectionally with a post-colonial lens: namely, that gender is less important than subject-status within an empire. Vashti and Mordecai both attempt to resist the power structures of their empire, and both of them are brutally punished for it with imperial decrees—even if Mordecai's punishment was, in the end, overturned. It matters not whether women exhibit feminist convictions or men hold fast to their ideals. If "God helps those who help themselves" (a common mindset for reading religion back into the book of Esther), then the approach to empire that God favors is one of power-gathering, outward obedience, and carefully timed appeal, as enacted by Esther—not the approach of brash resistance.

44. Beal, *Book of Hiding*, 115.

45. Bailey, "'That's Why,'" 243.

Unlike Bailey, who views Mordecai's homoerotic elements as a critique of assimilationist Jews, Beal views the text's queerness in a more supportive light: "this feminization in Esther is not intended as a cut-down; rather, it presents a solidarity of not-selves."[46] I concur with Beal; Mordecai is depicted as a positive figure in the book of Esther, yet/and he is also depicted as a queer and genderqueer character. As a Benjaminite who "nursed" Esther, consorted with eunuchs, positioned himself in thresholds, and mirrored Vashti's resistance, Mordecai exemplifies the way that the book of Esther deconstructs binaries of masculinity and femininity in its pursuit of a carnivalesque middle ground.

1.4 A Futureless Queen

Esther is a strangely childless book. This absence—so complete that most exegetes pass over it altogether—comes into focus when contrasted with the book of Ruth, the only other biblical book to bear a woman's name. As Nielsen summarizes the plot of Ruth, "famine and childlessness are overcome through Ruth's marriage to Boaz and the birth of the desired son."[47] This son—and then the genealogy of the sons who will descend from him—represent the climax of the book, the resolution of the problems posed by barrenness and death in the first chapter. In this way, the book of Ruth stands as a monument to what Lee Edelman calls "reproductive futurism": the overriding principle that the Child is "the emblem of futurity's unquestioned value,"[48] a beacon deserving of sacrificial preservation. "The children are our future," as Whitney Houston sang; all political policies and moral decisions must value them above all

46. Beal, *Book of Hiding*, 114.
47. Nielsen, *Ruth*, 30.
48. Edelman, *No Future*, 4.

else.[49] And as Edelman made clear in *No Future*, the opposite of reproductive futurism is queerness, and vice versa: "The sacralization of the Child thus necessitates the sacrifice of the queer."[50]

In this context, then, the book of Esther is exceedingly queer. Children (טַף) appear exactly twice: in the initial edict to annihiliate all Jews, including women and children (Est 3:13), and in the second edict for Jews to annihilate their enemies, including women and children (Est 8:11). We also hear of Haman's many sons, of unknown age (Est 5:11)—and, by the end of the book, we see their dead bodies on display (Est 9:14). But neither Esther nor Vashti bear the king any children; nor does Mordecai have any children of his own; nor does Esther know her own parents. Indeed, the closest we see to a "normal" heterosexual family unit is Haman's family, and all its males end up dead—so much for the future. Esther is a book where children are neither present nor longed-for, and in this way, it distinguishes itself from much of the Bible. As Tamber-Rosenau says of Deborah:

> So what does it mean when a prominent female character in the Bible is not portrayed as having children of her own? I would argue that we can read the absence of children, fertility concerns, or any other child-related storyline from the tale as problematizing the reproductive futurism that prevails in most of the Bible.[51]

This statement is just as true of Esther as it is of Deborah, Jael, and Judith, whom Tamber-Rosenau examines. In their cases, Tamber-Rosenau argues that they use "maternal language or imagery in a deliberate strategy of appropriating the power of motherhood"[52]; in the case of

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49. This principle is similarly evident in Ezra-Nehemiah and its obsession with the question of intermarriage and its results. While the intermarriage debate in Ezra-Nehemiah is about more than children, they play an important role; Ezra commands that they be sent away along with their mothers (Ezr 10:3), while Nehemiah is appalled to discover children speaking non-Hebrew languages (Neh 13:24).

50. Edelman, *No Future*, 28.

51. Tamber-Rosenau, "The 'Mothers' Who Were Not," 192.

52. Ibid, 202.

Esther, other than the notable and genderqueer situation of Mordecai's nursing, discussed above, motherhood is simply absent.

I thus conclude my survey of queerness in the book of Esther with an argument from absence: the book is queer for what it does *not* contain, just as it is queer for its contents. To be sure, Esther fights for the future of the Jewish people, hence the aforementioned allusion to their children. Nonetheless, as a young woman who neither has children nor (as far as we know) wants them, her identity represents a challenge to reproductive futurism and a bold statement of queerness.

2. Ishtar, the "Patron Goddess of the Gender-Queer"[53]

After reading *The Wicked + The Divine*, a comic book series in which various divinities are reincarnated in the present day, one of my students began to dig into Inanna's history. What the student found surprised and delighted her: "Ishtar is basically the patron goddess of the genderqueer!" Her observation was accurate, and in more ways than one. Ishtar/Inanna[54] was a genderqueer deity, openly manifesting both male and female characteristics. Ishtar was also the goddess of genderqueer followers; several categories of her priests exhibited queer and genderqueer social roles and identities. Finally, Ishtar was patron of genderqueerness, the deity of sexual reversals and gender fluidity. In this section, I summarize Ishtar's manifold

53. I owe this phrasing (and punctuation) to my student Gaby Granata.

54. In this section, I largely elide the fact that "Ishtar" was no single deity; for instance, Porter warns that "in Assurbanipal's time, special Ishtars such as Ishtar of Nineveh and Ishtar of Arbela, as well as an unmodified Ishtar, were understood to co-exist as separate and somewhat different divine beings" (Porter, "Ishtar of Nineveh," 44). To mix together the traits and tales of Ishtar from all periods of Mesopotamian history, as I do here, is to create a deity that, in a sense, never existed. However, my goal is to postulate the general impressions of Ishtar that would have been known to a Jewish author in the Second Temple period; in lieu of direct evidence, I assume that major traits that appear repeatedly around Ishtar(s) would have generally accreted to her identity as a mythic character.

genderqueer associations in order to make one primary point: a story that starred Ishtar as a main character was always going to be queer.

I have previously discussed Ishtar as "a goddess of opposites," one whose personality embodied the dynamism and chaos of opposing extremes. One of the pairs of opposites that she specifically manifested was gender. "[S]he is death and life, male and female, she is a female who does not nurture nor have a permanent partner, a sexual woman who is warlike and glories in aggression and destruction, etc."[55] Her maleness was not limited to "masculine" activities like war, but taken very literally: "In a Sumerian incantation hymn, she is described as a woman and a mother while simultaneously a hero of battle and a man. Several depictions show her wearing male garments, carrying male gear, and even sporting a beard."[56] In one bilingual hymn, Ishtar declares, "while being a woman, I am a noble young man."[57] In short, Ishtar/Inanna has a gender identity that refuses to be limited to one side of the gender binary.

This tendency also extends to her followers. One of the most prominent myths about Ishtar/Inanna describes her descent into the Netherworld, where she is temporarily incapacitated, causing a halt to earthly sexual activities. In response, Ea/Enki creates a being to rescue her, a being who apparently has the ability to transverse the divide between world and Netherworld. The being's Akkadian name is *Aṣûšu-namir*, "his coming-out is radiant"; he is an *assinnu* in the Nineveh copy and a *kulu'u* in the Assur copy.[58] Aṣûšu-namir's mission is successful, but Ereshkigal, the queen of the Netherworld, curses him for it:

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55. Abusch, "Ištar," 95.

56. Sacher Fox, "Gender Transformation and Transgression," 54. Cf. Groneberg, "Die sumerisch-akkadische Inanna/Istar," for the classic discussion of the sources at hand.

57. Reisner, *Hymnen*, p.106 no. 56 40.

58. In the Sumerian version, he is two people, a kurḡarra and a galaturra. For some discussion of all the variants, cf. Lapinkivi, *The Descent of Ištar*, 72-79, and Peled, *Masculinities and Third Gender*, 50-63.

May the bread of the plows of the city be your food!
May the clay vessels[59] of the city be your drinking-cup!
May the shade of the city wall be your station!
May the threshold be your dwelling!
May drunk and sober alike slap your cheek![60]

As others have noted,[61] this curse bears a close resemblance to Enkidu's curse of the prostitute Shamhat in the Gilgamesh epic (tablet 7 iii 18–22), and it may have a similarly etiological function, explaining the social position of the *assinnu* and *kulu'u*. Two of the curses ("shade of the city" and "drunk and sober") are shared between the two texts, and they indeed fit better in a curse on prostitutes.[62] But once those two are removed, the remaining "curses" do not seem so negative; Aṣûšu-namir will live in the city and dwell in the threshold (*askuppatu*), a liminal figure.

"Liminal" has indeed been used to describe the *kalû*, *assinnu*, *kurgarrû*, *pilpilû*,[63] et cetera, all categories of Ishtar-priests. A great deal of scholarship has attempted to decipher what the people in these various priestly orders "were": were they eunuchs? Intersex? Cross-

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59. Sometimes translated "sewers," but I can find no linguistic evidence to support a scatological context. (Cf. George, "Babylonian Lavatories," for a discussion of the actual terms for sewers.) It is possible, but not certain, that this pair of lines refers to anal sex (receiving the "plows" of the city; cf. Maul, "*kurgarrû* und *assinnu*," 162-163) and oral sex (drinking from the "vessels" of the city).

60. Descent of Ištar 104-108, my translation.

61. See, in particular, Tigay, *The Evolution*, 170-173, for a line-by-line comparison.

62. The "shade of the (city) wall" was where Ištar engaged in extravagant sexual activity in one explicit hymn (HS 1079 14. Cf. von Soden, "Ein spät-altbabylonisches pārum-Preislied für Ištar," for copy and discussion.) Prostitutes were associated closely with taverns, hence the "drunk and sober alike."

63. Most of these priests were what we would call "assigned male at birth" in modern gender studies; they were referred to with male pronouns but associated with female clothing, implements, and behavior. However, there is some evidence that the *pilpilû* was in the opposite category, based on the text "Lady of Largest Heart," in which Ishtar seems to give the *pilpilû* a weapon and declare his "heart like a man." Cf. Peled, *Masculinities and Third Gender*, although he rejects the idea that the *pilpilû* "was a female" (i.e. was assigned female at birth). (p.73)

dressers? Homosexual men?[64] Indeed, this curiosity mirrors the intrusive questions that modern trans people must constantly field: "but what are you *really?*" Yet the simple reality is that we do not have hard evidence of the genital configurations of Ishtar's followers. What we do have is evidence of their associations (which spanned both genders) and their activities (which included singing, dancing, wearing women's clothing, and, at least for the *assinnu*, sex with men). Ishtar "turned their maleness into fe[maleness],"[65] but we do not know whether that "femaleness" referred to genital configuration, sexual practices, social role, clothing, or something else. For these reasons, the very ambiguity of the term "genderqueer" is what makes it most useful here; there was something queer about their gender, but we can only speculate as to what it was.

Lastly, Ishtar's powers were associated with the ability to change gender and sexuality—not just in her priests, but in the population more broadly. For instance, Streck and Wasserman discuss an Ishtar incantation that has numerous gender-bending moments.[66] Some of them are part of a ritual in which "behavior is turned upside down" (ii.1), with men and women cross-dressing and wielding symbolic objects of the opposite gender; these are likely priests, not lay people. But in an earlier section, Ishtar's nature is praised; in particular, i.41-60 describe a range of scenarios associated with human sexuality, from childbirth to adultery to underwear. These scenarios include "a man (being) womanly, a maiden (being) a young man" (i.45); "providing a change of clothes, the path, going back and forth" (i.52); and "a ma[n ...] the way of a woman; a

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64. Cf. Peled, *Masculinities and Third Gender*, for a particularly thorough overview and discussion, and Helle, "Only in Dress?", for an important critique of the conversation. See also Assante, "Bad Girls and Kinky Boys?", Gabbay, "The Akkadian Word for 'Third Gender'"; Maul, "*kurgarrû* und *assinnu*"; McCaffrey, "Reconsidering Gender Ambiguity in Mesopotamia"; Nissinen and Svärd, "Constructing the Image of *Assinnu*"; Peled, "Identifying Gender Ambiguity"; Peled, "*Assinnu* and *Kurgarrû* Revisited"; Peled, "Visualizing Masculinities"; Roscoe, "Priests of the Goddess"; and Zsolnay, "The Misconstrued Role of the *Assinnu*."

65. Erra IV 56. Cf. Cagni, *L'Epopea di Erra*, 110-111.

66. Streck and Wasserman, "The Man Is Like a Woman."

wom[an ...] that of a man" (i.57-58). Mingled as these lines are with ordinary, non-priestly practices, they indicate that genderqueer activity in the broader population was attributed to Ishtar.

But her power also could be used in a threatening way. The fullest example of this is in a Hittite prayer to Ishtar of Nineveh: "For those (i.e., the enemy) place in the hand the distaff and spindle of a woman and dress them like women. Put the [women's] scarf on them and take away from them your favor."[67] However, similar curses appear in various Babylonian and Assyrian contexts; in Esarhaddon's succession treaty, a plethora of deities are invoked in the king's favor, but when he turns to a feminization curse ("may she make his maleness womanly"), Ishtar is the one he calls upon.[68] In every case that I know of where a specific deity is connected to these feminization curses, Ishtar is the deity.[69]

To be clear, none of the aspects of Ishtar that I have cited in this very brief overview are explicitly present in the book of Esther. No men are transformed into women; no *assinnu* or *kulu'u* appears; Queen Esther does not grow a beard. However, what these diverse examples demonstrate is that genderqueerness was essential to the nature of the goddess. While we cannot know exactly which Near Eastern texts were known to the author of the book of Esther, the sheer breadth of evidence for Ishtar's genderqueer associations—from myth to hymn to political

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67. "Prayer to Ishtar of Nineveh," §8. Translation from Collins, "Ritual and Prayer to Ishtar of Nineveh," COS I.164.

68. Essarhaddon r.56, accessed on ORACC, http://oracc.iaas.upenn.edu/rinap/rinap4/Q003327/html. See also the Ishtar curse from the treaty from Alalakh (RIME 4.34.1,19–20), which has enough ambiguous terms that I will not address it here. (Cf. Peled, *Masculinities*, 261 for discussion.) For further examples, cf. CDA S 286, and see the discussion of this phenomenon in Bergmann, "We Have Seen the Enemy," and Chapman, *Gendered Language.*

69. Cf. Konstantopoulos, "My Men Have Become Women, and My Women Men: Gender, Identity, and Cursing in Mesopotamia," for a discussion of these curses.

treaty—meant that this aspect of her personality was widely known. A reader who encountered genderqueerness in a story about Ishtar would simply nod knowingly: "yes, that's her."

3. "An Online-Offline Queer Community"

> Fandom is often an online-offline queer community, supporting fans who may or may not see themselves in *actual* source material, but who can gather together and feel seen by each other.[70]

Fan fiction is a queer practice. One recent study showed that on the popular fan fiction website *Archive of Our Own*, almost 60% of the stories centered on a romantic or sexual same-sex pairing.[71] This is no new trend, either; even in the early days of modern fan fiction, when authors published their stories in physical "zines" that were distributed at fan convention, one of the most popular romantic pairings was Kirk/Spock from *Star Trek*.[72] Same-sex relationships are an integral part of modern fandom, even as canonical same-sex relationships remain rare in media, and they have received not-inconsiderable scholarly attention.

As modern scholarship is discovering, though, the queerness of fan fiction runs deeper than its frequently homoerotic subjects. Early fan fiction scholarship assumed that most writers and readers of fan fiction were straight women with a "normal female interest in men bonking"[73]; the appearance of queer themes was rarely connected to real-world queer identities. In contrast, the *Teen Vogue* article above notes that many of the readers and writers of slash are interested in

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70. Stitch, "LGBTQ+ Fans."

71. destinationtoast, "Toastystats." The statistics were lower on competing websites Wattpad and FanFiction.net, but even there, about 20% of the stories centered on a same-sex pairing—a much higher proportion than most estimates of same-sex couples in reality.

72. Cf. Jamison, *Fic*, 84-90.

73. M. Fae Glasgow, quoted in Harris and Alexander, *Theorizing Fandom*, 9.

it as a reflection of their own queerness. The most recent studies show that it may be correct; in a 2019 survey of over 17,000 fans, 73% identified as female, as expected.[74] However, a full 43% of the fans identified as bisexual, while only 20% identified as heterosexual. (The remainder were mostly asexual, "queer," or homosexual.)[75] When it comes to fan fiction, fans are (largely) queer people doing (largely) queer things.

So why is fan fiction so queer? This question has received a number of answers, some of them more relevant to the ancient world than others, as summarized by Lothian, Busse, and Reid:

> Cultural approaches argue that few female role models are available in media texts, or that, if they are, their overdetermination for female viewers complicates or even prohibits identification; textual approaches suggest that fans respond to shows' homosocial or homoerotic overtones; feminist readings offer same-sex relationships as models for a more equal relationship; psychoanalytic analyses address the fact that women can *be* and *desire* both subjects within a given pairing, thus offering a wider variety of identificatory options; and sexual approaches (often the default response by fans themselves) foreground the object status of male stars who become sexual objects in the female fannish gaze where "one hot guy's good; two hot guys are better."[76]

To greater or lesser extents, all these theories have some merit to them.

However, the most recent intersections between fan studies and queer studies have argued that fan fiction is queer in a much broader sense of the word. Responding to this shift, which draws from texts like Ahmed's *Queer Phenomenology*, fan scholars are "considering queerness in opposition to normativity rather than homosexuality in opposition to heterosexuality."[77] For instance, Duggan writes that fan fiction "entails an assemblage of infinite resignifications and

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74. In comparison, 21% were non-binary/genderqueer, while only 9% were male.

75. Source: "Fansplaining Shipping Survey." Note that statistics were somewhat different in the 2013 "AO3 Census," which had 10,000 respondents. 38% of them identified as heterosexual—still a minority. (https://archiveofourown.org/works/16988199/chapters/39932580, accessed 7/30/21)

76. Lothian, Busse, and Reid, "'Yearning Void and Infinite Potential,'" 106.

77. Reid, "Thrusts in the Dark," 480. For other examples, cf. Hampton, "Bound Princes," and Riley, "Podfic."

ruptures that destabilize the possibility of any single identity's representation of a normativizing ideal." As a result, "fans are able, perhaps more than other readers, to recognize the internal contradictions and slippages within identity categories, such as gender, race, nationality, or (dis)ability, and to realize, through fan fiction, the radical potentialities of these categories."[78] Ahmed discusses this concept through the idea of "orientations": the starting points and trajectories that shape what we do and how we identify.

> Even when orientations seem to be about which way we are facing in the present, they also point us toward the future. The hope of changing directions is that we don't always know where some paths may take us: risking departure from the straight and narrow makes new futures possible, which might involve going astray, getting lost, or even becoming queer.[79]

The process of writing and reading fan fiction is itself, almost by definition, a "departure from the straight and narrow" that "makes new futures possible." It involves "poaching" characters (to use Henry Jenkins' term) from someone else and reworking them into something new—something that, no matter how faithful its intentions, is *other* than the original canon. This *otherness* inherent in fan fiction is a queering mechanism, a tendency that reorients and bends the cisheteronormativity that underlies most popular media. In short, fan fiction is queer because fan fiction's practice is a queer one, and that broader queerness invites radical reimagining of categories like gender and sexuality.[80] And if this analysis is correct, then we can expect to see

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78. Duggan, "Transformative Readings," 10.

79. Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 21.

80. It must be noted here that not all normative categories are reimagined by fans to the same extent. Most notably, modern fan fiction culture is and has always been a predominantly white space—both in the makeup of its participants, and in the dominant culture and priorities. While countless stories reimagine straight characters as queer, a parallel reimagining of white characters as people of color is virtually nonexistent within fan fiction. Cf. the special issue "Fans of Color, Fandoms of Color" (and particularly the authors cited in its introduction) for more discussion of the pervasive racism in fandom.

that "radical reimagining" present, one way or another, in any literature that is functioning as fan fiction.

4. Imagining Queerness in the Story of Esther

> Of course, the eroticism of the story of Esther is heterosexual and so may be taken for granted by the reader.[81]

"Of course." With this phrase, Jennings dismisses the possibility of queerness in the book of Esther, in the midst of his otherwise broad-minded exploration of homoeroticism in the Bible. To the contrary, I have surveyed studies about Ishtar and about fan fiction to argue that, as "fan fiction" about the character of Ishtar, the book of Esther was primed to embrace queerness in its diverse forms. Fan fiction transforms, disrupts, and bends by its very nature. Here, it calls into question the idea that genderqueer eunuchs are limited to powerless liminality, stuck in the shadows; the heterocentrism of assuming that a woman-chasing king could not also chase young men; the belief that a foster-father cannot parent, in the genderless assocations of the word; and the reproductive futurism that declares that a young woman must want offspring.

What is more, its disruptions of assumptions reflect the disruptiveness of its central character. Ishtar was a genderqueer deity with genderqueer followers and genderqueering powers. As such, she manifested queer disruption in her identity and in the world around her. Although it is impossible (with our current knowledge) to prove which sources of information about Ishtar were accessible to the author of the book of Esther, the sheer pervasiveness of her

81. Jennings, *Jacob's Wound*, 185.

genderqueer associations meant that he likely recognized, and then mirrored, that aspect of her character.[82]

The book of Esther deserves far more recognition for the queerness inherent in its carnivalesque atmosphere. As a product of queer literary formation about a queer character, it manifested queerness in multiple ways. Exploring that process does not only give us greater insight into the goals and features of the biblical book; it also demonstrates the fruitfulness of a reparative[83] reading approach for readers who are themselves queer and/or genderqueer, and have been excluded from so much of biblical interpretation.

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82. A rebuttal may be posed: if fan fiction queers, and Ishtar was already genderqueer, would not "two positives make a negative," resulting in a staid and heteronormative character depiction? The answer to this question is surprisingly complex. On the one hand, this postulated phenomenon is almost entirely absent in modern fan fiction; there is no substantial community of authors taking canonically queer characters and making them straight. On the other hand, as I will discuss in much more depth later in this chapter, the genderqueer traits of Ishtar were indeed tempered by what its Jewish author could imagine writing. This veneer of conservative norms may be why the profound queerness of the book of Esther has taken so long to be discussed. Cf. Callis, "Homophobia, Heteronormativity," for a discussion of how even authors of queer fan fiction are "still clearly influenced by normative cultural expectations." (7.2)

83. Here, of course, I refer to Sedgwick, "Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading."

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Esther Brownsmith
OTSEM Summary
Paper: "Love and Eunuchs: Esther and Ishtar as Queer Queens"

My paper is an excerpt from my upcoming monograph, *Queen of the Alternate Universe: Reading the Book of Esther as Fan Fiction*. In the book, I make the argument that the biblical characters of Esther and Mordecai are based on the characters of Ishtar and Marduk, and that fan fiction studies is therefore a fruitful lens for analyzing the biblical text. I introduce the common fan fiction trope of the "Alternate Universe" (AU), in which favorite characters are transplanted into a different setting and plot, as an explanation for the differences between known Ishtar myths and the book of Esther. While this project began as a single paper, I found that the fan fiction lens opened up numerous new questions and conversations around the book of Esther: for instance, how does the fan fiction idea of "canon" interact with contemporary conversations about the ancient imagined library? In what way does affect and "emotion-ed" writing shape the narrative style of the book? How can notions of hybridity and subversion explain the complex relationship between the book of Esther and other biblical texts? Different chapters will address these diverse subjects.

This particular excerpt comes from a chapter in which I engage queer theory as it interacts with fan studies and the book of Esther. In this section of the chapter, I argue that the book of Esther contains a substantial number of queer themes (some of them previously unexamined by scholarship). I summarize scholarship on Ishtar's close relationship with queerness and genderqueerness, then survey the substantial interactions between fan fiction and queerness. I conclude by arguing that queerness in the book of Esther reflects two converging influences: the preexisting queerness associated with its main character, and the additional queerness stemming from its behavior as fan fiction.[1]

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1. As I discuss in my early chapter(s), the formal definition of fan fiction is highly contested; some scholars limit it very specifically to the phenomenon that appeared in the

The remainder of my chapter will focus on two other interactions between the biblical text and queerness. First, along the lines of Tamber-Rosenau's *Women in Drag*, I read Queen Esther as a character who puts on the "drag" of a Persian queen while remaining a good Jewish girl, which connects to the ways that fan fiction interacts with concepts of gender as innate vs. performed. (I am considering combining this section with the previous section, as an additional example of queerness in the book of Esther.) Second, I step back from sexuality to examine concepts of queerness as "bending" and "ruining" in a broader sense, and I argue for a parallel between how the (usually) female, (frequently) queer authors of modern fan fiction use queerness to reshape text-worlds, and how the Jewish author of Esther used Jewishness to reshape and reimagine his own world.

I welcome feedback on any aspect of my paper and my broader project. This section of the book attempts to draw together not two but three very diverse fields—biblical studies, fan fiction studies, and critical queer theory—and while I believe that they have some very fruitful room for interaction, I am also aware of the dangers of such cross-disciplinary work: that my engagement with one or more fields will seem superficial or inadequate, and that the wide gaps between academic fields will make my comparisons less than persuasive. I am also concerned about the accusation of cherry-picking: despite the examples I cite, the book of Esther has a heterosexual marriage at its core, so can it really be considered queer when read as a whole? Finally, although I will be using earlier chapters to introduce my primary concepts, I am somewhat concerned about accessibility. Should I be defining concepts from queer theory and fan studies more carefully before I use them? Which concepts in particular are opaque or confusing?

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider my paper.

20th century. But regardless of whether the book of Esther "is" fan fiction, it acts in the ways that fan fiction acts.

Being and Action: The Sanctifying God and the Profaning God in the Hebrew Bible

Ryan Chester — King's College London

Abstract:

The sacred and profane construct presents the holy in absolute opposition to the profane. The holy (קדש) is regarded as "consecrated to" and stands as Yhwh's quintessential attribute. The adjective חל and the Piel of חלל ("profane," "common") are popularly appraised as catchall terms for everything not holy. While the Hebrew Bible presents Yhwh as ontologically קדוש ("holy"), it also designates Yhwh as the agent of חלל ("profane"). Such explicit testaments challenge the validity of this perennial construct; for how can the ontologically holy perform profane actions? This study examines the presentation of god in the Hebrew Bible at the intersection of being and action.

Being and Action: The Sanctifying God and the Profaning God in the Hebrew Bible

Ryan Chester — King's College London

1. Introduction

The topic of interest pertains to the viability of the holy and profane as states of being. The study focuses on the explicit instances wherein god is the agent of both consecration and profanation. Given the underlying philosophical premise that action corroborates and is inseparable from being, how does this affect our understanding of god in the Hebrew Bible? This paper begins by evaluating being and action in modern philosophical usage and the Hebrew Bible before inspecting the sanctifying god, the profaning god, and problematically—the sanctifying and profaning god.

2. Being and Action: The Philosophical Premise

Being is inseparable from action. What one is must therefore correspond to what one does. Action is being and being is action.

The claim to non-differentiation is a central tenet for this study. At the same time it presents two challenges. The first challenge is that the intellectual community is ill-equipped to embrace such a claim. The academic world is trained and disciplined to

appraise synthetic binaries of being-and-action, cause-and-effect, structuralism-and-existentialism. The cognizer reasons existent thought as entailing an effect and action pointing to a structure comprising cause and being. In other words, sequence is regarded as evidence of discontinuity. The source is considered as other than the act even if an act derives from the source. This is perhaps best captured by the Latin phrase *agere sequitur esse* ("action follows being").[1] We can observe such logic in the medieval reasonings of Aquinas. He writes, "anything acts insofar as it is in act; anything is in act through its form; therefore, that through which something first acts must be form."[2] While action may point to being (or being to action), the separation of either deconstructs the integrity of the entity in question.[3] In other words, the cognizer deconstructs and reduces the very subject he or she intends to reason as structurally sound.

The second challenge lies in the writers ability to clearly communicate the non-distinctive reality of being and action. The phrase, "action follows being," illustrates this dilemma. Apart from action, being is extremely difficult (if not impossible) to convey. This is perhaps why Arendt reasons that *who* one is cannot be distinguished from *what* one is.[4] Roncalli explains this as a kind of paradox. He writes, "who one is is revealed as

[1] "In fact, what we know first about any being is its action. It is through its action that we come to know *what* a thing is." Olivia Blanchette, *Philosophy of Being: A Reconstructive Essay in Metaphysics*, (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2003), 176. See also: James T. Bretzke, *Consecrated Phrases, A Latin Theological Dictionary: Latin Expressions Commonly Found in Theological Writings*, 3rd ed. (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2013), 13.

[2] "quia unumquodque agit in quantum est actu; est autem unumquodque actu per formam: unde oportet illud quo primo aliquid agit esse formam." Thomas Aquinas, *De unitate intellectus contra Averroistas*, as cited and translated in Ralph M. McInemy, *Aquinas Against the Averroists: On There Being Only One Intellect*, trans. Ralph M. McInemy (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1993), 80–81.

[3] There is a danger of holding on too tightly to sequence as the governing rule to dictate structure. Such a supposition may create a circular model with infinite regress, as in: "Being and action *follow each other*!" David C. Schindler, *Hans Urs von Balthasar and the Dramatic Structure of Truth: A Philosophical Investigation*, Perspectives in Continental Philosophy Series 34 (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004), 19.

[4] Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 181.

not yet fully graspable in and through 'what.'"[5] While I regard this as a false dichotomy it illustrates the impossibility of identifying the who in terms of what. This is why acts are needed to grasp the idea of existent being. However, verbs, even by allusion or inference, amalgamate with being in a tapestry of attributes that are, in fact, supposits of being.[6] Thus, as soon as we strive to explain being we default to attribution via verbal supposits in a way that can never amount to the ineffable whole that is existent being.

The two challenges illustrate the conundrum. On the one hand, the academic community is trained to segregate being from action. On the other hand, the writer struggles to explain the homogeneity of being and action apart from these two categories. Though the paradox remains in tension it must not be glossed over or neglected. One is what one has done, does, and will do (even if future action may not be manifest or apparent in the present). Accordingly, this study treats the homogeneity of being and action as the consummate representation for the totality of a person.[7] For example, the theoretical person John Doe (the existent being) can be described as a breather (one who breathes), a father (one who fathers a child), a cobbler (one who makes shoes), a liar (one who lies), a repenter (one who repents), a truther (one who speaks truth), and a myriad of other supposits. Combined these, and a litany of other acts, inseparably corroborate John Doe's being.

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[5] Elvira Roncalli, "Narrating the Self through the Other: On the Thought of Adriana Cavarero," in *Contemporary Italian Political Philosophy*, ed. by Antonio Calcagno, SUNY Series in Contemporary Italian Philosophy (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 2015), 53–74 (58).

[6] Blanchette, *Philosophy of Being*, 179. Similarly, Laycock explains that attributes of being are defined as abstract names that break beingness into summative categories. Henry Laycock, "John Stuart Mill," in *Sourcebook in the History of Philosophy of Language: Primary Source Tests from the Pre-Socratics to Mill*, eds. Margaret Cameron, Benjamin Hill and Robert J. Stainton, SGTP 2 (Switzerland: Springer, 2017), 1033–97 (1080–82).

[7] Jespersen explains this grammatically as a nexus-substantive, which is "introduced to give us an easy means of adding some descriptive trait in the form of an adjunct which it would be difficult or impossible to tack on to the verb in the form of a subjunct…" Otto Jespersen, *The Philosophy of Grammar* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1924; repr., London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1935), 138.

However, there are some acts that cannot be attributed to John Doe. One cannot include actions as supposits of being if one has not enacted them, even though they may adhere to possibility or capability. For example, one cannot be attributed as a progenitor (one who has had children) if one has not given birth to a child. Thus, what is possible or capably within the purview of their being is not a determiner of one's being unless it is so engaged by or upon the being.[8] Similarly, one cannot enact that which is not compatible with their being. For example, one cannot be a photosynthesizer (one who autonomously converts sunlight to chemical energy), if a being is a person.[9] Thus, one cannot act contrary to what one is.[10] In short, the totality of one's actions must be in agreement with the totality of one's being.

The problem is further hindered by the fact that humanity is incapable of either perceiving or recording the totality of one's being and actions; though we may be able to synthesize or summarize to various degrees of imprecision. Thus, the whole for any given entity is never fully realized. This should not deter the effort. Instead it ought to spur the inquisitive to interrogate being and action with the humble realization that the effort itself is not a fruitless pursuit. And the subject most pertinent to this paper is the being and action of god in the Hebrew Bible.

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[8] This means that actions done by others can become an appositum of a given being. One can act on another such that the one acted upon becomes the state or condition indicated by the verb. For example, should a judge incarcerate a person then the person is not caused to be incarcerated, but statively becomes incarcerated. Another example is a parent who loves their child. The child is statively loved. Both examples illustrate that actions done by others can become an appositum of one's being.

[9] Photosynthesis agrees with the being of plants—not humanity.

[10] One cannot be or do contrary to what one is. Widder's evaluation of Scotus' work approaches close to this understanding by observing, "…being has a quidditative sense, whereby it is predicated *in quid*, signifying the entire essence of a subject. This sense refers specifically to the being of substances, to anything about which it can be asked, 'What is it?', with the answer ultimately being 'It is a being.' " Nathan Widder, "John Duns Scotus," in *Deleuze's Philosophical Lineage*, ed. by Graham Jones and Jon Roffe, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 27–43 (35). Put more simply, "predication *in quid* answers the question of what something is (*quid sit aliquid*)." Gordon Leff, *William of Ockham: The Metamorphosis of Scholastic Discourse*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1975), 149.

3. Being and Action: The Conceptual Environment

To my knowledge there are no developed studies that evaluate being and action, in the Hebrew Bible. Monographs that broach the subject do so under the governance of axiology and theology.[11] This paper is not concerned with addressing values, worth, ethics, or morals. Instead our focus is on the usage of language relating to the major themes of this paper. Even so, we can readily observe the writers views concerning the homogeneity of being and action. Five features are particularly indicative.

First, the ancient Israelites show the indivisibility of being and action through the motif: reap what you sow.[12] In Job 4:8 we read: "plowers of iniquity and sowers of trouble—they reap it."[13] The recriminate form finds its juxtaposition in Hos 10:12–13: "Sow for yourselves justice, reap in abundance… You plowed wickedness; injustice you reaped…."[14] In Eccl 11:4 we see the consequential result should one perform in a contrarywise manner: "Wind watching—he will not sow; and cloud observing—he will not reap."[15] Reversals are similarly expressed as: sow but not reap (Mic 6:15); sow wheat, reap thorns (Jer 12:13); sow in tears, reap with joy (Ps 126:5); the plower overtakes the reaper, the treader overtakes the sower (Amos 9:13).[16] In each of these

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[11] For example, see: Paul T. Nimmo, *Being in Action: The Theological Shape of Barth's Ethical Vision* (London: T&T Clark, 2007); Yoram Hazony, *The Philosophy of Scripture*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Kenneth Seeskin, *Thinking About the Torah: A Philosopher Reads the Bible*, JPS Essential Judaism Series (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2016). For new efforts toward a recasting of philosophy in the Hebrew Bible, see: Jaco W. Gericke, *The Hebrew Bible and Philosophy of Religion*, SBLRBS 70 (Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2012); Jaco W. Gericke, "Is There Philosophy in the Hebrew Bible? Some Recent Affirmative Perspectives," *JS* 23/2i (2014): 583-598; Jaco W. Gericke, "Philosophical Criticism of the Hebrew Bible and the Analytic-Continental Divide," *OTE* 29/1 (2016): 85–99 (see categories of criticism on p. 86).

[12] The concrete metaphor turns "an unimaginative platitude" into a didactic maxim. For quotation, see: Tod Linafelt, *The Hebrew Bible as Literature: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 83.

[13] See also: Prov 22:8; Deut 27–29; and Ezek 35:3–9. For the idea of naught-ness or naughtiness in the word אָוֶן (translated above as iniquity), see: Samuel R. Driver and George B. Gray, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Job*, ICC (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1921), 43.

[14] Cf. Jer 4:3–4. For a translation emphasizing agriculture, see: Mayer I. Gruber, *Hosea: A Textual Commentary*, LHBOTS 653 (London: T. & T. Clark, 2019), 437–44.

[15] This could be a prohibition against laziness in general, agricultural procrastination, fatalistic Gnosticism, or the many forms of divination and the watching of weather phenomenon.

[16] See also: Lev 26:16 and the curses of Deut 27–28.

inversions, divine justice in judgment is executed as the futility of one's just efforts or as the just and blessed end from lengthy oppression. These illustrate a rubric that one's actions correspond to one's being—all of which is determinatively categorized as justice.[17] In other words, action corroborates being. Action is not a consequence of being.[18] This is different from notions that "action follows being."

Second, the Hebrew Bible illustrates the limits of being by intentionally exaggerating impossible violations. For example, Isa 10:15 reads: "Should the axe vaunt itself over the one who hews with it, or the saw magnify itself against the one who wields it? As if a rod would wield him who lifts it, or as if a staff should lift the one who is not wood!"[19] The impossibility of the claim emphasizes the ridiculousness of such considerations. In other words, one cannot do contrary to what one is.[20] A rod logically cannot wield the wielder. On a more practical note, the Hebrew Bible demonstrates the limits of one's being by highlighting logically analogous outcomes should a violation of being occur. Prov 6:27 reads, "Can a man take fire in his bosom and his garments not be burned?"[21] In other words, one must not go against the limits of one's being. Clothing that carries fire is a violation of the clothing's ontology, such that the fire will burn the cloth and harm the person wearing it. In the same way, one who goes into his neighbors

[17] This aligns with van der Toorn's idea of the Semitic antithesis, which he describes as "a distinctive feature of the sapiential literature of the Old Testament." Karel van der Toorn, *Sin and Sanction in Israel and Mesopotamia: A Comparative Study*, SSN 22 (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1985), 101.

[18] Wong rightly warns against uncritically presuming consequence over correspondence in texts indicating action and outcome. Ka Leung Wong, *The Idea of Retribution in the Book of Ezekiel*, VTSup 87 (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 229.

[19] Translation by: Göran Eidevall, *Prophecy and Propaganda: Images of Enemies in the Book of Isaiah*, CBOTS 56 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 42. See also: Marvin A. Sweeney, *Isaiah 1-39: with an Introduction to Prophetic Literature*, FOTL 16 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 199–200. See also: Isa 29:16; 45:9; Jer 13:23. For New Testament instances, see: Rom 9:20-21; Jam 3:11-12.

[20] From an epiphanic and theophanic standpoint, being can be affected momentarily, as in the case of Balaam's donkey in Num 22:28-35. This particular donkey can be described as the talking one or the teaching one. But, due to the miraculous and otherwise impossible circumstances, this should not be regarded as stretching the realm of possibility to all donkeys.

[21] Schipper regards this as a rhetorical question employed in "pedagogical terms." Bernd U. Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2019), 244. See also: Matt 12:33; Mark 7:20–23.

wife violates the woman and himself in v. 29. This fits in the realm of possibility, where the proverbial violation is treated as a didactic word picture. There are many such illustrations in the Hebrew Bible.

Third, the ancient writers were content to explain the homogeneity of being and action through parable or paradigmatic analogy.[22] For example, kingship is described as an abundant and prolific tree in Daniel 4, and the people of Israel are the dutifully stewarded vineyard in Isa 5:1–7. In both of these occurrences the tree and the vineyard are cut down or laid to waste because of arrogant presumption in Nebuchadnezzar's case, and for producing worthless fruit.[23] We can further identify the same metaphor for individuals. The proverbial person is corroborated by his actions, which are defined as where one walks, stands, sits; to what does one affix his or her delight, and in what he or she relentlessly meditates upon. This description emblematizes the individual as either a copious tree placed into the beatific blessing of god or as the worthless chaff that blows away in Psalm 1.[24] In other words, the persons actions (whether internal, external, or acted upon) is the homogeneity of being and action.

Fourth, the Hebrew writers understood that one's being was recorded in celestial scrolls. The heavenly book motif, according to Baynes, manifests in at least five different

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[22] The paradigmatic reality of being and action is seen in the so-called law codes and cultic practices. Toorn, *Sin and Sanction*, 41 and 85.

[23] For the content of arrogant presumptions, see: Dan 5:30. In Isa 5:4, the phrase ויעש באשים is often translated as "why did it yield wild grapes" (NRSV); or "did it produce worthless ones" (NASB). *BDB's* translation of באשים indicates the range of meaning, as: "stinking or worthless things, wild grapes." *BDB*, "בְּאֻשִׁים," 93. The noun shares strong affiliation with the verb, emphasizing "stench," which Clines renders as, "stink" (also citing 1QH 8.25). Clines, "I באשׁ," *DCH* 2:88–89 (88). It is important to note that the idea of grapes is contextually explicit rather than lexically explicit. This means that one does not need a translation that combines an attribute with the noun. The verb עשה is often translated in terms of production or economic output. While this makes sense for today's readers it distorts the ontological unity through sequence, as discussed above. Perhaps a better translation emphasizes the verb עשה in terms of enacted being. *HALOT* understands one of the definitions for עשה as: "to 'make' in the widest sense" (e.g. make peace). *HALOT*, "I עשׂה," 889–92 (891). This is particularly appropriate for our study on the whole of being and action. Thus our translation "and why did it make stench" serves to heighten the parabolic impact while steering away from the pitfalls of sequence..

[24] Stordalen explains the fruit bearing tree as the idealized man "like an Adam that has not violated divine law." Terje Stordalen, "Heaven on Earth: Jerusalem, Temple, and the Cosmography of the Garden of Eden," *CBÅ* (2009): 7–20 (19). See also: Ps 15; Jer 17:5–8.

forms in the Hebrew Bible: the book of life (Exod 32:32–33; Mal 3:16); the book of deeds (Isa 43:25; 65:6); the book of fate (Ps 56:8; 139:16), the book of action (Zech 5:1–5), and the book of apocalypse (Daniel 7–12).[25] Absolutely everything is recorded, whether righteous or wicked. In Eccl 12:14 we read: "for every deed God will bring into judgment with everything hidden—whether good or evil."[26]

This brings us to our final category; namely, the actions that transformatively affect another being, as most-often indicated by the Piel of the D-stem.[27] To be sure, the Piel is arguably the "most elusive of the Hebrew conjugations."[28] Even so, we must remember that Biblical Hebrew utilizes a greater degree of fluidity than contemporary Western languages.[29] The translator must therefore exercise constraint by allowing the verb's proximate context to influence meaning while not usurping the verbs intrinsic semantic range. This is an essential discipline, and one that necessarily restrains the exegete from imposing an overtly rigid distinction between fientive and stative, transitive and intransitive, factitive and causative categorizations.[30]

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[25] Leslie Baynes, *The Heavenly Book Motif in Judeo-Christian Apocalypses 200 B.C.E.–200 C.E.*, JSJSup 152 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 203. Contrary to the Platonic view that writing is an end in itself, Baynes explains that the Jewish and Christian writers understood writing as transformative, it "transforms death into life." Baynes, *Heavenly Book Motif*, 206.

[26] Longman regards this as a "motive clause." Tremper Longman III, *The Book of Ecclesiastes*, NICOT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 281. Bartholomew as a "negative motivation." Craig G. Bartholomew, *Ecclesiastes*, BCOTWP (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 371. Cf. Eccl 11:9.

[27] While the passive participle is particularly relevant, even though its identification in Hebrew is "not entirely predictable," it is beyond the scope of this study. Bruce K. Waltke and Michael P. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 613..

[28] Paul Joüon and Takamitsu Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, trans. and rev. by Takamitsu Muraoka, SubBi 14, 2 vols. (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2003), 140. It is worth remarking that the analysis of the Piel remains somewhat tenuous as the entire verbal system relies on the Arabic system based on Sibawaih's publication in 1881–9. The ancient Hebrew verbal stem prior to 1881 remains contested. This is relevant as Piel verbs without a correlating G-stem may convey non-denominative force. See: Albrecht Goetz, "The So-Called Intensive of the Semitic Languages," *JAOS* 62 (1942): 1–8 (1); Stuart A. Ryder II, *The D-Stem in Western Semitic*, JLSP 131 (Paris: Mouton, 1974), 12; Frederik Leemhuis, "Sibawaih's Treatment of the D Stem," *JSS* 18/2 (1973): 238–256 (242).

[29] Goetz understands the D stem as occupying a unique "organic place" in ancient Semitic languages. Goetz, "So-Called Intensive," 8. Joosten rightly observed, the Hebrew verbal system "is a highly complex edifice of distinct usages in which morphology, syntax and pragmatics meaningfully interact." Jan Joosten, "A Neglected Rule and Its Exceptions: On Non-Volitive yiqtol in Clause-Initial Position," in *Ἐν πάσῃ γραμματικῇ καὶ σοφίᾳ: En pāsē grammatikē kai sophiā. Saggi di linguistica ebraica in onore di Alviero Niccacci, ofm*, eds. Gregor Geiger and Massimo Pazzini, SBV Analecta 78 (Bari: Franciscan Printing Press, 2011), 213–20 (218).

[30] Kaufman explains, "The dichotomy between active and stative verbs in Semitic (that is, between verbs and adjectives from an English perspective) is fundamental to the system; presuppositions that one form can do only one thing are by no means fundamental

The Piel contains two particular features that are relevant for understanding the homogeneity of being and action in the Hebrew Bible. The Piel is prototypically transitive and potentially denominative. Prototypical transitivity refers to both high semantic transitivity and salience. High semantic transitivity is described as "the potency of the agent and the control of the action by the agent."[31] This ought not be understood as an intensification of the Qal.[32] Neither should this be siloed as factitive or causative.[33] While prototypical transitivity comports to a "high degree of affectedness," it does not implicate factitive or causative on their own, though context may support either and/or both.[34] This is why salience in discourse studies is particularly important. Givón explains salience in terms of grammatical role, where the verb "codes an event that is *telic* (compact), *perfective* (bounded), *sequential* (non-perfect) and *realis* (non-hypothetical). The prototype transitive event is thus fast-paced, completed, real, and cognitively salient."[35]

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to it." Stephen A. Kaufman, "Semitics: Directions and Re-Directions," in *The Study of the Ancient Near East in the Twenty-first Century: The William Foxwell Albright Centennial Conference*, eds. Jerrold S. Cooper and Glenn M. Schwarz (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 273–82. See also: Jan Joosten, "The Functions of the Semitic D stem: Biblical Hebrew Materials for a Comparative-Historical Approach," *Or* 67/2 (1998): 202–230 (206).

[31] Geoffrey Khan, *The Neo-Aramaic Dialect of Barwar*, vol 1: *Grammar*, HdO, Section 1: The Near and Middle East 96 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 268. See also Paul J. Hopper and Sandra A. Thompson, "Transitivity in grammar and discourse," *Language* 56, (1980): 251–299. Waltke and O'Conner note, the D-stem "designates an effected state and governs an object." Waltke and O'Connor, *Hebrew Syntax*, 401. Kouwenberg supplies a few examples of low transitivity verbs that also have a direct object, which are most commonly found in English expressions, such as: "*to sing a song, to cross a street, to pass an exam, to have the flu*." N. J. C. Kouwenberg, *The Akkadian Verb and Its Semitic Background*, ed. Gonzalo Rubio, *LANE* 2 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 66..

[32] This is an illicit generalization found in numerous introductory Hebrew grammar texts. John C. Beckman, "Toward the Meaning of the Biblical Hebrew Piel Stem" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2015), 245.

[33] Blau notes "the differences between the factitive pi''el and the causative hif 'il have become blurred, and it is difficult to differentiate between, e.g., הִקְדִּישׁ/קִדֵּשׁ 'to consecrate,' i.e. 'to make it קָדוֹשׁ (holy),' on the one hand, and הִפְשִׁיט/פָּשַׁט 'to strip someone of a garment,' the causative of פָּשַׁט 'to strip off one's garment,' on the other." Joshua Blau, *Phonology and Morphology of Biblical Hebrew: An Introduction*, *LSAWS* 2 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 229.

[34] Baker calls this "a high-transitivity causative event," and offers the word "kill" as an example. Egbert J. Bakker, "Voice, aspect and Aktionsart: Middle and passive in Ancient Greek," In *Voice: Form and function*, ed. Barbara Fox, and Paul J. Hopper. Typological Studies in Language 27 (Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1994), 23–47 (26). For high transitivity and foregrounding, see: Hopper and Thompson, , "Transitivity," 295. For a table illustrating the difference between perfective and imperfective aspect in disource analysis, see: John A. Cook, *Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb: The Expression of Tense, Aspect, and Modality in Biblical Hebrew*, *LSAWS* 7 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012), 151. For a discussion on the implications of three different classes of verbs, see: Beckman, "Piel Stem," 248–9. N. J. C. Kouwenberg, *Gemination in the Akkadian Verb*, SSN 32 (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1997), 115–6.

[35] Talmy Givón, *Syntax: A Functional-Typological Introduction*, vol. 2 (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1990), 93. Notably, Kouwenberg identifies D-stem verbs as favoring high transitivity with telic occurrence, and indicating a factitive interpretation. Kouwenberg, *Gemination*, 102.

The so-called denominative verbs (verbs with no corresponding G-stem) remains a topic of some debate, with some claiming it is a meaningless term.[36] Kouwenberg places specific emphases on the rule that determines a true denominative verb. He writes, "For a 'real' denominative verb the fact that it is denominative and that it is closely associated with its source noun is an essential and indispensable part of its meaning."[37] However, the emphasis on its associative source should not presuppose an overtly rigid and nominalized distinction from regular verbs.[38] Even so, a denominative presumes derivation from an adjective or a substantive.[39] As Ryder observes, "Since the stative verb is a nominal form, the basic function of the D-stem is then seen to be denominative. Wherever derived from adjectives the D-stem denotes 'make a person or thing that which the adjective indicates', i.e. it is factitive."[40] At first glance the denominative form appears to be distinguishable from others. However, its luster is diminished when the descriptions are contrasted with prototypical transitivity. The similarities between the two should not go unnoticed. Thus, the debate on denominative distinctiveness is set aside for this study. The Piel will be explained in terms of prototypical transitivity. Context alone

[36] For studies discussing the etymological problem, see: Joosten, "Semitic D stem," 224. Ryder explains that the term, denominative, "denotes the process during which a root loses its exclusively nominal orientation and acquires a supplementary verbal orientation." Ryder, *D-Stem*, 128. For comment on the "grammatical function," see: Kouwenberg, *Gemination*, 305. For the denominative as meaningless, see: Leemhuis, "Sibawaih's Treatment," 253. For a good summary of the denominatives, see: Waltke and O'Connor, *Hebrew Syntax*, 410–4.

[37] Kouwenberg, *Gemination*, 309.

[38] Ryder observes, "often these denominatives either involve the removal of the subject from one state into another or denote some object in the process of formation – which is the denominative counterpart of a state in process of being achieved." Ryder, *D-Stem*, 130.

[39] Kouwenberg, *Gemination*, 309. In the same page, Kouwenberg labels D-stem verbs derived from adjectives without a G-stem as a D tantum denominative verb.

[40] Ryder, *D-Stem*, 19. Joosten illustrates the different directions of the denominative Piel as: "to bring N about, to make N" … "to use N, to do something with N" … "to act as N, to engage in N" … "to do away with N." Joosten, "Semitic D stem," 224. For the privative Piel, the same as Joosten's last example, he explains, the privative "has the sense of 'taking away', 'removing' or 'depriving' of the substance designated by the noun that underlies a denominative *Piel*." [Sic. bold type removed]. Jonathan Paradise, "What Did Laban Demand of Jacob? A New Reading of Genesis 31:50 and Exods 21:10," in *Tehillah le-Moshe: Biblical and Judaic Studies in Honor of Moshe Greenberg*, eds. Mordechai Cogan, Barry L. Eichler, and Jeffrey H. Tigay (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997), 91–98 (92). Paradise cites additional privative Piel examples, including: Exod 27:3; Num 19:19; Cant 4:9; Ps 52:7; Job 31:12. Simple examples of different Piel usages in translation are provided by Joosten. Joosten, "Semitic D stem," 224.

determines which nuance is appropriate. This will be demonstrated in our analysis on the sanctifying god and the profaning god. What god does to others and what others do to god in the Piel (pertaining to our verbs in question) is ontologically imputed and comprehensively salient.

As the above demonstrates, the Hebrew Bible reveals the totality of internal, external, and the acted upon as attributes of any given being. The way it is expressed is through didactic agricultural motifs, metaphorical analogy to other living things (like plants), or through a proverb or rhetorical question illustrating what acts cannot be performed by an existent being. Furthermore, the text shows that all acts define the person, as recorded in the heavenly books.[41] Thus the ancient writers appear to favor paradigmatic explanations rather than artificial differentiations of being and action. Even so, the Hebrew Bible does contain two unique passages where select highlights of the internal, external, and the acted upon corroborates to one's existent being. Qohelet explains himself through the litany and legacy of actions he has performed and been the recipient of; and he relates the sequence via the act of considered reflection.[42] Similarly, god asserts his being by numerous acts that none but god can perform in Job 38–41.

Given the above, we can conclude that the ancient Hebrew writers did not share our need to divide a being into artificial parts.[43] The writers recognized that a being is like a tree—a person cannot be differentiated from the fruit it produces. Though today,

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[41] We can also add the ontological and praxeological implications of a name and naming. See: Sandra L. Richter, *The Deuteronomistic History and the Name Theology: lᵉšakkēn šᵉmô šām in the Bible and the Ancient Near East*, BZAW 318 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2002), esp. section on "Nominal Realism" (14–22); S. Tamar Kamionkowski, "Did the Priests Have a 'Name' Theology?," in *IGGUD: Selected Essays in Jewish Studies. Volume 1: The Bible and Its World, Rabbinic Literature, and Jewish Thought*, eds. Baruch J. Schwartz, Abraham Melamed, and Aharon Shemesh (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 2008), 21–38.

[42] Eccl 1–12.

[43] Bottéro writes, "our insistence on isolated propositions somewhat deadens, in fact deforms, the thought of those people, who had neither our need for logic nor our demands for clarity." Jean Bottéro, *Religion in Ancient Mesopotamia*, trans. Teresa L. Fagan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 71.

we may identify fruit as a product of the tree, we also recognize that the fruit corresponds to the tree. In the Hebrew Bible, this correspondence doesn't equal a productized estrangement of output from source. This is why an olive exclusively corresponds to an olive tree (Judg 9:8–9); an apple exclusively corresponds to an apple tree (Joel 1:12); and the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil exclusively corresponds to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen 2:17; 3:5, 22). When one eats the fruit, one correspondingly partakes of the tree's ontological and praxeological integrity. Action is therefore consummately indivisible from being.[44]

It stands to reason that god's being in the Hebrew Bible is discovered in the acts he does or is done to him. As Chirichigno explains, "Whatever God is in concept is demonstrated in his acts."[45] By the same token, whatever acts are done to him (in the Piel), further serves as additional appositum for who he is in being.

4. The Sanctifying God in the Hebrew Bible

God is both the holy/sacred one and the one who consecrates/sanctifies. Rather than appropriate Baudissin's etymological root meaning of "cut" or "separation," assert an "illegitimate totality transfer" from separateness to wholeness, or equivocate purity as a synonym for holiness, this study adheres to Costecalde's findings.[46] In Costecalde's

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[44] This illustrates the difficulty that lies at the linguistic intersection of dogma and parable—the difference between "is" and "is like." For an excellent discussion, see: Christopher F. Evans, *Parable and Dogma* (London: The Athlone Press University of London, 1977), 9.

[45] Greg Chirichigno, "A Theological Investigation of Motivation in Old Testament Law," *JETS* 24/4 (1981): 303–13 (311).

[46] Wolf Wilhelm Friedrich Graf von Baudissin, "Der Begriff der Heiligkeit im Alten Testament," in *Studien zur Semitischen Religionsgeschichte*, vol. 2 (Leipzig: F. W. Grunow, 1876), 2:19–21. See also: Walter Eichrodt, *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart: Ehrenfried Klotz / Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1933–1939), 1:176; John G. Gammie, *Holiness in Israel*, OBT (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 9; *TDOT*, "קדשׁ," 12:521–45 (523); and *BDB*, "קדשׁ," 871–4 (871). For rebuttal, see: Philip P. Jenson, *Graded Holiness: A Key to the Priestly Conception of the World*, JSOTSup 106 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 48. See also: Jean L'Hour, "L'impur et le Saint dans le Premier Testament à partir du Lévitique. Partie II: Le Saint et sa rencontre avec l'Impur et le Pur," *ZAW* 116 (2004): 33–54 (33); E. Jan Wilson, *"Holiness" and "Purity" in Mesopotamia*, AOAT 237 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1994), 85. Julien Ries, *El Sentido de lo Sagrado: En Las Culturas y en las Religiones*, trans. by P. Ricardo Isaguirre (Barcelona: Azul, 2008), 51–69 (51–2). For illegitimate totality transfer, see: James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical*

semantic study of the verb קדש, he concludes the quintessential meaning as "consecration to," which he supports from a study of ancient Near Eastern cognates.[47] Consecration denotes dedication, as in dedicated to god.[48] With this understanding, we presume that the verb stresses both consecration and dedication to the penultimate source—god. For this study we will refer to the noun קדש as "holy" and the verb in the Piel as "consecrate."[49]

God is the holy one "*par excellence*."[50] This is understood by consensus. The root קדש ("holy") occurs over 850 times in the Hebrew Bible and is explicitly attributed to god in numerous locations, a few of which are: Exod 15:11; Lev 11:44–45; 19:2; 21:8; Isa 6:3; 43:3; 48:17; 55:8; and Hos 11:9.[51] God is also the explicit agent of קדש in the Piel in

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Language (London: SCM Press, 1961), 218; Wayne A. Meeks, "A Nazi New Testament Professor Reads His Bible: A Strange Case of Gerhard Kittel," in *The Idea of Biblical Interpretation: Essays in Honor of James L. Kugel*, eds. Hindy Najman and Judith H. Newman, JSJSup 83 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 513-544 (537). For the idea of holiness as wholeness, see: Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (New York: Praeger, 1966), 41–57 (esp. 51). Many adhere to Douglas' view, some with subtle modifications, see: Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 3 (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 721; Saul M. Olyan, "Mary Douglas's Holiness/Wholeness Paradigm: Its Potential for Insights and its Limitations," *JHebS* 8/10 (2008):1–9 (7); Gordon J. Wenham, "Purity, " in *The Biblical World: Volume 2*, ed. John Barton (New York: Routledge, 2004), 378–94 (384). See also: John E. Hartley, *Leviticus*, WBC 4 (Dallas, TX: Word Books,1992), 144; Beate Pongratz-Leisten, "Reflections on the Translatability of the Notion of Holiness," in *Of God(s), Trees, Kings, and Scholars: Neo-Assyrian and Related Studies in Honour of Simo Parpola*, StOr 106, eds. M. Luukko, S. Svärd, and R. Mattila (Helsinki: WS Bookwell Oy, 2009), 409–27 (411). Ratheiser captures the range of interpreted meaning for קדש as comprising: "ideas such as 'pure,' 'purified,' 'consecrated'/'separated,' 'cleansed,' 'devoted,' 'holy,' 'immaculate,' 'transparent.'" Gershom M. H. Ratheiser, *Mitzvoth Ethics and the Jewish Bible: The End of Old Testament Theology*, LHBOTS 460 (Bloomsbury Academic & Professional, 2007), 184–5. Ratheiser's range illustrates the equivocation of purity and cleanliness.

[47] For example, Costecalde reasons that Mesopotamia inseparably blended the notions of consecration and purification in the derived forms of *qdš*. This in no way presupposes that the *qdš* were in any way set apart from the social domain. Claude Bernard Costecalde, *Aux origines du sacré biblique* (Paris: Letouzey & Ané, 1986), 55. Wilson's study confirms that *qdš* in Sumerian means, "pertaining to the realm of the divine." Wilson, *"Holiness" and "Purity,"* 93. In Ugarit, Costecalde describes *qdš* as "c'est-à-dire 'consacré à la divinité." Costecalde, *Aux Origines*, 72. In Egypt, the goddess *Qudšu* was known as, "'maîtresse du ciel', 'épouse de tous les dieux',… la déesse *Qudšu* pourrait devoir son nom au fait qu'elle est 'consacrée' aux dieux…" Costecalde, *Aux Origines*, 86. See also: L'Hour, "L'Impur et le Saint," 2:34.

[48] Costecalde, *Aux Origines*, 90; L'Hour, "L'Impur et le Saint," 2:34. His analysis is supported by a selection of key texts in the Hebrew Bible. Costecalde, *Aux Origines*, 109–36; Claude Bernard Costecalde, "Sacré et Sainteté dans l'Ancien Testament," *DBSup* 10 (1985): 1393–1415; L'Hour, "L'Impur et le Saint," 2:36–47; Peter J. Gentry, "Sizemore Lectures II: No One *Holy* Like the Lord," *MJT* 12/1 (2003):17–38; Peter J. Gentry, "The Meaning of 'Holy' in the Old Testament," *BSac* 170 (2013): 400–17. See also: Walter Zimmerli, "'Heiligkeit' nach dem sogenannten Heiligkeitsgesetz," *VT* 30 (1980): 493–512. Similarly, Toorn concludes that קדש is "always related to a divine referent and its meaning must be paraphrased, somewhat clumsily, as 'participating in the divine energy,' 'in harmony with the nature of God.'" Toorn, *Sin and Sanction*, 28.

[49] It is worthwhile that קדש holds no exact semantic equivalent with any given English word. Ratheiser, *Mitzvoth Ethics*, 184. Accordingly, the translations of holy and sacred are semantic approximations. Baruch J. Schwartz, "Israel's Holiness: The Torah Traditions," in *Purity and Holiness: The Heritage of Leviticus*, eds. by Marcel J. H. M. Poorthuis and Joshua Schwartz, JCP 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 47–59 (48).

[50] Hilary Lipka, "Profaning the Body: חלל and the Conception of Loss of Personal Holiness in H," in *Bodies, Embodiment, and Theology of the Hebrew Bible*, eds. by S. Tamar Kamionkowski and Wonil Kim, LHBOTS 465 (London: T & T Clark, 2010), 90–113 (90).

[51] See: David P. Wright, "Holiness: Old Testament," *ABD* 3:237–49 (237).

several passages, including: Gen 2:3; Exod 20:11; 29:44 (x2); Jer 22:7; Ezek 36:23; and 37:28. We will briefly consider the verbs before turning to the nominals.

The objects of god's Piel consecration are: the seventh day (Gen 2:3); the sabbath day (Exod 20:11); his own great name (Ezek 36:23); and Israel (Ezek 37:28).[52] In addition, we find a unique bracketing of קדש in the Piel perfect and imperfect in Exod 29:44, which reads: "And I consecrate the tent of meeting, and the altar; and Aaron, and his sons I will consecrate to priesthood for myself."[53] Finally, in one occurrence god consecrates the conquering opponents of the house of the king of Judah. In other words, Yhwh consecrates the "destroyers—man and his weapon" (Jer 22:7).[54] We can summarize these occurrences by category. God consecrates: time (the seventh day, and the sabbath day); objects (the tent of meeting, the altar, and weapons); people (Aaron, his sons, Israel, and the destroyers); and himself (his name). Each of these Piel occurrences are prototypically transitive, which makes each object effectuated and saliently consecrated in totality.[55] In other words, the Piel points to the verbs imputational force by which the object becomes constitutionally defined by that which the verb stipulates.[56] Whatever god consecrates in the Piel becomes ontologically consecrate.[57]

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[52] Ezek 37:28 is a Piel participle. For other occurrences where god is the agent of the Piel and Israel is the object, see: Exod 31:13; Lev 20:8; 21:8, 15, 23: 22:9, 16, 32; Ezek 20:12).

[53] Ryder translates "I will consecrate… and I will also consecrate…" Julia Ryder, *Centralizing the Cult: The Holiness Legislation in Leviticus 17–26*, FAT 134 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 361.

[54] The verb is a Piel, perf, 1s. For the translation of קדש as "consecrate," see: Jacob Neusner, *Jeremiah in Talmud and Midrash: A Source Book*, Studies in Judaism (New York: University Press of America, 2006), 19. For "will set apart," see: William McKane, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986), 518. For "will prepare." Daniel Bodi, *The Book of Ezekiel and the Poem of Erra*, OBO 104 (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag / Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), 97. For "will send," see: F. B. Huey Jr., *Jeremiah, Lamentations*, NAC 16 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1993), 203.

[55] See also: Daniel C. Timmer, *Creation, Tabernacle, and Sabbath: The Sabbath Frame of Exodus 31:12–17; 35:1–3 in Exegetical and Theological Perspective*, FRLANT 227 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2009), 73. Jacobus A. Naudé, "Holiness in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls After Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment*, Vol. 2, eds. Peter W. Flint and James C. VanderKam (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 171–99 (182–3).

[56] Naudé describes god's Piel acts of קדש as factitive, as in "to set in a state of holiness." Naudé, "Holiness," 182. See also: Jackie A. Naudé, "קָדַשׁ (qādaš)," *NIDOTTE* 3:877–87 (884); Timmer, *Creation*, 73.

[57] Added to this are the N-stem passives of קדש, where the verb acts on god—the subject (Lev 10:3; 22:32; Ezek 20:41; 28:22, 25; 39:27).

Interestingly, we also find that god is the object of the Piel for non-consecration in one occurrence. In Deut 32:51 we read Yhwh confronting Moses: לא־קדשתם אותי ("you (pl.) did not consecrate me") in the midst of the sons of Israel.[58] What should have been done was detrimentally not performed. God pronounces the punishment and the location of Moses' death on the top of the mountain overlooking the promised land on the other side of the Jordan river in vv. 48–52. In other words, failure to consecrate god resulted in failure to attain the promised land and death. Even so, we read that god is the object of non-consecration. By inference we can possibly reason that god should have been the object of consecration. However, no such text exists in the Piel for קדש with god as object.

As we turn to the nominals we are immediately confronted with the most emblematic text—the trisagion of Isa 6:3b: "Holy, holy, holy—Yhwh of hosts."[59] The seraphim herald the enthroned god in heaven while diminutively perform within god's presence.[60] The declaration is one of ontological significance. God is the holy one over all hosts. If we contrast this with the Piel we can reasonably claim that god is the consummate consecrate one.

Two additional texts are particularly relevant for our purposes. In Lev 11:44a we read that the people are declared holy as a present reality: "For I—Yhwh your (pl.) god—

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[58] Translations vary from: "acted treacherously," Richard J. Thompson, *Terror of the Radiance: Aššur Covenant to Yhwh Covenant*, OBO 258 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 9; "you did not sanctify me," Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, 345; "you did not uphold my holiness," Richard E. Averbeck, "אָשַׁם (ʾāšām)," *NIDOTTE* 1: 557–566 (560). Also, for an "estimative meaning 'to consider holy'," see: Hans-Peter Müller, "קדשׁ *qdš* holy," *TLOT* 1103–1118 (1105). The verbs plural suffix indicates all of Israel. Although god is addressing Moses for his lack of consecration, all of Israel are understood as participants.

[59] For explanation on the trisagion, see: Costecalde, "Sacré," 1410–15; L'Hour, "L'Impur et le Saint," 36–8. For other 3-fold constructions, see: Jer 7:4; 22:29; Ezek 21:32. For a discussion on the implications of this triplet, see: David J. Reimer, "On Triplets in a Trio of Prophets," in *Let us Go up to Zion: Essays in Honour of H. G. M. Williamson on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, eds. Iain Provan and Mark J. Boda, VTSup 153 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 203–18 (esp. 213–5).

[60] For the significance of seraphim, see: Tryggve N. D. Mettinger, "Seraphim," *DDD* 742–4. Interestingly, these heavenly beings are the most proximate to god and are not explicitly attributed as holy themselves, and declare god as the trisagion—the most profound appositum of Yhwh in the Hebrew Bible. One wonders if the attribute of קדוש applies to them. Perhaps the locative presence of god is not sufficient to infer קדוש as an appositum of the seraphim. Such questions are in need of further consideration.

am; now become (pl.) consecrate and be (pl.) holy, for holy—I *am*."[61] While Milgrom regards only the priests as holy at this stage in the Leviticus narrative it is not quite so straightforward.[62] Benton's study on aspect is insightful. He explains that the Hitpael of קדש followed by the Qal of היה plus the adjective קדוש indicates "become X and so be X"—emphasizing "process and final state."[63] But this does not demand or insinuate a future tense or subjunctive mood in translation. Instead it reflects the present condition of becoming which endures as a verbal-adjective.[64] This helps our understanding of the Hitpael and Qal in context. The process of becoming consecrate results in a continued affirmation of one's being holy in the present.[65]

In Lev 19:2c, we read: "Holy you (pl.) should be, for holy, I—Yhwh your (pl.) god—*am*."[66] The command to be holy, according to Milgrom, is "unambiguously" applied to all Israelites.[67] The context of Lev 11:44a, and the fact that the entire congregation of Israel is present in Lev 11:2, similarly raises doubts on the future tense or

[61] The verb היה is a Qal perf. emphasizing the present condition. Hieke's translation emphasizes the verbs *sollt* ("should be") and *warden* ("become"): "Denn ich (bin) JHWH, euer Gott, ihr aber sollt euch heiligen und heilig werden, denn ich (bin) heilig." Thomas Hieke, *Levitikus, Erseter Teilband: 1–15*, eds. Ulrich Berges, Christoph Dohmen, and Ludger Schwienhorst-Schönberger, HThKAT (Freiburg: Herder, 2014), 429.

[62] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 687–8.

[63] Richard C. Benton, Jr., "Aspect and the Biblical Hebrew Niphal and Hitpael," (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2009), 277–8.

[64] This is where insights from verbal-adjective (or permansive) studies are particularly helpful. Davidson explains, "The permansive represents a condition as enduring, or, if the reference be to action, it represents the action as the characteristic state of the one who exercises it. … The Permansive… is thoroughly indifferent to completeness or incompleteness; it represents an action as *enduring*." Richard Davidson, "The Semitic Permansive-Perfect" (PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 1902), 5.

[65] Macina further notes that the consecration of Exod 29:43–44 indicates Israel, in its entirety, is holy. Robert D. Macina, *The Lord's Service: A Ritual Analysis of the Order, Function, and Purpose of the Daily Divine Service in the Pentateuch*, (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2019), 156. In addition, the theme of eighth day atonement bears strong correlation with present consecratedness from Lev 9–27. See: Andreas Ruwe, "The Structure of the Book of Levitics in the Narrative Outline of the Priestly Sinai Story (Exod 19:1-Num 10:10)," in *The Book of Leviticus: Composition and Reception*, eds. Rolf Rendtorff and Robert Kugler, VTSup 93 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 55–78 (66–7).

[66] The clause in v. 19c has been called "the thesis" and "motto of Leviticus." For "thesis," see: Hartley, *Leviticus*, 308. For "motto," see: Gordon J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, NICOT (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1979), 18 and 264. For the bookends of Lev 19:2 and 19:36b–37, see: Ryder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 357. Milgrom observes the holy in this verse as the preeminent command to holiness in the Hebrew Bible. Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 3A (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 1604.

[67] Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1604.

subjunctive mood for Lev 19:2c.[68] While the jussive is a notional mood containing "an element of will," it is equally important "to distinguish between *jussive form* and *jussive sense*."[69] The jussive sense of one's will can be expressed in the present-perfect of obligation, expediency, or expectation, as in what "should be." In other words, the people of Israel should statively remain holy because god is holy. At the same time, the text leaves open the possibility that this idyllic practice, if usurped by the people, will result in their loss of being holy. This fits the narratival flow of Lev 11:44a.

At this point we can observe that god is holy and the people are holy in the present. In both verses (Lev 11:44a and 19:c) we find god speaking of himself. This is widely regarded as an illeistic phrase expressing a "dissociative third-person self-presentation."[70] The writer depicts god as speaking of himself in a self-referential way to convey a greater "sense of objectivity" and authority over the subject, which is himself.[71] Accordingly, many suppose that the verses "implies *imitation Dei*."[72] As god is, so ought the people be. But we must remember that the word קדש "does not convey any value

[68] The Qal jussive היה is widely translated as a subjunctive, as in "shall be." Jay Sklar, *Leviticus: An Introduction and Commentary*, TOTC 3 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 242; Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1603. Hieke translates: "*sollt heilig sein*." Thomas Hieke, *Levitikus, Erseter Teilband: 16–27*, eds. Ulrich Berges, Christoph Dohmen, and Ludger Schwienhorst-Schönberger, HThKAT (Freiburg: Herder, 2014), 699. Levine regards the word as "must be." Baruch A. Levine, *Leviticus*, JPSTC (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 126.

[69] For "an element of will," see: Jespersen, *Philosophy of Grammar*, 319-21. For quotation on jussive form and sense, see: Waltke and O'Connor, *Hebrew Syntax*, 566.

[70] Ervin R. Elledge, "The Illeism of Jesus and Yahweh: A Study of the Use of the Third-Person Self-Reference in the Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Texts and Its Implications for Christology" (PhD diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015), 164. See also: Victoria Land and Celia Kitzinger, "Some Uses of Third-Person Reference Forms in Speaker Self-Reference," *Discourse Studies* 9/4 (2007): 493–525 (494). For the formula of "self-assertion," see: Christophe Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch: A Study in the Composition of the Book of Leviticus*, FAT II/25 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 397. For "self-declaration," see: Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1607.

[71] Elledge, "Illeism," 21. Ratheiser regards holiness as "an important characteristic of divine self-manifestation, expressed in the *theologoumena* of revelation…" Ratheiser, *Mitzvoth Ethics*, 190.

[72] Walter J. Houston, "Toward an Integrated Reading of the Dietary Laws of Leviticus," in *The Book of Leviticus: Composition and Reception*, ed. by Rolf Rendtorff and Robert Kugler, VTSup 93 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 142–61, 149. See also: Schwartz, "Israel's Holiness," 57. Hieke, *Levitikus: 16–27*, 711; Zimmerli, "Heiligkeit," 511.

judgment;" neither does it express the idea of "holiness as a quality."[73] Value, worth, ascriptions, and accolades are not lexically conferred but correlative considerations.

The task of separation axiology from semantics indicates a potential problem for our understanding of the word itself. This is illustrated by the numerous descriptions of the holy in relation to god. The holy is regarded as: "a mysterious quality;" the "attribute of attributes," the expression "of His transcendent divinity;" "a synonym for his deity;" the reference to "his unspeakable nature," god's "quintessential characteristic… [that] imbues all aspects of his being and presence;" and "that characteristic of ineffability possessed only by God."[74] Davidson writes, "'Holy,' therefore, was not primarily an epithet for 'god' or 'the gods'; it expressed the idea of god or the gods in itself."[75] Such understands have encouraged many to regard the holy in terms of otherness. For example, Otto regards the holy as the "Numinous," the celestial "'wholly otherness' of god"—both mysterious and unreachable.[76] Eliade's work, which is claimed by many as definitive by "common consent," reasons that the holy is the "reality of a wholly different order."[77]

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[73] Schwartz, "Israel's Holiness," 49.

[74] For "mysterious quality," see: Levine, *Leviticus*, 256. For "attribute of attributes," see: Arthur W. Pink, *The Attributes of God*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2006), 52. For the quotation "of His transcendent divinity," see: Schwartz, "Israel's Holiness," 48. For "a synonym for His deity," see: Robert C. Sproul, *The Holiness of God*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1985), 38. Wells similarly explains that the phrase "'I am Yhwh' becomes tantamount to saying 'I am holy'," in Lev 20:7. Jo Bailey Wells, *God's Holy People: A Theme in Biblical Theology*, JSOTSup 305 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 82. For "his unspeakable nature," see: 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: E. J. Brill, 1996), 123. For "quintessential characteristic… [that] imbues all aspects of his being and presence;" see: Saul M. Olyan, *Rites and Rank: Hierarchy in Biblical Representations of Cult* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000), 17. For "that characteristic of ineffability possessed only by God," see: Gammie, *Holiness*, 195.

[75] Andrew B. Davidson, *The Theology of the Old Testament*, ed. Stewart D. F. Salmond (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904), 151. In fact, the holy is regarded with such profundity that Farnell reasons, "wherever theistic belief has prevailed, holiness has belonged to the essence of the idea." Lewis R. Farnell, *The Attributes of God: The Gifford Lectures* (London: Oxford University Press, 1925), 186.

[76] "Ganz andere." Rudolf Otto, Das Heilige: über das Irrationale in der Idee des Göttlichen und sein Verhältnis zum Rationalen (Breslau: Trewendt und Granier, 1917), esp. 5–7; 28–34. See also: Rudolph Otto, The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the non-rational factor in the idea of the divine and its relation to the rational, trans. J. W. Harvey (New York: Oxford University, 1958), 180 (esp. 5–11; 72–81).

[77] For "common consent," see: Mircea Eliade, *Le sacré et le profane*, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1957); for the Eng. trans., see: Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (New York: Harper & Row, 1961). For the claim of definitiveness, see: David J. A. Clines, "Sacred Space, Holy Places and Suchlike," in *On the Way to the Post-modern: Old Testament Essays 1967–1998*, JSOTSup 293 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 542–54. Similarly, Shiner calls Eliade's work as "the most complete and sophisticated." Larry E. Shiner, "Sacred Space, Profane Space, Human Space," *JAAR* 40 (1972): 425–36 (425). Eliade, *Sacred and the Profane*, 10.

Such notions continue to be promoted by many in biblical studies, including: Staubli, Milgrom, Schwartz, L'Hour, and Knohl.[78] The reasoning follows that if holy is the appositum of god, and god is other, then the holy is a state of being that is other. This is curious.

The holy as a state is often explained in contrast to other so-called states. These conclusions are derived from Lev 10:10. In this text god commands Aaron the High Priest to distinguish between הקדש ("the holy"), החל ("the profane"), הטמא ("the unclean"), and הטהור ("the clean"). Many consider these four nominals as indicative of two, three, or four different states of being or existence; with some, like Barr, claiming that this "relatively closed system" is self-explanatory.[79] However, given the fact that scholars do not agree on the quantity of states the problem of clarity persists.

Our interest centers on the first two nominals. Namely, the holy is popularly regarded as a "state of being," with Yhwh—the emblematic other—as its archetype.[80] And if the holy is a state of being then the profane is the state that is opposite to the holy. In fact, many define the holy and profane: as domains "set off" from each other; as oppositional, antonymic, or antithetic; and as that which is employed "as antonyms."[81]

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[78] Thomas Staubli, *Die Bücher Levitikus Numeri*, NSKAT 3 (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1996), 94; Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1606; Schwartz, "Israel's Holiness," 48; L'Hour, "L'Impur et le Saint," 2:38. Israel Knohl observes that Otto's Numinous exceeds "reason and morality … and is essentially other and different from human reason and experience." Israel Knohl, *The Divine Symphony: The Bible's Many Voices* (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 2003), 22. See also: Ettienne Ellis, "Reconsidering the Fear of God," *OTE* 27/1 (2014): 82–99. Other examples include: See also: Mitchell G. Reddish, "Holy One," *ABD* 3:258; Walter Kornfeld and Helmer I. Ringgren, "קדשׁ," *TDOT* 12: 521–545 (539); Mark F. Rooker, *Leviticus* NAC 3A (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 46–47; Ming Him Ko, *Leviticus*, ABCS (Carlisle, UK: Langham Global Library, 2018), 97.

[79] For two states of being, as in the holy and common, see: René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on Leviticus*, UBSHS (New York: United Bible Societies, 1992), 148. For three states, see: For three states, see: Hieke, *Levitikus: 1–15*, 125; John W. Kleinig, *Leviticus*, ConcC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2003), 6–8; Sklar, *Leviticus*, 45; Mark J. Boda, *A Severe Mercy: Sin and Its Remedy in the Old* Testament, Siphrut 1 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 51; Macina, *Lord's Service*, 119–20. For four states of holy, profane, pure, and impure, see: Richard D. Nelson, *Raising Up a Faithful Priest: Community and Priesthood in Biblical Theology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 19; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, 616. Wright explains the four states as "profane and pure, profane and impure, holy and pure, and holy and impure." Wright, "Holiness," *ABD* 3:246. James Barr, "Semantics and Biblical Theology – A Contribution to the Discussion," in *Congress Volume: Uppsala 1971*, VTSup 22 (Leiden: Brill, 1972): 11–19 (15–16).

[80] Michael C. Mckeever, "Sacred," *NIDB* 5:18.

[81] For the idea of domains that are set off from each other, see: Clarence T. Craig, "Paradox of Holiness: The New Testament Doctrine of Sanctification." *Int* 6/2 (1952): 147–61 (149); Costecalde, "Sacré," 1356. Costecalde derives his relational view of the

This view garners translations or explanations that emphasize alterity. For example, the profane/common is referred to as "not holy"; "the absence of holiness"; "merely lacking holiness"; "different from" the holy; "that which is for everyday use;" that which is "simply the norm for human existence;" that which is "open, manifest, obvious, ordinary, and devoid of any special power to evoke awe and reverence;" "what… has become dissolute or lacks integrity;" and that which carries "pejorative connotations of impiousness, wickedness, and ignorance."[82] In other words, the profane is identified as *the absence of/antinomic from/opposite to* the holy. And both are curiously regarded as states, where only correct ritual can potentially restore one from the profane state.[83] Such explanations preclude god from bearing the slightest hint of the profane in his being or his actions.

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sacred/profane from Craig, who writes, "to sanctify is to take out of the sphere of the profane or common and introduce into the divine or sacred." Craig, "Paradox," 149. For oppositional, see: Baudissin, "Heiligkeit," 2:19–40, (23–25); Joosten, *People and Land,* 124; Ratheiser, *Mitzvoth Ethics*, 197. For antonymic, see: L'Hour, "L'impur et le Saint," 2:43; Tawil does not discuss the holy per se, but does identify חל as the "antonym" of קדש. Hayim Tawil, "The Semantic Range of the Biblical Hebrew חלל Lexicographical Note X," *ZAW* 117 (2005): 91–94 (94). For the technical antonym, see: Naudé, "Holiness," 176. For antithesis, see: Zimmerli, "Heiligkeit," 497. For antonymic utility, see: Pongratz-Leisten, "Notion of Holiness," 411.

[82] For translations of not holy, see: Barr, "Semantics," 15; Péter-Contesse and Ellington, *Handbook on Leviticus*, 148; Sklar, *Leviticus*, 160; Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 51; Mark C. Murphy, *Divine Holiness and Divine Action* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 72. For absence of holiness, see: Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 732. For lacking holiness, see: David P. Wright, "Law and Creation in the Priestly-Holiness Writings of the Pentateuch," in *Laws of Heaven-Laws of Nature: Legal Interpretations of Cosmic Phenomena*, eds. Konrad Schmid and Christoph Uehlinger, OBO 276 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016), 73–101 (88); see also "the lack of holiness" Wright, "Holiness," *ABD* 3:246. For difference from the holy, see: Levine, *Leviticus*, 256. For everyday use, see: Péter-Contesse and Ellington, *Handbook on Leviticus*, 148. For the norm, see: Nelson, *Faithful Priest*, 25. For the quotation with "devoid of any special power," see: John E. Smith, "The Experience of the Hoy and the Idea of God," in *The Challenge of Religion: Contemporary Readings in Philosophy of Religion*, eds. Frederick Ferré, Joseph J. Kockelmans, and John E. Smith (New York: The Seabury Press, 1982), 256–264 (257). For the dissolute, see: Martin D. Yaffe, "Introduction," in *Judaism and Environmental Ethics: A Reader*, ed. Martin D. Yaffe (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2001), 1–70 (60). For the quotation of the pejorative as profane, see: Nomi Stolzenberg, "The Profanity of Law," in *Law and the Sacred*, eds. Austin Sarat, Lawrence Douglas and Martha Merrill Umphrey, ASLJST (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), 29–90 (36).

[83] Wright, "Holiness," *ABD* 3: 247. For rite of passage, see: Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, trans. Rosemary Sheed (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1958), 15; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 538; Eyal Regev, "Reconstructing Qumranic and Rabbinic Worldviews: Dynamic Holiness vs. Static Holiness," in *Rabbinic Perspectives: Rabbinic Literature and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Proceedings of the Eighth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 7–9 January, 2003*, eds. Steven D. Fraade, Aharon Shemesh and Ruth A. Clements, STDJ 62 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 87–112 (98). See Boorer's citation of Exod 29:44 as representative of transference from the profane sphere to the divine sphere. Suzanne Boorer, *The Vision of the Priestly Narrative: Its Genre and Hermeneutics of Time*, AIL 27 (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2015), 349.

5. The Profaning God in the Hebrew Bible

The adjective חל ("profane") occurs 7 times in the Hebrew Bible, while the Piel for חלל ("profane") occurs 66 times. There are no occurrences where god is described by the adjective חל. However, god is the explicit agent of the Piel for חלל in eight passages: Isa 23:9; 43:28; 47:6; Ps 89:35(34); 89:40(39); Lam 2:2; Ezek 24:21; and 28:16.[84] In one instance god is the explicit object of the Piel for חלל in Ezek 13:19. This is interesting; for if god is holy, as previously defined, then how can god not only engage in acts of profanation but also be profaned? We will briefly explore god's acts of profanation before turning to god as the object of profanation.

The objects of god's Piel profanations are: the city of Tyre (Isa 23:9); the heads of the sanctuary (Isa 43:28); god's heritage—the people of Israel (Isa 47:6); the king's crown (Ps 89:40(39)); the kingdom and its heads (Lam 2:2); the sanctuary (Ezek 24:21); and the king of Tyre (Ezek 28:16). Unlike the verb קדש, the text reveals a negation of profanation. In Ps 89:35(34) god declares לא־אחלל ("I will not profane") the covenant with David the king. We can summarize these occurrences according to the following categories. God profanes: places (the city of Tyre, the kingdom, and the sanctuary); people (heads of the sanctuary; the heads of the kingdom; the people of Israel; and the king of Tyre); and objects (the kings crown). God further profanes what he states are his possessions, namely: his heritage (his people), and his sanctuary, but not his covenant.

We can nuance the implications of profanation from the various contexts. For example, god's acts of profanation render the city of Tyre devastated by economic

[84] While we can potentially include Ps 55:21(20), the textual difficulties require additional study prior to reaching a reasonable conclusion. We can also include the texts where god is the originating subject whereby the object profanes a secondary object (Deut 28:30 and Ezek 7:21–22). Both of these are beyond the scope of this paper.

disaster and Canaanite destruction in Isa 23:8–13.[85] God profanes the heads of the sanctuary to such an extent that Jacob is delivered to utter destruction, and Israel is cut off in Isa 43:28.[86] God profanes his heritage (his people) and delivers them to Babylonian captivity in Isa 47:6. God profanes the king's crown to the ground in Ps 89:40(39).[87] God profanes the kingdom and its heads and hurls them down to the ground, which in context refers to the dust of Sheol in Lam 2:2–10.[88] God profanes his sanctuary, corresponding to the death of Israel's sons and daughters by the sword in Ezek 24:21, as well as the sudden and inglorious death of Ezekiel's wife in Ezek 24:18.[89] God also profanes the king of Tyre, casts him from the Edenic mountain of god, and removes him from the sacred stones of fire in Ezek 28:16.[90] In short, god's acts of profanation are prototypically transitive, phenomenologically effectuated, concretely salient, and constitutionally transformative. Whatever god profanes in the Piel becomes ontologically profane.

We also read that god is the object of Piel profanation by others. In Ezek 13:19 god declares ותחללנה אתי ("and you have profaned me"). There is no mistaking that Adonai Yhwh is speaking of himself in v. 18 with the prefixed pronoun on the accusative

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[85] The structure of Isa 23, according to Sweeney, "reaches its climax in vv. 8–9 and 10–13 with the identification of YHWH as the cause of the destruction." Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–39*, 304.

[86] This is similar to Scheuer, who renders this "I delivered Jacob to utter destruction." Blaženka Scheuer, *The Return of YHWH: The Tension between Deliverance and Repentance in Isaiah 40–55*, BZAW 377 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 34. Hrobon suggests that the context emphasizes that Jacob is turned "into an impurity" and Israel is "turned into a blasphemy." Bohdan Hrobon, *Ethical Dimension of Cult in the Book of Isaiah*, BZAW 418 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 139.

[87] Dahood translates the phrase as "utterly desecrated." Mitchell J. Dahood, *Psalms II: 51–100: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, AB 17 (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 2008) 310; "have defiled his crown in the dust," Walter Brueggemann and William H. Bellinger Jr., *Psalms*, NCBC (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 384. Nicholas J. Tromp identifies over 20 occurrences in the HB where ארצ equals the netherworld. This may be another reference, though more study is needed to confirm. Nicholas J. Tromp, *Primitive Conceptions of Death and the Netherworld in the Old Testament*, BibOr 21 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969), 23–46.

[88] See esp. the theme of descent from heaven in v. 1 to Sheol in v. 10. This is understood as *terminus a quo* ("the end from which") and *terminus ad quem* ("the end to which"). Israel is like Job, "as one already dead" in Job 2:11–13. David J. A. Clines, *Job 1–20*, WBC 17 (Dallas, TX, Word Books, 1989), 64.

[89] For an excellent study on the prophetic symbolic acts of Ezek 24:15–24, see: Åke Viberg, *Prophets in Action: An Analysis of Prophetic Symbolic Acts in the Old Testament*, CBOTS 55 (Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2014), 222–8.

[90] For comment on the stones of fire as reference to the burning coals for the heavenly incense, see: Robert R. Wilson, "The Death of the King of Tyre: The Editorial History of Ezekiel 28," in *Love and Death in the Ancient Near East*, eds. J. H. Marks and R. M. Good (Guilford, CT: Four Quarters, 1987), 211–218.

in v. 19. God is declaring himself profane by the actions of others. The verbal suffix refers to the daughters of the people, who are described as necromancers or false prophetesses in v. 17.[91] Many assume the profanation of god is equivalent to his name, synonymous for either god or his name, or indicative of god himself.[92] The latter is preferred due to the absence of the name prior to Ezek 20:9. The reader is guided to understand that god is ontologically profane to such an extent that his profanation is experienced אל־עמי ("before all my people"). The profanation of god corresponds to the unjust death of the justly living (נפש), while the unjust life of the unjust living (נפש) is kept alive.[93] In other words, the profanation of god equals the inversion of justice for his people, who are, according to Gen 2:7, חיה נפש ("living souls").[94]

The foregoing indicates that not only is god the profaning one but he is also the profaned one.[95] As both the agent and object of the verb חלל in the Piel, god is ontologically profane. The verb is stipulative; whatever the verb effects, it becomes

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[91] Stökl regards these women as necromancers: Jonathan Stökl, "The מתנבאות in Ezekiel 13 Reconsidered," *JBL* 132/1 (2013): 61–76. For false prophetesses, see: Richard C. Steiner, *Disembodied Souls: The Nefesh in Israel and Kindred Spirits in the Ancient Near East, with an Appendix on the Katumuwa Inscription*. ANEM 11 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015), 21–7. For a profile of these prophetesses in contextual action, see Cooper's ten list characteristics: Lamar E. Cooper, *Ezekiel*, NAC 17 (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 157–158.

[92] For equivalence of name, see: Steiner, *Disembodied Souls*, 6; Hrobon, *Ethical Dimension*, 140. For god or his name, see: Wright, "Holiness," *ABD* 3:246. For god himself, see: Wong, *Retribution*, 153; Daniel F. O'Kennedy, "חָלַל," *NIDOTTE* 2:145–150 (147); Fritz Maass, "חלל *ḥll* pi. Entweihen," *THAT* 1:570–75 (573); Werner Dommershausen, "חלל," *TDOT* 4:409–17 (412).

[93] In this case, I am rendering the prepositions אל as "concerning" or "with respect to," indicating specification, or "the sphere in which the verb applies or the extent to which the verb occurs." Ronald J. Williams, *Williams' Hebrew Syntax*, 3rd ed. rev. and exp. by John C. Beckman (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 117. The word נפש is commonly translated as "soul, living being, life, self, person, desire, appetite, emotion, and passion." *BDB* "נֶפֶשׁ," 659–61 (659). Steiner's book features a detailed analysis of this passage. Steiner, *Disembodied Souls*, 1–80.

[94] Cf. Ezek 13:19. These implications for humanity as היה נפש indicate that "man is created into or as a living soul, that is into a living being…, as a complete unity." Claus Westermann, *Creation*, trans. John J. Scullion, S.J. (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1974), 77–78. Wolff explains נפש as the ontological character of man's ontology. He writes, "man is *npš*, he lives as *npš*." Hans Walter Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, trans. by Margaret Kohl (London: SCM Press, 1974), 11.

[95] While we can include additional arguments pertaining to the profanation of god's name and the implications of the passive N-stem, such discussions must wait for another time. For profanation of god's name, see: Amos 2:7; Mal 1:11–12; Jer 41:16; Ezek 20:9, 14, 22, 39; 36:20, 21, 22, 23; 39:7; etc. For the N-stem where god is the passive subject of חלל, see Ezek 22:26, where we read: ואחל בתוכם ("and I have been profaned in their midst"). The action was completed at some point in the past and continues in the present.

constitutionally imputed. God is therefore both ontologically profane and praxeologically profane.

6. The Sanctifying God and the Profaning God

The Hebrew Bible presents a sound concordance to evaluate the homogeneity of being and action. Existent being is expressed through paradigmatic and analogous associations with other facets of life. Simply put, one's being corresponds to one's actions and the transformative actions of others upon one's being. For example, a tree is an entity that can manifest fruit corresponding to its being. This is not a product or output of being but a corroboration of one's being. In the same way action corresponds to one's being. A tree can also be the object of potent verbs indicating high semantic transitivity, like being uprooted or planted by an external agent. Both actions effectuate a substantive and determinant impact upon its being; the nuance of which is often indicated by its context. By treating the Piel as indicative of a transformative and effectuated action, the object becomes cognitively sealed by the dictates of the verb in question. The agglomeration of all action in being is emblematic of the existent being. The tree that is planted by another and manifests fruit in correspondence to its being demonstrates the homogeneity of being and action. What one is constitutes what one does. By the same token, one cannot do what is contrary to one's being. Neither can one be acted upon with effectuality unless it corresponds with what is ontologically possible with one's being.

As we summarize the Hebrew Bible's treatment of god we are immediately confronted with a profound conundrum. In order to make the problem abundantly clear I will now refer to קדש/קדוש as "sacred," and קדש in the Piel as "sanctified." God (the existent being) is sacred (ontologically stative), the sanctifer (one who sanctifies), and the

sanctified (one who is sanctified by others).[96] In addition, god (the existent being) is profane (ontologically stative), the profaner (one who profanes), and the profaned (one who is profaned by others). With the exception of god as the sanctified (an implicit assumption), each of these statements are textually explicit. God is explicitly described as profane by virtue of his acts and the acts upon him in the Piel. Who god is, ontologically speaking, is precisely the composite of his actions. God's praxeology is god's ontology—both serving as the emblematic whole for god's existent being.

7. Concluding Remarks

The above study poses a number of challenges to prevailing views. The first question pertains to the striking absence of god's profaning actions in the various developed systems. For example a number of influential scholars make no mention of the relevant verses in their discussions on the holy and profane as a system, including: Söderblom, Rogerson, Barr, Wenham, Jenson, Nelson, Péter-Contesse, Kleinig, Sklar, Hieke, Wright, Staples, and Macina.[97] And of the few that do (Milgrom, Olyan, and Boda), none mention god as the agent of the verb in their analysis.[98] Why is god, as agent of the Piel, apparently ignored in their systems? If god's profaning acts are applied to these and other systems will any of them be sustainable?

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[96] The latter is implicitly deduced from our examination of Deut 32:51.

[97] Nathan Söderblom, "Holiness (General and Primitive)," *ERE* 6:731–41 (esp. 737–38); John W. Rogerson, "What is Holiness?," in *Holiness Past and Present*, ed. Stephen C. Barton (London: T. & T. Clark, 2003), 3–21; Barr, "Semantics," 15–16; Wenham, *Leviticus*, 18–25; Wenham, *Numbers*, 34–8; Jenson, *Graded Holiness*, 43–55; Nelson, *Faithful Priest*, 18–9; René Péter-Contesse, *Lévitique 1–16*, CAT IIIa (Genéve: Labor et Fides, 1993), 241–44; Kleinig, *Leviticus*, 6–10; Sklar, *Leviticus*, 44–8; Hieke, *Levitikus*, 123–131; Wright, "Law and Creation," 73–101; Jason A. Staples, "'Rise, Kill, and Eat': Animals as Nations in Early Jewish Visionary Literature and Acts 10," *JSNT* 42 (2019): 3–17; Macina, *Lord's Service*, 119–20.

[98] Milgrom is the only one that at least cites verses where god is the explicit agent. He cites Isa 23:9 and Ezek 28:16 but makes no mention of חלל or Yhwh as agent. Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 3B (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 2308, 2352, and 2361. And while Milgrom does provide a brief discussion of Ps 89:40 (cf. Ps 74:7; Ezek 28:7–8, 16; Lam 2:1–2), he does so to reject Weinfeld's proposal of "a secondary meaning of *ḥillel* 'throw to the ground.'" Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1697, and 1807. Moshe Weinfeld, "Ḥilul, Kbisha Mirmas regel," in *Meḥqere Lašon: Festschrift Z. Ben-Hayyim*, ed. M. Bar-Asher, et al. (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1983), 195–200.

Second, what can be derived from the idea of holy or profane as two distinct and antinomic states?[99] If these are discrete states, then one must claim that god is both transferred from the holy state to the profane state and from the profane state to the holy state. But such conclusions are challenged by god's statements about himself in Lev 11:44a and 19:c. Can god be both holy and profane at the same time, some of the time, part of the time, or all of the time? How can god be transferred from one state to the next by the actions of others? As has been reasoned, the idea of god's transference cannot be supported by his own verbal actions. Rather, his actions demonstrate that the profane is constitutive of his being, as are the actions done to him in Ezek 13:19. How does this recognition correspond to god's otherness, transcendence, or numinosity? Are these viable descriptors for god? The question is therefore whether it is appropriate to regard the holy and the profane as dichotomous states of being, realms of existence, spheres of presence, or even as gradable properties.

In closing, I would ask, are biblical writers transcending the binary; are they asserting something about the holy and profane that has been lost through time? Perhaps the Hebrew writers are indicating that our search into the meaning of the holy and profane demands a different approach.

[99] On the one hand, Waltke and O'Conner explain the Piel of קדש ("consecrate to") as: "'to make to be holy = transfer to a state of holiness = consecrate,' which takes an object." Waltke and O'Connor, *Hebrew Syntax*, 402. On the other hand Bibb reasons that the Piel of חלל ("profane"), "describes the shift from a holy state to a profane state." Bryan D. Bibb, *Ritual Words and Narrative Worlds in the Book of Leviticus*, (New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 142. Milgrom's explanation is equally curious. He states the idyllic or intended movement as: "to *advance the holy* into the realm of the [profane]." Jacob Milgrom, "The Dynamics of Purity in the Priestly System," in *Purity and Holiness: The Heritage of Leviticus*, eds. Marcel J. H. M. Poorthuis and Joshua Schwartz, JCP 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 29–32 (29). Conversely, it is not idyllic to advance the profane into the realm of the holy. Even so, Milgrom's statement presumes the possibility if we apply the explicit verses wherein god is the agent of profanation.

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Being and Action: The Sanctifying God and the Profaning God in the Hebrew Bible

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Summary

The OTSEM paper represents a facet of my dissertation. The paper addresses the nexus of divine being and action in the Hebrew Bible. Numerous texts specifically state that god is the agent of consecration/sanctification, which is agreed-upon by consensus. However, texts in Psalms, Isaiah, Lamentations, and Ezekiel explicitly designate god as also the agent of profanation. These texts are often ignored or glossed over. What is more striking, some scholars who devote their efforts toward attempts to systematize usage in this area (largely based on Lev 10:10; Ezek 22:26; and 44:23) all but ignore the verses wherein god is the agent of profanation. If it is agreed that one cannot do contrary to what one is, what implications does this phenomenon have for divine being in the Hebrew Bible? Furthermore, how does this affect our understanding of holy and profane as distinct states or spheres of being?

The paper begins by discussing the modern philosophical usage before relating it into the conceptual literary milieu of the Hebrew Bible. The paper then addresses god as קדוש ("holy/sacred"), and as agent of קדש ("consecration"); god as agent of חלל

(“profanation”), and object of חלל (“profanation”). The summary and questions that follow raise doubt about previous discussions on the holy and profane and urge a sober reevaluation of prior assumptions.

The question pertaining to being and action is a material component of my dissertation, entitled: “The Sanctifying God and the Profaning God in the Hebrew Bible.” The dissertation is divided into two parts. Part One address preliminary considerations, which includes: a detailed study of the primary witnesses, scholarly debates, and implications; the literary and syntactic environment; the identification of pertinent aspects within the conceptual milieu of the Hebrew Bible; and select linguistic elements of structure. This sets the stage for Part Two, which exegetically evaluates the sanctifying god and the profaning god in the Hebrew Bible. After a preliminary discussion on being and action in the Hebrew Bible, a number of texts will be evaluated wherein god is the agent of profanation. The observations drawn from this exegetical study will then be applied to key texts. The combination of Parts One and Two will result in a reassessment of the holy and profane, and the nature of god as existent being, and will chart a course for future research.

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Preparing the path: Labels and classifications in the Discoveries in the Judaean Desert series

Abstract

In this paper, I will discuss the classification and labelling system in the Discoveries in the Judaean Desert Series (DJD). Though not an inherent part of the material, labels and classifications are paratextual features which often function as an interpretive lens. They are the first frame through which scholars approach the material. As the official publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls, DJD has naturally influenced subsequent research on the scrolls. As previous research has pointed out, the classifications and labels established in the series have contributed to shaping scholarly imagination of the scrolls.

The interpretation of the analysis will in due course be guided by theoretical considerations from editorial theory, book history, archival theory, and approaches to knowledge production. I will also draw on ongoing discussions concerning whether certain categories are accurate and helpful. After I have presented tendencies in the classification and labelling practices in DJD, I will compare these to the labelling of the German Turfan Expeditions. I will argue that there are advantages and disadvantages to a more flexible and less interpretive labelling system. However, the classification and labelling system in DJD has problematic elements related to provenance and naming and counting manuscripts. This has editorial, interpretive, and statistical implications, and it means that the labels have aided some approaches, results, and interpretations over others.

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Preparing the path: Labels and classifications in the Discoveries in the Judaean Desert series

Focal points for the discussion

Dear reader,

Thank you very much for taking the time to read my paper! I am very grateful for this opportunity to improve my work in progress.

This paper is a rough (and shortened) draft to a chapter in my thesis (see separate summary of my project and paper). I have not yet written all sections intended to be included in this chapter. Specifically, I have not yet written about how I intend to let theoretical perspectives inform my interpretation of my analysis. Nor about how subsequent Scrolls publications have been influenced by the classifications and labels applied in DJD. The last section that is largely unfinished at this time, is the section on comparative material. I would therefore very much appreciate feedback on those three topics in particular. I have two specific questions in relation to this:

1. Do the theoretical perspectives I mention appear relevant? Are there other perspectives I should have a look at?
2. Does the comparative material I mention appear relevant? Is there some other material I should also look into?

I am aware that this paper could be more eloquently written, and that I have not double checked my reference style throughout. I do intend to improve these two aspects in due course. I therefore ask that most of the feedback time is focused on the three topics above, as well as other content-related issues. It would also be very helpful to know if the reader feels that I do what I set out to do, and if it at all seems a helpful contribution. I am, of course, grateful for any and all feedback – thank you again!

Best wishes,
Ingrid

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Preparing the path: Labels and classifications in the Discoveries in the Judaean Desert series

> "...there needs to be some brief posing of the question concerning for whom genre labels are supposed to function. For whom do generic labels provide assistance?"[1]

It is human nature to classify and categorize things.[2] We interpret things around us in relation to other things. We note their similarities, differences, and relations. These classifications are often intuitive. But to say that something is intuitive, is not to say that it is neutral. It is just to say that in one's context, certain values and knowledge has become tacit. It is therefore important to explore how categories shape our knowledge about the Dead Sea Scrolls.

In DJD XXXIX, Emanuel Tov writes that "the names used in DJD are conventionally used even by those who disagree with the characterization of the texts in DJD."[3] This illustrates DJD's authority in Dead Sea Scrolls studies. Though not an inherent part of the material, labels and classifications are paratextual features which function as an interpretive lens. They are the first frame through which scholars approach the material. In this way, DJD has influenced subsequent research on, and scholarly imagination of, the scrolls. It is important to understand this influence and consider what alternative approaches could have been taken. In this paper, I will therefore analyze the classification and labelling system in DJD, discuss some challenges with this system, and compare these results to classifications and labelling of comparative material.[4]

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[1] George J. Brooke, "Genre Theory, Rewritten Bible and Pesher," *DSD* 17 (2010): 361–386 at 374.

[2] Molly M. Zahn, "Avoiding the Category Trap: A Multivariable Approach to Second Temple Literature" (paper presented at *Categories and Boundaries in Second Temple Jewish Literature*, Midlands4Cities, Zoom, 4th March 2021), 5. Zahn builds here on Eleanor Rosch's work in cognitive science on how humans group things together.

[3] Emanuel Tov, "The *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert* Series: History and System of Presentation," in *The Texts from the Judaean Desert: Indices and an introduction to the Discoveries in the Judaean Desert Series*, DJD XXXIX, eds. Emanuel Tov, James VanderKam, and Monica Brady (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 1–25 at 11.

[4] I also plan on discussing some ways in which this has influenced subsequent scholarship, for example in how later publications are structured, and in which ways the labels in DJD may have influenced later interpretations.

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Labels and classifications as museum plaques

> "...names and categories affect how we think; they actually influence the way in which we understand the things denoted by those labels."[5]

In this section, I intend to address some theoretical perspectives that can aid me in interpreting and discussing the finds of my analysis. The theoretical perspectives I plan to draw from are archival theory, editorial theory, book history, perspectives on knowledge production, and perhaps also museology and theory of social practices. Together, I believe these perspectives can help me conduct a sound and transparent critical edition analysis.

Series and volume structure

The structure of the series and individual volumes displays information that is helpful when analyzing categories and classification. It gives insight into how the authors and editors understood the relation and distance between the material they published. I have therefore mapped the tables of content for all volumes, as well as the volume titles and headings. When helpful, I have consulted specific entries or introductions. For a series which publication spans over such a long period of time, the structure is relatively consistent. In the following I will outline the standard structure of the series and volumes and present the exceptions to this structure.

The first volume undoubtedly set the tone for subsequent volumes. Only Cave 1 material is presented in DJD I, indicating that the series was first and foremost intended to be organized according to site.[6] One volume per site, and in the case of minor caves there could be several sites in one volume. Of course, the Cave 4 material in particular turned out to be so vast that it was impossible to encompass it all in one single volume. With only a few exceptions (see for example volume XXVIII which contains Wadi Daliyeh and Cave 4), however, material was designated to volumes according to alleged find site throughout the series.

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[5] Molly M. Zahn, "Talking about Rewritten Texts: Some Reflections on Terminology," in *Changes in Scripture: Rewriting and Interpreting Authoritative Traditions in the Second Temple Period*, eds. Hanne von Weissenberg, Juha Pakkala, and Marko Maattila, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für diealttestamentliche Wissenschaft 419: 93–119 at 93.

[6] D. Barthélemy and J. T. Milik, *Qumran Cave I*, DJD I (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955).

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As a volume, DJD I is structured into two parts: 1. *The archaeological finds*, and 2. *The texts*. The first part contains information about the discovery and excavation, as well as a publication of pottery and textiles. Harold James Plenderleith also explains how Dead Sea Scrolls were unwrapped.[7] The second part of DJD I, *The texts*, is further divided into two sections: *Biblical texts* and *Non-biblical texts*. Dominique Barthélemy was responsible for the first of these sections and presented his fragments in the order of the canon of the Hebrew Bible. The scholar in charge of the second section, *non-biblical texts*, was Józef T. Milik. This section was again subdivided into five groups of texts, according to designated genres. In short, this rough structure can be discerned:[8]

- DJD I: Volume according to site (Cave 1)
    - Archaeological finds
    - Texts
        - Biblical (presented canonically)
        - Non-biblical (sub-divided into different genres)

This structure is generally followed throughout the series, except that most volumes do not contain the *archaeological finds* section. Volumes largely contain material according to site. The main division between *biblical* and *non-biblical* material continues, where the *biblical* is presented canonically and the *non-biblical* is divided into different genres or groups of texts. Depending on how much material is attributed to a given site, this division between *biblical* and *non-biblical*, as well as between different genres, can appear within one single volume or across volumes. For the Cave 4 material there are for example separate volumes for *biblical texts* and for different genres of *non-biblical texts*. Despite the relative consistency, there are eight exceptions to this general organization, namely volumes II, V, IX, XXIII, XXIV, XXV, XXXI, and XXXVII.[9]

Volume II (1961) continues the separation of *Archaeology* (including history) and *texts*. Apart from this, its structure deviates significantly from that of the first volume. *Texts*

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[7] Gerald Lankester Harding, Roland De Vaux, Grace Mary Crowfoot, and Harold James Plenderleith, "Part I: The Archaeological Finds," in *Qumran Cave I*, DJD I, 1–40.

[8] Barthélemy and Milik, *Qumran Cave I*.

[9] It is also worth mentioning volume VII at this point. The volume follows the standard structure of DJD and structures its content according to genre. However, the last group listed is not a genre, but a group according to material (papyrus). It seems that because most fragments are parchment or leather, papyrus fragments are listed as a separate group of manuscripts. See Maurice Baillet, *Qumrân Grotte 4 III: (4Q482–4Q520)*, DJD VII (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982).

are first sorted by language (Hebrew and Aramaic, Greek and Latin, and Arabic), then by material (leather, papyrus, ostraca), and only lastly by genre or groups of texts (literary texts and non-literary texts).[10] Note that the section on literary texts consists mainly of biblical or bible-related compositions, though the heading does not flag them as such. Volume II's structure is perhaps the one that diverges the most from the standard.

The (in)famous volume V (1968) by John Allegro contains non-canonical Cave 4 material. It differs from the standard organization in that it is not divided into sections according to genre. It is, however, structured according to manuscript numbers which clearly relate to designated genre or content. Material related to the Hebrew bible, such as commentaries, are presented in the order of the canon of the Hebrew Bible. In this way, the structure of the volume is also canonical. As such, volume V mostly corresponds to the standard structure of DJD, with the exception that there are no sub-chapters for different genres or groups of texts.

The title of Volume IX (1992) reveals that the published material is "Palaeo-Hebrew and Greek Biblical Manuscripts." It does not, as the title may lead one to believe, exclusively contain canonical compositions. *Parabiblical* manuscripts are also included. In fact, *biblical* and *parabiblical* are the two main subsections in the volume. These sections are then divided into two sections according to script and language (Palaeo-Hebrew and Greek). Notably, those manuscripts that are written in Greek are listed as *Greek* when dealing with parabiblical manuscripts, and as *Septuagint* when speaking of biblical manuscripts. In short, volume IX is structured first according to script and language, then divided into biblical and parabiblical, and lastly sectioned according to script and language again.[11]

Volume XXIII (1998) is one of two volumes dedicated entirely to Cave 11 material.[12] Both *biblical* and *non-biblical* texts are published in the volume, but these are not separated into two different sections. The *biblical* material is presented first and canonically, however, followed by the *non-biblical* material. In this way, entries in DJD

[10] See P. Benoit, J. T. Milik and R. De Vaux, *Les Grottes de Murabba'at*, DJD II (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961).

[11] See Patrick W. Skehan, Eugene Ulrich, and Judith E. Sanderson, *Qumran Cave 4 IV: Palaeo-Hebrew and Greek Biblical Manuscripts*, DJD IX (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

[12] The other Cave 11 volume is DJD IV.

XXIII appear in the standard order, but the standard separation of *biblical* and *non-biblical* material into different sections is absent in the volume.[13]

Because volume XXIV (1997) publishes seal impressions from Wadi Daliyeh, it is of such a different nature from other DJD volumes that its structure is not necessarily comparable to the rest of the series. It is nonetheless mentioned here, as its structure is so different from the standard DJD structure. The volume is structured according to motif.[14]

The last three volumes that differ from the standard structure are the three volumes by Émile Puech: XXV (1998), XXXI (2001), and XXXVII (2009). Puech was assigned *non-biblical texts* from Cave 4, and would thus according to the standard structure, have organized his material first and foremost according to genre. Instead, he organized the material first and foremost by language, resulting in one volume (XXV) of *Hebrew Texts* and two volumes (XXXI and XXXVII) of *Aramaic Texts*. The latter two are sub-divided into groups of texts according to content, and all three are structured according to manuscript numbers. Volume XXV is not divided into subsections. In short, Puech's volumes differ from the standard structure of the series in that the material is primarily organized according to language, and that volume XXV is not divided into subsections according to genre.

Volume XXV in fact contains one Genesis fragment, 4QGenèse^{n}.[15] The entry for 4QGenèse^{n} is not presented separately from the rest of the entries. Nor is it listed first in the volume. The volume's structure thus differs from the standard also in this way. The reason that this fragment was assigned to Puech, despite being identified as *biblical*, is that it was originally identified as belonging to 4Q524, the Temple Scroll.[16] Puech re-

[13] Florentino García Martínez, Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, and Adam S. van der Woude, *Qumran Cave 11 II: 11Q2–18, 11Q20–31*, DJD XXIII (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).

[14] Mary Joan Winn Leith, *Wadi Daliyeh I: The Wadi Daliyeh Seal Impressions*, DJD XXIV (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

[15] The fragment is actually two fragments. According to Stephen A. Reed ("What is a Fragment," *JJS* 45 [1994]: 123–25, at 123), the term "fragment" has been used inconsistently by Qumran scholars: "Editors have not consistently and scientifically labelled each discrete real fragment in their papers. ... Often editors use the term 'fragment' to refer to a grouping of fragments which they claim belong together."

[16] Emanuel Tov, *Revised Lists of the Texts from the Judaean Desert* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2010), 114.

identified the two fragments as belonging to Genesis 34 and Genesis 50.[17] It is unclear why the entry was not moved to another volume after its re-identification.

Several interesting observations can be drawn from the standard structure of DJD and the exceptions to it. I will mention some: the distinction between *archaeological finds* and *text*, the separation of *biblical* and *non-biblical* material, a gradual standardization of structure, and the freedom of individual editors. The first two relate to the interpretive consequences of how the material is grouped together, and the last two deal – at least indirectly – with the editorial process.

The distinction between *archaeological finds* and *the text* shows that text bearing artifacts are treated as something fundamentally different from non-textual artifacts. Once an artifact contains text, the text appears to be treated as its most interesting feature, revealing an immaterial text focus. Physical features are not seen as irrelevant in the publication, but they take second stage to the preserved writing.

The further separation of *biblical* and *non-biblical* manuscripts testifies to a biblical, and specifically text critical, interest. The separation is anachronistic because there was no biblical canon at the time. When the manuscripts are grouped this way, there is a risk that readers of DJD approach the groups of material as inherently different and interpret them in a canonical light. Furthermore, the canonical approach to the scrolls characteristic to the series has led to charged characterizations of manuscripts that were related to "biblical" compositions but differed in some way from the canonical books.[18] The fact that only non-biblical manuscripts are grouped according to genre may also hinder scholarship from seeing the possible interactions or connections of biblical and non-biblical compositions. Therefore, the distinction is helpful if one's research interests lie in the reception history, transmission, development, and canonization of what are today the biblical compositions, but it is less helpful if one, from a more historical perspective, seeks to understand the manuscripts' contemporary clusters of texts or literary milieu.

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[17] Émile Puech, *Qumrân Grotte 4 XVIII: Textes Hébreux (4Q521–4Q528, 4Q576–4Q579)*, DJD XXV (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 193.

[18] Årstein Justnes, "On Being a 'Librarian': Labels, Categories, and Classifications," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran and the Concept of a Library*, eds. Sidnie White Crawford and Cecilia Wassen (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 15–29.

Close to all volumes in the DJD series that contain both *biblical* and *non-biblical* fragments, present the *biblical* material first, then the bible-related, and lastly the non-biblical. This is true also for most volumes which do not present these in different sections. Of the volumes that differ in one way or another from the standard structure, three are relatively early (II, V, and IX), one was produced largely in the Netherlands (XXIII), one contains seal impressions (XXIV), and the last three are produced by Puech (XXV, XXXI, and XXXVII). If we set aside volumes V and XXIII (which do not differ significantly from the standard structure) and volume XXIV (which is of a different nature than the other volumes), we are left with volumes II, IX, XXV, XXXI, and XXXVII – all of which in some way are structured according to language.

The fact that three of the remaining five volumes were produced by Puech, and the other two are early volumes indicates two things: 1) The structure became gradually more standardized through the Tov-era. 2) Individual editors did have some freedom as to how to organize their volumes. Puech seems to have preferred a structure similar to those seen in vols. II and IX and chose to organize his volumes accordingly. This second point is one which will be discussed in my chapter on contributors to the series.

Labelling

In DJD XXXIX, Tov explains that the first step of analysis towards publishing the scroll fragments, was to identify them. This happened from 1950 onwards in the Rockefeller Museum. Although Milik and Strugnell especially took on this task in the early years, all members of the first team participated.[19] The team had access to each other's' material and could therefore suggest alternative identifications.

The task of identifying the fragments also included attributing labels to them that signaled which composition and manuscript copy it was believed to derive from. Scholars in the first team appear to have had a large degree of freedom when it came to labelling the fragments that they were in charge of. As the team expanded, the editor in chief seems to have been more involved in the labelling process, ensuring more consistency between the different volumes.

In the Tov-era, entry editors most often suggested labels which had to be approved by the editor-in-chief. [20] Some volumes had volume editors or consulting editors as well, but

[19] Tov, "History and System of Presentation," 10.

[20] Tov, "History and System of Presentation," 10–12.

they do not seem to have been involved in this procedure The labels were often changed many times between the preliminary and final publications, and sometimes even after the final publication in DJD.[21]

Despite several re-identifications, however, the names given to fragments in DJD generally remain the established labels used by scholars – even those who disagree with them.[22] The labels given in DJD have therefore played an important role in influencing subsequent scholarship. They provide information which guides the understanding of the fragments to which they belong. In other words, they partake in knowledge production related to the scrolls.

Each Dead Sea Scrolls manuscript published in DJD is labelled both descriptively and sequentially (see point three in the table below), with the exception of some fragments that remain unidentified.[23] For example, 4Q16 is also called 4QExod^{e}. In principle, five elements make up the siglum for a Dead Sea Scroll manuscript, but the first and the fifth are commonly omitted.[24] In the table below, the five elements are explained in the order in which they occur:[25]

	Elements	**Explanation and examples**
1	The material on which the text is written	skin/parchment (most common) is not indicated; pap=papyrus

[21] Some labels, and thereby sometimes also classifications, have been changed prior to or after the final publication in DJD. 4Q576 (Gen^{n}) was for example previously identified as 4Q524 (Temple), 4Q97 (Ps^{p}) as 4Q237, and 6Q30 (papProv) as papCursive Unclassified frgs. Tov explains that many of the names that were once generic have been made more specific. Thus, most of the texts which were once called 'Sapiential Text' now carry more specific names," such as 4QInstruction$^{a–g}$ which was previously known as Sapiential work A. See Tov, "History and System of Presentation," 11–12.

[22] Tov, "History and System of Presentation," 10–12.

[23] Skehan, Ulrich, and Sanderson, *Qumran Cave 4 IV*, 1; Tov, "History and System of Presentation," 10. Allegro did not name all manuscripts published in his volume. See John M. Allegro, *Qumran Cave 4 I*, DJD V (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968).

[24] I build here on Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *A Guide to the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 1.

[25] I owe this table and the notes below to Årstein Justnes.

2	The name of the cave/site where the manuscript and/or fragments were discovered or reported to have been found (provenience)*	Qumran caves: 1Q, 2Q, 3Q, etc
3	Abbreviated title of the work	Gen (Genesis), Exod (Exodus), Lev (Leviticus), etc. apGen (Apocryphon of Genesis) pHos (pesher/commentary on Hosea) tgJob (Targum of Job) Sir (Sirach), Tob (Tobit) En (Enoch), Jub (Jubilees), TLevi (Testament of Levi)
	A number denoting the numbered texts in the DJD volumes, cf. below**	1Q1, 1Q2, 1Q3, etc. 4Q1, 4Q2, 4Q3, etc.
4	The copy of the work at the given site	Superscript letters following the title of the work
5	The language in which the work is written	Hebrew (most common) is not indicated ar, aram (Aramic) gr (Greek)

* Sometimes the order of (1) and (2) is transposed.

** The famous and largely intact manuscripts from Cave 1 were published already in the first half of the fifties, before the official series of the Dead Sea Scrolls was launched. They are sometimes called "the unnumbered texts" since they do not have a Q-number: These are, in the order they were published: The Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa[a]), the Habakkuk Commentary (1QpHab, 1950), the Manual of Discipline (today known as The Rule of the Community; 1QS, 1951), the other Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa[b]), the War Scroll (1QM), and the Hodayot (the Thanksgiving Hymns; 1QH[a], 1954).

A couple of the elements in the table above are challenging. The first and the last are relatively unproblematic. The second, find site, is on the other hand very problematic. Most of the material published in DJD does not derive from controlled excavations and is therefore unprovenanced. Much of it was acquired through the market, and some sites were excavated by archaeologist after they had already been looted, and thus contaminated.

For example, only caves 3, 5, and 7–10 in Qumran, all characterized as minor caves, were found and excavated by archaeologists, while all the richest manuscript caves in Qumran, caves 1, 4, and 11 – as well as cave 2, were first looted by Bedouin. To illustrate the proportions of this: Only one DJD volume was needed to accommodate material from the Qumran caves first discovered by archaeologists, while as many as 34 volumes were devoted to material from the caves that were first looted by Bedouin.[26]

Furthermore, according to Stephen Reed, there is no clear-cut boundary between excavated material and material from the market: "Scholars mixed together the purchased and discovered fragments while they were studying them and it is now impossible to distinguish which fragments were discovered and which were purchased."[27] Tov also explains that the inventory system scholars created was "mostly based on information volunteered by the Bedouin and only very partially on controlled excavations."[28] For these reasons, the second element in the labels, find site, is in most cases unfortunately highly uncertain.

The third and fourth elements in the labels are not necessarily problematic but are instead relatively subjective, and therefore also somewhat inconsistent.[29] As Tov writes, "they reflect the editor's understanding of the composition."[30] There is naturally a difference between how scholars have treated previously *known* compositions compared to previously *unknown* compositions, because it is much more difficult to identify the latter. This has editorial, interpretive, and statistical implications.

The editorial and interpretive implications relate to what is addressed in the editions in DJD. For example, variants are offered for known (often biblical) compositions. This is, of course, impossible for unknown compositions. It is also much more difficult to determine the sequence of fragments belonging to the same manuscript when the

[26] I owe this observation to Årstein Justnes.

[27] Stephen A. Reed, "Find-Sites of the Dead Sea Scrolls," *DSD* 14.2 (2007): 199–221 at 205.

[28] Emanuel Tov, "Some Thoughts at the Close of the *Discoveries of the Judaean Desert Publication Project*," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls and Contemporary Culture: Proceedings of the International Conference held at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem (July 6–8, 2008)*, eds. Adolfo D. Roitman, Lawrence H. Schiffman, and Shani Tzoref, Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 93 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011), 3–13 at 9.

[29] For a more thorough discussion of this, see Hindy Najman and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, "A Preparatory Study of Nomenclature and Text Designation in the Dead Sea Scrolls," *Revue de Qumrân* 26.103 (2014): 305–325.

[30] Tov, "History and System of Presentation," 11.

composition is unknown.[31] Additionally, the nature of the commentary is determined largely by the fragments' identification.[32]

Furthermore, the name given to a fragment or manuscript impacts the way it is understood and what other material it is seen in relation to. For example, it makes a big difference in approach and understanding that Puech re-identified the two fragments first identified as part of 4Q524, the Temple Scroll, to instead belonging to 4Q576, Genesis. All this shapes how the fragment is interpreted. Moreover, the names given very often do not accommodate the textual pluriformity in the time of the scrolls, but instead convey the false impression of a fixed canon.

The statistical implications relate to how one is to count manuscripts in such a fragmentary material.[33] Tov succinctly summarizes the problem: "The fact that each fragment that is not ascribed to a larger collection of fragments is given a name necessarily causes some form of distortion."[34] This means that tiny fragments are counted as complete scrolls.[35] Fragments that could have belonged to the same manuscript may have, from lack of context and familiarity with the composition, be identified as different manuscripts.

The manuscripts will also be named according to extant text only, meaning that they might be labelled and classified imprecisely. The manuscripts in question may have contained other elements than those they are named by. A manuscript classified as hymnic, may for example also have contained other elements that simply have not survived.[36] Another example with statistical implications is the five small fragments of 4Q313 which Stephen Pfann regroups into four different manuscripts.[37] In short, both the designated composition and the number of copies are elements which depend on

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[31] That is, if the sequence was the same on the manuscript as that with which we are familiar today.

[32] Tov, "History and System of Presentation," 10.

[33] According to Timothy H. Lim, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Very Short Introduction* (2d edition; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 33 the estimate varies from 25,000 to 80,000–100,000 fragments. However, in a recent book, James H. Charlesworth (*Jesus as Mirrored in John: the Genius in the New Testament* [London: Bloomsbury, 2019], 276) speaks of "over 200,000 [!] difficult-to-read fragments in unfamiliar handwritings" from Qumran.

[34] Tov, "History and System of Presentation," 11.

[35] Justnes, "On Being a 'Librarian'," 18.

[36] Tov, "History and System of Presentation," 11–12.

[37] Stephen J. Pfann, "3. Cryptic Texts," in *Qumran Cave 4 XXVI: Cryptic Texts and Miscellanea, Part 1*, eds. Emanuel Tov, James VanderKam, and Monica Brady, DJD XXXVI (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 513–701 at 697.

subjective interpretations, and which shape not only the understanding of each fragment, but also the statistics of the whole Dead Sea Scrolls corpus.

Discussed in scholarship

Dead Sea Scrolls research has in later years drawn from modern genre theory and, specifically, prototype theory, emphasizing the inductive nature of genres.[38] This allows for a more flexible understanding of genre than the traditional list of features.[39] Several genres and categories have been discussed, and this paper cannot encompass them all. I will here briefly mention two examples of categories which have been debated and two suggested solutions moving forward.

Biblical as a category has been widely debated.[40] No fixed canon existed in the time of the scrolls. The term is therefore anachronistic in this context. Of course, when scholars speak of biblical and non-biblical manuscripts, they refer to those compositions which were later canonized into the Hebrew Bible. As such, this category does not inform the reader about how a given manuscript was used or interpreted, or what status it held in its own time, because there was no clear distinction at the time between biblical and non-biblical material. *Biblical* refers solely to the compositions' later use.[41] This can create

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[38] See for example Benjamin G. Wright III, "Joining the Club: A Suggestion about Genre in Early Jewish Texts," *DSD* 17 (2010): 289–314; Carol A. Newsom, "Pairing research Questions and Theories of Genre: A Case Study og the Hodayot," *DSD* 17 (2010): 270–288; Brooke, "Genre Theory, Rewritten Bible and Pesher;" Molly M. Zahn, "Genre and Rewritten Scripture: A Reassessment," *JBL* 131.2 (2012): 271–288.

[39] For a criticism on the traditional approach to genre, the list of features, see Alastair Fowler, *Kinds of Literature: An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982), 36.

[40] It would be impractical to list all publications or scholars who have discussed the *biblical* category. I will here mention a few that have been important in my own studies: Sidnie White Crawford, "The Fluid Bible: The Blurry Line Between Biblical and Nonbiblical Texts," *Faculty Publications, Classics and Religious Studies Department, University of Nebraska – Lincoln*, paper 43 (1999); James E. Bowley and John C. Reeves, "Rethinking the Concept of 'Bible': Some Theses and Proposals," *Henoch* XXV (2003); Hanne von Weissenberg, "Defining Authority," in *In the Footsteps of Sherlock Holmes: Studies in the Biblical Text in Honour of Anneli Aejmelaeus*, eds. Kristin de Troyer, T. M. Law, Marketta Liljeström, Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology, 72 (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 679–695; Sidnie White Crawford, "'Biblical' Text – Yes or No?: The Hebrew Bible," in *What is Bible?* Eds. Karin Finsterbusch and Armin Lange (Leuven; Paris; Walpole, MA: Peeters, 2012), 113–119; Justnes, "On Being a 'Librarian';" Najman and Tigchelaar, "A Preparatory Study." See also Eva Mroczek, "The Hegemony of the Biblical in the Study of Second Temple Literature," Journal of Ancient Judaism 6 (2015), 2–35.

[41] Justnes, "On Being a 'Librarian'," 15.

artificial clusters of text and distort our understanding of the literary milieu in which the manuscripts belonged.[42] In this way, the *biblical* category is helpful for those interested in tracking the transmission of compositions which were later canonized, but it is not helpful for those whose research interests lie in the history of the manuscripts, their literary milieu, and their use and users.

Other terms have been suggested to replace *biblical*, such as *authoritative*. But this hardly solves the problem, as the connotations of *authoritative* are much the same as those for *biblical*. Furthermore, calling some compositions authoritative, implies that other compositions should be categorized as *non-authoritative* – a very unhelpful label.[43]

The *Wisdom* category has also been under scrutiny in recent years.[44] Scholars have addressed several issues. For one thing, wisdom is a young category. It is an etic genre which is often treated as if it was emic.[45] As the title of his article, "The 'Wisdom Literature' Category: An obituary," and subsequent book, "An obituary for 'Wisdom Literature': The Birth, Death, and Intertextual Reintegration of a Biblical Corpus," reveals, Will Kynes argues that the Wisdom genre as it has been applied, has outplayed its role. Matthew Goff argues that the criteria for determining whether a composition is a wisdom text are imprecise and that the genre designation will always be subjective.[46] Charles Comerford has likewise challenged the validity of the Wisdom category as it is applied to the Dead Sea Scrolls and has pointed out several important shortcomings of the category and its use in the field.[47]

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[42] Justnes, "On Being a 'Librarian'," 23.

[43] See footnote 18 in Justnes, "On Being a 'Librarian'," 20.

[44] See for example Mark R. Sneed, ed., *Was There a Wisdom Tradition? New Prospects in Israelite Wisdom Studies*, Ancient Israel and its Literature (Atlanta: SBL, 2015); Matthew Goff, "Qumran Wisdom Literature and the Problem of Genre," *DSD* 17 (2010): 315–335. There have also been several conferences on the topic. For example the Wisdom webinar by Union Presbyterian Seminary on April 27th 2021, titled "Wisdom as a category for studying ancient texts and discourses," and the 2021 SNSF Webinar Conference hosted by Université de Lausanne (IRSB), titled "Was Wisdom Transformed to Torah in Second Temple Judaism?"

[45] Will Kynes, "The 'Wisdom Literature' Category: An Obituary," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 69,1 (2018), 1–24 at 22.

[46] Goff, "Qumran Wisdom Literature."

[47] Charles P. Comerford, "What of Wisdom in the Scrolls? Problematising the Expansion of the Wisdom Literature Category from the Hebrew Bible to the Dead Sea Scrolls," considered for *Ancient Wisdom Discourse: Problematising Transcultural Interactions in the Ancient Wisdom Texts*, forthcoming.

Several established categories have been criticized. A next question then seems: what would have been the alternative(s)? As Stuart Weeks argued in the 2021 Wisdom webinar, the labels we use depend on the questions we are asking.[48] Therefore, we need a flexible categorization system that will allow various labels at the same time so that we might ask various questions. Two scholars who have suggested new approaches to the categorization of Dead Sea Scrolls moving forward are Hindy Najman and Molly Zahn.

Terminologically, Najman distinguishes between *genre* as something employed consciously by the producers of texts and *constellations* as useful categories for later readers.[49] Constellations are not inherent in texts but are connections later readers draw between compositions or manuscripts. Just as constellations in the night sky are drawn between stars by humans, as opposed to existing as physical lines or figures in the sky. Most of the categories applied to the Dead Sea Scrolls, will then be constellations rather than genres.

Zahn suggests another flexible system. Instead of speaking of constellations, she compares categories to a road map. This too enables different connections for one and the same composition or manuscript. Old categories can be preserved, and new categories added, all while being transparent about biases reflected in those categories.[50] This makes it possible to categorize manuscripts according to multiple variables, allowing each manuscript to be grouped into several different clusters simultaneously.[51]

Justnes writes that because there does not exist any one universal way to label and characterize, "we sometimes need to combine several sets of labels, simply in order to

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[48] The 2021 Wisdom webinar, "Wisdom as a category for studying ancient texts and discourses," held by Union Presbyterian Seminary on April 27th, 2021.

[49] Hindy Najman, "The Idea of Biblical Genre: From Discourse to Constellation," in *Prayer and Poetry in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature: Essays in Honor of Eileen Schuller on the Occasion of her 65th Birthday*, eds. Jeremy Penner, Ken M. Penner, and Cecilia Wassen, STDJ 98 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 307–21, at 309. Najman is inspired by Walter Benjamin, who uses the term "constellations" in his book *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne (London: NLB, 1977).

[50] Zahn, "Avoiding the Category Trap."

[51] Zahn also advocates this multivariable approach in her article "Towards a New Map of Second Temple Literature: Revelation, Rewriting, and Genre Before the Bible," *Metatron* 1 (2021): https://metatron.scholasticahq.com/article/19547-towards-a-new-map-of-second-temple-literature-revelation-rewriting-and-genre-before-the-bible. Justnes also argues in favor of a multivariable approach in his article "On Being a 'Librarian'." He presents a historical approach which could function as one of the roads on Zahn's road map.

have a conversation about the texts."[52] Zahn and Najman's suggestions enable precisely this. However, while both models would probably work very well in digital databases, it is difficult to imagine how they could have been applied constructively in the analog mode of DJD – nor do Zahn and Najman argue that they could. Instead, their models provide helpful ways forward in the post-DJD era.

Comparison with other material

In the search for alternative approaches to labelling and classification, it is perhaps most helpful to compare DJD to other publications of ancient material. Preferably publications which were produced before or around the same time as DJD. I wish to consult the following material for this comparison: The Nag Hammadi library, the Cairo Genizah, the Oxyrhynchus Papyri, and the German Turfan expeditions. Due to time constraints and word limit, only the latter is presented here.

The German Turfan Expeditions (1902–1914)

The Syriac Manuscripts from the German Turfan Expeditions were discovered between 1902 and 1914 in Turfan, western China, in excavations led by the Berlin Museum of Ethnology. "Following their discovery, the fragments, wrapped in paper, were sent to Berlin in wooden crates, each containing a contents-list which used abbreviations signifying the expedition number and the find-site."[53]

Combined with packet numbers, these abbreviations make up the signatures, or sigla, of the fragments from the Turfan expeditions. These signatures are made up of four elements: A letter signifying the general area (T for Turfan), a roman numeral indicating which of the four expeditions (for example III), a letter referring to the specific find spot (e.g., B for Bulayïq), and lastly the packet number (sometimes including a letter).[54] All elements in these signatures give information about the discovery rather than scholarly interpretations of the material.

There are several advantages to this non-interpretive labelling system. The signatures do not guide interpretations of the material and therefore accommodates different

[52] Justnes, "On Being a 'Librarian'," 19.

[53] Erica C. D. Hunter and Mark Dickens, *Texte der Berliner Turfansammlung: Syriac Texts from the Berlin Turfan Collection*, Syrische Handschriften 2 (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 2014), 2.

[54] Hunter and Dickens, *Texte der Berliner Turfansammlung*, 2.

classifications. Should the initial classifications change, it will therefore not be necessary to rename the fragments – as has happened to some Dead Sea Scrolls fragments. Furthermore, had the Dead Sea Scrolls been given discovery-oriented labels, one would be able to distinguish between excavated material and material which was acquired through the antiquities market. In place of the roman numeral described above, one could insert a letter or number to signal who or which groups led the excavation of the material in question. If the material derived from the market, one could mark this with a specific sign, for example the letter M. This comparison demonstrates that it is possible to employ a less interpretive labelling system which to a lesser extent is dictated by specific interpretive interests, and which could also convey uncertain provenance.

There are also disadvantages to a less interpretive labelling system. The material can appear less accessible, especially to early career scholars, because such signatures are somewhat cryptic. For a biblical scholar, it would also have been more complicated to find the material relevant to her study if the labels did not indicate (proposed) content. The choice between an interpretive and non-interpretive system therefore seems to rest largely on who the target audience of the publication is, and which questions it seeks to help answer.

Preparing the path

Had DJD been produced today, it would probably have been a digital database. This would have allowed for a more flexible system. Manuscripts could have been given non-interpretive labels, but still be searchable based on multiple variables such as identified genres, literary milieu, etc. But DJD was produced as a codex and therefore did not have these options. Had it been applied from the beginning, DJD could theoretically have used non-interpretive labels as described above, but after the excavated and purchased material was mixed, this was no longer really a possibility. I have argued that the existing system has both strengths and weaknesses, but what interests me most is how it has influenced subsequent scholarly imagination of the scrolls.

Later scholarship has approached the scrolls largely through classifications and labels in DJD. In this way, DJD prepared the path for certain research questions and interpretations of the scrolls. I have argued that this has facilitated an immaterial text focus and an anachronistic canonical perspective which does not accommodate the pluriform text tradition of the scrolls. The established categories have been helpful for biblical scholars, but less so for more historically or materially oriented research

questions. I have further argued that the labels are problematic in how they deal with provenance, and subjective in how they deal with naming and counting manuscripts. This, I have argued, has editorial, interpretive, and statistical implications.

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Abstract/Summary of the paper *Preparing the path: Labels and classifications in the Discoveries in the Judaean Desert series*

In this paper, I will discuss the classification and labelling system in the Discoveries in the Judaean Desert Series (DJD). Though not an inherent part of the material, labels and classifications are paratextual features which often function as an interpretive lens. They are the first frame through which scholars approach the material. As the official publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls, DJD has naturally influenced subsequent research on the scrolls. As previous research has pointed out, the classifications and labels established in the series have contributed to shaping scholarly imagination of the scrolls.

The interpretation of the analysis will in due course be guided by theoretical considerations from editorial theory, book history, archival theory, and approaches to knowledge production. I will also draw on ongoing discussions concerning whether certain categories are accurate and helpful. After I have presented tendencies in the classification and labelling practices in DJD, I will compare these to the labelling of the German Turfan Expeditions. I will argue that there are advantages and disadvantages to a more flexible and less interpretive labelling system. However, the classification and labelling system in DJD has problematic elements related to provenance and naming and counting manuscripts. This has editorial, interpretive, and statistical implications, and it means that the labels have aided some approaches, results, and interpretations over others.

My PhD project

In my PhD project, I analyze the editorial history of the Discoveries in the Judaean Desert series (DJD), focusing especially on editorial practices. I am interested in what shaped or influenced the publication, and how DJD in turn has influenced subsequent scholarship and scholarly imagination of the Scrolls. In this way, I conduct a critical edition analysis. Some of the elements I look into in my analysis are contributors to the series, editorial guidelines, the approach to certain topics (like provenance, materiality, history, and textual reconstruction), and labelling and classification of the material. In an expanded version, this paper is a rough draft to a chapter in my thesis dealing with the latter. Because I am still in the relatively early stages of my PhD, the complete structure of my thesis and its chapters is not yet fully developed. This is only my second somewhat developed paper at this stage. In the first one, I looked into the editorial guidelines provided by Emanuel Tov to contributors of the series in 1996.

The Beauty of the Beasts: a Psychoanalytical Reading of Job 40-41.

Abstract: *This paper is later to be written into a chapter in my thesis Protesting the wrath of God: embodied lament of the wailing male. My project is an interdisciplinary literary feminist study on how the lamenting* גבר *("strongman") of Lam 3:1 and Psalm 88 experience the wrath of God, how this divine fury is embodied in the heavily gendered language of biblical Hebrew and how divine and human masculinities are negotiated in these texts. The underpinning idea in this project is that God is experienced as a violent enemy and an impenetrable penetrator, whereas the lamenters experience themselves as fragile, powerless and failed men (being both infantilised and feminised) with permeated, vulnerable skin. The skin is read as a vital metaphor for the self.*

In my project I use psychoanalytic theories as a lens to through which I read the biblical texts. In this paper I implement a psychoanalytic interpretation akin to Freudian dream analysis in my close reading of the poetic language of Job 40-41, looking for suppressed, unconscious material. The main question of this paper is "how are the erotic forces embodied in poetic devices in Job 40-41?", and I aim to demonstrate how the beasts Behemoth and Leviathan participate in a fearsome and awe-inspiring intercourse.

Job 40-41 is the climactic part of God's theophany and hymnic self revelatory speech in the Book of Job. God boasts of his two terrifying and glorious beasts, Behemoth and Leviathan, who in this interpretation are read as metaphors of the force of Eros, containing both playfulness and high voltage danger. Whereas Job has lamented his pain, shame and loss of patriarchal honour, demanding for God to explain his actions, God presents something totally different in stead: he reveals the immense erotic energies behind and under the surface of everything alive. God's master plan is understood as undergirded by a magnificent power of fertility, creation, play, joy, bonding, fornication, laughter, pleasure and delight. In Job 40-41 God reveals something unexpectedly monstrous about his nature, while simultaneously stressing how unapproachable and unfathomable he is. God is impenetrable, and we will never get under his skin, even when we get a sneak peak under his skirts.

The Beauty of the Beasts: A Psychoanalytical Reading of Job 40-41.

«The light that bathes the bible has the same crude and shameless color as the light that reigns over the unconscious» (Hélène Cixous)

This is a literary synchronic psychoanalytical reading where I investigate imagery of Job 40-41, treating the whole Book of Job as fixed. I am rooting the reading in an understanding of the vital importance the infant's primal physical experience of the skin as an erotozone and and how this fundamental, basic corporeal experience is crucial to the understanding of Job's meeting with the deity (here understood as the ego's brutal confrontation with "reality"). The skin is seen as a metaphor for the ego. The Freudian concept of the Eros life force is the main fundament. My study is not a thorough verse by verse analysis, the centre of attention are the verses where language is charged with repressed erotic content rooted in psychic events in childhood. The beasts Behemoth and Leviathan are understood as magnificent awesome, wonderous fantastic but dangerous forces of procreation, creative energy and frightening sexual drive. In this analysis I will explore how poetic devices are expressed in God's self-revelatory hymnic speech in Job 40-41. My curious research questions are: how is the primitive force of Eros embodied in the poetic language of Job 40-41? What kind of imagery is used to highlight the erotic drama? Which are the psychosexual events explored in the mysterious, exciting and sublime encounter with the beasts?

My underlying idea throughout my whole study is the lamenter's experience of God acting like an *impenetrable penetrator* in contrast to the vulnerable wailer who complains that his skin (here understood as his **ego** [1]) is permeated by God's arrows and spears, that he is defenceless and out of control and has neither shield nor armour to protect himself. God gets under the skin and penetrates his innermost soft core. (30:17) Job's skin is pierced, ruined and in a state of decay, he is covered in boils, sores and worms that can be interpreted as deadly powers of depression. His appearance is revolting; he looks like a monster and freak. ("Am I a sea monster that you must watch over me?" (7:16) Job's complaints seem rather solipsistic, he has an narcissistic obsession with the loss of his honour. He seems to feel entitled to dignity because of his alleged innocence and righteousness (Job 1:1), and he furiously demands a trial where the tyrannic deity would be put in the dock and Job finally could get the justice and answers he deserves (Job 19). The deplorable and shameful, abject state and his appalling body, mainly his wounded skin (Job 7:12) seem to torment the honourable patriarch more than the loss of children: Job can't mourn, and he can't ask for help.). Job suffers from an illness where the boarders between his inner and outer world collapses, and I treat his skin disease as a psychic breakdown.

In this paper I aim to make use of an interpretation akin to Freudian dream analysis. [2] The text is interpreted in the same way as a dream is in a therapeutic analysis, revealing the underlying content beneath the manifest content. To Freud the dream was "the royal road to a knowledge of the unconscious activities of the mind" [3], the subconscious.[4] Dream elements

[1] Jorge Ulnik, Skin in Psychoanalysis, ([s.l.]: Routledge, 2007); Pieter van der Zwan, "Some psychoanalytical Meanings of the Skin in the Book of Job" in *Verbum Eccles.* 38.1-8.and other articles by van de Zwan.
[2] Michael Delahoyde. "Psychoanalytic criticism". https://public.wsu.edu/~delahoyd/psycho.crit.html

[3] Jean-Michel Qinodoz, *Reading Freud : A Chronological Exploration of Freud`s Writings*, vol. 1, Lire Freud (London: Routledge, 2004)., 38.
[4] The terms "subconscious" and "unconscious" can be used interchangeably.

are 'symbolic' with private meanings that can only be discovered through the dreamer's own associations. In contrast to the regular chaotic, fragmented and absurd dream the subconscious content of Job 40-41 is presented in the constrained form of a well-composed belletristic poem, and we are all invited to take part in its hallucinatory universe. I read this text as consisting of chains of associations that all communicate the same underlying psychopathological problem or psychosexual event in early childhood (the prebirth or birth experience, the oedipal conflict and castration anxiety or the primal scene) that is inseparably intertwined with the adult understanding of sexuality. The poem contains the disguised fulfilment of the repressed infantile wishes, especially sexual wish-feelings.

Job 40-41 is the climactic part of God's theophany and hymnic self-glorifying speech in the Book of Job. The divine speaker boasts of his two awesome and fantastic beasts, Behemoth and Leviathan, which in this interpretation are read as "a beast with two backs": two mythical animals representing *the primary scene*, the small child's phantasy of the parental intercourse. Whereas Job throughout the chapters bitterly ang angrily has lamented his loss of honour and demanded an explanation for the lack of justice he feels he is entitled to, God presents something totally unexpected instead: he reveals the immense erotic energies – the libido - behind and under the surface of everything alive. God's master plan is understood as a magnificent force of fertility, creation, play, joy, bonding, fornication, laughter, pleasure and delight. In Job 40-41 the deity comes forth as awe inspiring, fearsome and sexual, both revealing something exciting about his nature, while simultaneously stressing how unapproachable and unfathomable he is: the divine skin is impenetrable. The theophany is the turning point of the book, and what is revealed is to be taken seriously, it is divine truth. This truth can only be represented in poetic language, not in dogmas. There are wild things under the surface and secrets to be revealed, and God lets Job take a sneak peak under the divine skirts to let him get a glorious glimpse of the enormous, monstrous awe-inspiring and unbeatable forces of the divine underbelly. This sight of course would make anyone speechless, but in the end, Job is still not lost for words. The vision leads to Job's "metanoia", his psychic maturation, and he will finally be empowered to act "like a man", leave the impotence and abject, depressive state of sitting in the ash heap behind, and as a happy finale beget ten new children.

My aim is precisely to delve to the most uncomfortable material with theories that are considered vulgar and scandalous, with a jargon that might feel strange and off-putting: "Anal sadism and rage in babies? Polymorph perversion in infants? Why this obsession with reducing everything to the sexual sphere?!" -After all, sometimes a cigar is just a cigar, and a sea monster is just a sea monster! The crude, clinical language can never do justice to the beauty of the encounter in the therapy room, but I still consider it an adequate analytic tool in the interpretation of art. [5]

Some central psychoanalytic terms need a definition, and I stress that I focus on the male child. Freud claims that our identity is divided into two separate spheres, the aware part of our mind, the conscious (what we imagine is knowable about ourselves and the world), and the unconscious, which controls most of our behaviour, and which is totally hidden from the

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5 https://public.wsu.edu/~delahoyd/psycho.crit.html#:~:text=Psychoanalytic%20criticism%20adopts%20the%20methods,of%20the%20author's%20own%20neuroses.

conscious. The blockage is caused by defence mechanisms that protects the psyche from agonising aspects of ourselves, repression being one of the most important. What is repressed is usually sexually charged. Our identity's development is intertwined with our sexuality, that's why we call it "psychosexual development". By "sexuality" Freud means a diversity of drives, and these drives all stem from the baby's bodily source of pleasure: the oral pleasure of sucking the breast; the pleasure of being sated; the soft skin-to-skin experience with the mother; the pleasure of being bathed, pampered and cuddled after the unpleasant experience of soiled nappies. These experiences are transformed into mental representations and influence us uncontrollably throughout life. We are always at odd with ourselves, and the external world and the inner reality is always in conflict with each other.[6] "Consciousness – what we call our identity – is always unstable, always at risk of sabotage from the unacceptable feelings of loss and desire which we have to repress into our unconscious in order to conform to the demand of culture." [7]

This reading focuses especially on the Eros drive, the force of love and bonding that exceeds genital sexual pleasure. Sigmund Freud's view of the Eros and Thanatos (Death) instincts evolved continually during his lifetime. The death drive is a destructive and aggressive force that often leads to obsessive-compulsive behaviour that drives the subject to repeat old self sabotaging patterns that leads to psychic suffering. This death drive is "something that would seem more primitive, more elementary, more instinctual than the pleasure principle which it overrides."[8] (Job of the first chapter shows obsessive-compulsive behaviour in his excessive sacrifices). [9] The energy force in Eros is the libido.

A "mother" or "father" in this psychoanalytic reading is not a concrete parental person, it is a term for the powerful being with royal and mythical qualities that is created in the child's subconscious. (Thus the *real life* "mother" can be any person who is the primary significant other to the child.) The double mother/father figure is a subconscious figure where both parents morph into one.

The Oedipus complex or *oedipal crisis* is a crucial psychosexual event based on a triangulation in the mind. A threatening wedge risks to come between the child and mother dyade: "I covet this M/Other, that Third is in my way – I want to get rid of it". [10] (The phenomenon of children who want to marry the parent of the opposite sex or insist on sleeping between the parents appears through human history in all cultures.)

According to Freud, the small boy, who is madly in love with his mother, gets overwhelmed by the *castration anxiety*: the consuming fear that he will lose his penis. This phantasy is triggered when he recognises the difference between the sexes (the mother, who has no penis is seen as "castrated", and his rival, the father, who owns the penis the mother desires). His murderous rage against the father causes guilt. The *superego* is shaped out of this

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[6] Minsky, Psychoanalysis and Gender, 26.
[7] Ibid.
[8] https://www.verywellmind.com/life-and-death-instincts-2795847
[9] Jack Kahn. *Job's Illness: Loss, Grief and Integration: a Psychological Interpretation*. (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1975),.25

[10] Lars Sjögren, «Inledning», *Freud: Samhälle och religion*, (Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 2008), 20.

guilt and terror. The boy must submit to the painful and humiliating reality of losing his mother as an object of desire to the father. This attack to his ego is the *symbolic castration.* The male child identifies with and must form an alliance with his rival. [11]

The *primal scene,* (Urszene), is the child's unconscious fantasy of the parental intercourse as a violent encounter. This mysterious primary scene that evokes sexual excitement structures the psychosexual development of the child. This event is either something that was actually observed and witnessed once, or it was a subconsciously constructed or fantasised one.[12]

In my analysis I focus on the verses of interest for the research question. Some verses tell about the impenetrable and glorious quality of the beast's skin that sore skinned Job may envy. The repressed material is the erotic secret content embodied in euphemisms [13] and metaphors for male and female genitalia, potence and impotence, erection, lubrication, intercourse, ejaculation; psychosexual events: castration anxiety, the oedipal crisis and the primal scene. The main idea is that the two beasts embody sexuality, procreation and birth. Behemoth as a bovine creature exposes the peaceful, playful side of it, whereas Leviathan who can spew fire like a dragon is a more dangerous force. Both beasts reside in water, an element which in itself is highly sensuous. Floating peacefully resembles a memory of blissful dwelling in the amniotic fluid. Behemoth hiding under the lotus plant in murky water connotes the female genitalia, a "flower" hidden under a "bush". The flow of water gives associations to the birth experience. Leviathan in Job 40-41 seems to be more of a lake / sea creature than a mythic chaos monster of the primal sea; he is not aggressive, but you'd better not disturb him! Verses 17. 22-24 contain the crucial primary scene, i.e. a child's inner frightening phantasy of the parental intercourse which arouses mixed feelings: intense jealousy and envy, desire and castration anxiety.

ANALYSIS

1 And Yahweh answered Job, saying: 2 "Will the one who disputes the Almighty correct him? Let God's critic yield a response!" 3. Then Job answered Yahweh, and said: *4. "Look, I am insignificant, what can I answer? I put my hand over my answer.*

Job admits that he's small (40:4 – qalloti – the opposite of cavod), insignificant and of little worth –and is overwhelmed by divine potent power.

אֱזָר־נָא כְגֶבֶר חָלָצֶיךָ אֶשְׁאָלְךָ וְהוֹדִיעֵנִי׃ Job 40:7

Gird your loins like a strongman. I will ask, and you shall answer me.

In Job 40:7 YHWH challenges Job and asks him to gird up his loins חלציך כגבר נא אזר. This is the second time God tells Job to "man up", bind up the skirt to prepare yourself to do hard physical labour or go to war. *Hitch up your belt like the fighter you are!* Prepare yourself for

[11] Minsky, Psychoanalysis and Gender, 41.
[12] Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation of Dreams (1900a).
[13] Scott Noegel, "Euphemism in the Hebrew Bible" in *EHLL* 1 (2013): 870-871. https://faculty.washington.edu/snoegel/PDFs/articles/noegel%2063-euphemism-EHLL-2013.pdf

your battler with me, don't be a weak man. [14] The expression is an idiom. It centres the loins or thighs: the seat of sexual strength and procreation (Gen 35:11; Ex 1,5; 1Ki 8:19; 2Chron 6:9) and courage. Weak, trembling loins connotes fear. (Ps 69:23; Is 45:1)

וְאִם־זְרוֹעַ כָּאֵל לָךְ וּבְקוֹל כָּמֹהוּ תַרְעֵם׃ Job 40:9

Do you have an arm like God? Can you thunder with your voice like I can?

"Everything Job can do El can do better!" Here God is mocking Job for having such a small arm; or is he actually boasting about how powerful and big his own penis is? The arm can be a phallic metaphor, just as other limbs can: regel, yad, esba and other body parts are all sexual metaphors. The wider metaphorical use of arm as "power" makes it plausible to associate the arm with an instrument of sexual virility and power.[15]

10. *Adorn yourself with majesty and dignity, Clothe yourself with splendour and glory.*

I interpret this as a stress of the importance of how the hide or the skin is intertwined with shame or dignity.

God moves from describing his strong arm (a phallic metaphor [16] and marvellous voice through mocking to even stronger and bigger matters: he exposes his big bad boys, his phallic "centerpiece": the beasts Behemoth and Leviathan.

הִנֵּה־נָא כֹחוֹ בְמָתְנָיו וְאֹנוֹ בִּשְׁרִירֵי בִטְנוֹ׃ Job 40:16

Now look!: Behemoth! I made him along with you, he eats grass like an ox. Notice the strength of his thighs and the power of its stomach muscles of his belly.

The loins are the seat of sexual strength. The word אוֹן denotes manly vigour or the physical strength of a man or God. Coach is power and physical strength which also connotes reproductive power like the powers of animals, like the wild ox e, horse Job 39:21, hippopotamus Job 40:16, bullock Proverbs 14:4; he-goat Daniel 8:6 ram Daniel 8:7 Behemoth is a package of erotic energy – hinne nah kåhå – behold the strength in his hips and belly muscles, look at his underbelly, the sexual parts!

יַחְפֹּץ זְנָבוֹ כְּמוֹ־אָרֶז גִּידֵי פַחְדָּו יְשֹׂרָגוּ׃ Job 40:17

It makes its tail stiff like a cedar; the sinews of its thighs are knit together.

The tail is here understood as the erect penis.

[14] Katherine Low, "Implications Surrounding Girding the Loins in Light of Gender, Body and Power" *JSOT 36* (2011): 3-30.

[15]

[16] https://faculty.washington.edu/snoegel/PDFs/articles/noegel%2063-euphemism-EHLL-2013.pdf

The muscle sinews are intertwined tightly and firmly like an erect and hard penis. Its loins bulge with vigor.

עֲצָמָיו אֲפִיקֵי נְחוּשָׁה גִּרְמָיו כְּמִטְיל בַּרְזֶל׃ Job 40:18

Its ribs are bars of bronze, its bones are iron beams.

This is a massive, hard and powerful sexual animal. The metal pipes can be read as a metaphor for the stiff and strong phallus, just as his bones are, ie boner is.

הוּא רֵאשִׁית דַּרְכֵי־אֵל הָעֹשׂוֹ ׀ יַגֵּשׁ חַרְבּוֹ׃ Job 40:19

He is the first of the great acts of God— only his Maker can approach him with the sword.

Or maybe it could be interpreted He is the first of El's ways, his maker draws his sword with him, alternatively Only his maker can draw his sword against him? This is a difficult verse. The sword is either given to the Behemoth by God, or is it God's sword (penis)? Is he the only one with a phallic organ that can compete with this marvellous and awe-inspiring creature? Does the verse refer to God's ability to castrate the beast? Behemoth is a wonderful creature, a masterpiece - a jewel in the crown - the first of the great makings. Yet his creator is approaching him with his sword! This can be interpreted as castration anxiety: the powerful God - Father figure can threaten and overpower any other creature with his phallic "weapon".

Net Bible: The One who made it has furnished it with a sword.

JPS Tanak 1917 He only that made him can make his sword to approach unto him.

World Engl Bible He who made him gave him his sword.

כִּי־בוּל ׀ הָרִים יִשְׂאוּ־לוֹ וְכָל־חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה יְשַׂחֲקוּ־שָׁם Job 40:20

The rivers (נהר'מ) bring to it what they produce, where all the wild animals play.

In my interpretation I chose to translate נהר'מ as "the rivers" as the space where the wild things get nurtured and play; this animal seems to be an animal that thrives in water. What a carefree life of pleasure!! Food, fun and fornication! The happy hippos are lolling around, sated with food and sexual sports. Behemoth lives a fully and rich satisfying, saturating life of lust without lack and want! He plays and chills; the tormented Job can only dream of such a wonderful, joyous and life free of pain!

Job 40:21-22

תַּחַת־צֶאֱלִים יִשְׁכָּב בְּסֵתֶר קָנֶה וּבִצָּה׃
יְסֻכֻּהוּ צָאֱלִים צַלְלוֹ יְסֹבְבוּהוּ עַרְבֵי־נָחַל׃

21. Under the lotus plants it lies, Hidden among the reeds in the swamps.

22. The lotus trees cover it for shade; the willows by the stream envelop it.

That the lotus appears in two consecutive verses seems to emphasice their significance. Flowers are symbols of fertility and the female genitalia. The marsh / mire / mucky muddy water can be read as a metaphor for the wet vagina which is hidden under enveloping pubic hair.

הֵן יַעֲשֹׁק נָהָר לֹא יַחְפּוֹז יִבְטַח כִּי־יָגִיחַ יַרְדֵּן אֶל־פִּיהוּ׃ Job 40:23

Look, even if the river rages, it isn't frightened,

The flowing of water is orgastic. *The entire Jordan could pull down its gullet and it wouldn't bat an eyelash.* This unalarmed beast is truly not intimidated by sex. Behemoth is tranquil and undisturbed whereas poor Job is upset and in a chaotic state of fear. (The bursting of water can also be interpreted as the birth experience in amniotic fluids; this can be read as a condensation of subconscious and crucial events).

בְּעֵינָיו יִקָּחֶנּוּ בְּמוֹקְשִׁים יִנְקָב־אָף׃ Job 40:24

Could anyone capture it when it is on its watch? Can anyone put a ring through its nose with hooks?

Who dares to **pierce** (neqev) him? Only God, the impenetrable penetrator, can match this nature force of sexual power. (And only a deity would "put a ring on it"!)

God now segways seamlessly into praising Leviathan. In this liminal segment of the text Behemoth and Leviathan seem to melt together, it is difficult to see where one monster begins and the other ends, and that is, I claim, absolutely intentional: they are tightly knit together, locked in an embrace and a clinch. This is the beast with two backs – or as I read it: a unified, merged mother-father figure of mythical and royal proportions.

תִּמְשֹׁךְ Job 40:25

לִוְיָתָן בְּחַכָּה וּבְחֶבֶל תַּשְׁקִיעַ לְשֹׁנוֹ׃

Or the great Leviathan, can you catch it with a fishhook? Or press down his jaw with a hook?

Can you pierce him, or is it not a unique task for the impenetrable penetrator?

הֲיִכְרֹת בְּרִית עָמָּךְ תִּקָּחֶנּוּ לְעֶבֶד עוֹלָם׃ Job 40:28

Will it make a covenant with you to be taken as your servant forever?
How invincible, indomitable, impenetrable and awesome Leviathan is! There is no way to subdue, subjugate and domesticate the free wild beasts. Thery are out of human control.

Job 40:31

[Please note that this paper is partly unfinished due to technical problems]

God asks Job: "Can you penetrate him?" Nobody can. He's divine. He's forbidden, taboo. His secret can't be told, shown, explored, touched. A touch is lethal. Leviathan is untamable and untouchable. Cfr the lethal power of the ark of the covenant: it yields highly dangerous energy. Leviathan is bursting with terrifying fire. If you see that what is under the skin / armor of God you must die.

Job 40:32

The beast is a package of raw divine energy. Like the power *ohn* of the Ark of the covenant, the force has immense divine energy.

מַפְּלֵי בְשָׂרוֹ דָּבֵקוּ יָצוּק עָלָיו בַּל־יִמּוֹט׃ Job 41:15

*The folds of its **flesh** stick together / are joined, tightly bound up and never totters are/ immovable.*

Basar is an euphemism for penis. This rock hard penis has no flimsy parts, it is like a rod cast in iron.

Job 41:21

Clubs are counted as chaff / toothpicks; it laughs at the rattle of javelins.

חֶקֶשׁ נֶחְשְׁבוּ תוֹתָח וְיִשְׂחַק לְרַעַשׁ כִּידוֹן׃ Job 41:21

Leviathan laughs at the small penises of all the others - meaning Job.

Job 41:22 *Its underparts are like sharp potsherds;*
it spreads itself like a threshing sledge on the mire.

Job 41:22
תַּחְתָּיו חַדּוּדֵי חָרֶשׂ יִרְפַּד חָרוּץ עַל־טִּיט׃

Leviathan rubs his underbelly against the bottom of the sea in a sex act. This is the uncanny primal scene: the parental intercourse, the beasts with two backs.

Job 41:23

It makes the deep boil like a pot;
it makes the sea like a pot of ointment.

יַרְתִּיחַ כַּסִּיר מְצוּלָה יָם יָשִׂים כַּמֶּרְקָחָה׃

The boiling pot, the steaming hot vagina, has the same meaning as the cauldron in verse 11. Now it is lubricated and foaming, as with semen and female secrete.

The sea / lake / river mud (of Behemoth?) is the receiving female "partner" as Leviathan is ploughing and threshing.

Job 41:24

אַחֲרָיו יָאִיר נָתִיב יַחְשֹׁב תְּהוֹם לְשֵׂיבָה׃

It leaves such a shining wake in the sea, as if the sea had a shock of white hair.

The dividing silver line on the surface of the water in Job 41 is like the white emission is seminal flow. This scene denotes calmness and peace after the sexual convulsion of energy.

את כל גבה יראה הוא מלך על כל בני שחץ׃

On earth it has no equal, a creature without fear.

Leviathan rules. God is king. Dad is the winner, litl scared Job is not his equal.

The text makes use of several Old Testament euphemisms for the genitalia and body parts that connote fertility and procreation: the thighs and loins are highlighted. Job is encouraged to gird his loins *like a man,* a *gever.* The thighs and the muscles of the belly and the stiff and large tail (aka penis) of Behemoth are admiringly described. [17] The arm and hand stand for the phallus, power and potence. God shows off his huge arm (40:9) as to demonstrate how ridiculously potent he is compared to earthling Job (40:14). Leviathan has such a huge "weapon" that he just laughs at the diminutive and powerless javelins and spears of humans, they are "chaffs"(41:20); it's erection is so impressive that even gods fear it (41:17a) and are "beside themselves" by the "crashing and splashing" during the beasty intercourse (41:17b). A boiling pot of ointment is interpreted as a lubricated vagina. (41:23)

[17] Thomas Aquinas interprets Behemoth as an elephant, but he stresses the sexual nature of the beast: "Second, he describes his conjugal relations. For the principal animal pleasures consist in food and intercourse. He describes the intercourse of the elephant first as to the principle of pleasure by which animals are excited to intercourse when he says, "His strength is in his loins," for semen is drawn to the genital members from the loins or from the kidney area. Second, he describes the manner of intercourse. For, as the Philosopher says in The History of Animals V, "The young girl elephant undergoes coitus sitting down, and the male mounts her." undergoes coitus sitting down, and the male mounts her." This is what he means when he says, "and his power is in the navel of his belly," i.e., he places the navel in coitus on the back of the female, and the navel must be very strong so as not to be ruptured because of the collision of such large bodies. Animals who perform coitus of this kind press the tail between their legs when they perform the sexual act, and so he says, "He stiffens his tail like a cedar," which he says because of its great size. Third, he describes the organs serving coitus when he says, "the sinews of his testicles are joined together," that is, they twists, as the Philosopher says in *The History of Animals* III about the testicles of all animals who walk and generate other animals." https://isidore.co/aquinas/english/SSJob.htm#402

and Leviathan rubbing, ploughing and threshing the mud with his underbelly's "grinding stone" is read as intercourse. The scene ends in a spectacular orgasm and a white silver lining on the peaceful water. The white wake of the sea could also be interpreted as the embodiment of a *gutter*. The word gutter has two meanings: it is on one hand the white space formed by the adjoining inside margins of two facing pages of a book. On the other hand it is the lowest or most vulgar level of condition of human life. I'll leave this to the reader to enjoy as I now have erected my metaphorical cathedral over the gutter, or in Freud's own words: "ecclesia super cloacam".[18], a church above the sewer.

Job feels disoriented, defragmented, humiliated, hurting, abused and alienated - *left out*. The oedipal crisis is a painful event when the child realises that it's left out of the parental exclusive love sphere. Life's raw, harsh reality hits like God's wrecking balls – monstrous balls of steel. The maturation comes through getting in touch with the inner child, and accept that reality doesn't offer a lovely soft-skinned breast or the loving, tender, gentle touch of the maternal caress. Job is encouraged to get in contact with the life energies his own secret power of pride, his creative spirit of Eros. God never responds to the patriarch's lament about Job's lost honour or cries for justice and retribution, but shows how wonderful creation is – including Job, along with the high-potent beasts. As Job rejects the ashes, dust and lack of agency in moaning he is able to go on to beget offspring. God reveals some crucial aspects of his masterplan, but still keeps his divine secrets intact: he has a hidden and mysterious divine nature, too magnificent to grasp, and we will never get under the divine skin. He is impenetrable and uncanny like Leviathan! Nobody can get under the divine skin and uncover his secrets. God is an unfathomable enigma. The secrets of sexuality and life forces can't be told in a scientific way, only in a poetic manner, through imagery.

In the happy ending of the Book of Job there is a surprising landing in a space where the feminine is highly valued. We encounter a sweet feminine "balm and bandage" that soothes the patriarchal wound. The book does not end in a triumphalistic shoutout to thick-skinned maleness and masculinity ("*gever*-ishness"); instead a feminine quality is embodied in the three fabulous and attractive daughters of Job, Jemima ("Turtle dove"), Kezia ("Cinnamon flower") and Keren-Happuk ("Eye make-up box"). (Job 42:14) The sensuous sweetness of their grace, fragrance and beauty stands in stark contrast to the crudeness and harshness of a rough and scarred *gever*, there is a re-valuation of the hierarchical system. The female / feminine quality is now considered something utterly cherished, and his daughters are given inheritance along with the brothers. The sons of Job surprisingly remain nameless, which adds to the emphasis of the incomparable value of the feminine (42:15).[19] Are they vicariously representing the scent and softness of the lost sweet maternal skin?

In this paper I have implemented a psychoanalytical reading akin to Freudian dream analysis in my interpretation of Job 40-41, looking for suppressed, unconscious material. I have explored the poetic language of Job 40-41, delving into skin metaphors and imagery that reveals the erotic imagery in the text. I have shown how the two beasts Behemoth and Leviathan can be read as the frightening primal scene, the child's fantasy of the mysterious parental intercourse. The divine instruction to "look to Behemoth" (40:16) is understood as a

[18] Kenneth Burke, "Freud- And the Analysis of Poetry", *AJS* 45 (1939), 392.

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[19] Further on the significance of naming in the Hebrew Bible, see Karla Bohmbach, "Names and Naming in the Biblical World" in *Women in Scripture*, 33-39.

command to perceive oneself not merely as a playful mammal that procreates, but also as a wonderous creation that God made along with the mythical, enigmatic and uncanny beast. On a cultural level the patriarchal understanding of the shame / honour concept that rules the idea of what it means to be a gever and the meaning of girding the loins as a gever is simultaneously challenged and retained. To be an erotic and creative individual is to be adorned in pride. Pride in this psychological sense is an erotic, deeply personal, individual concept, not a social construct. Job's impotence caused by depression and pathological, fruitless and enraged protests against the *reality principle* is healed after the encounter with the deity (which could be interpreted as the humbling reality of our human existence). Integration of the self is achieved through maturation. Reading with a feminist approach, I find a revaluation of patriarchal hierarchy values in the happy ending which highlights the softness and preciousness of Job's daughters.

Final reflection:

One of my main ideas in the beginning of my project was that triggering trauma texts with unhappy endings can be therapeutic and cathartic. That idea has since been challenged. After my daughter's death in 2019 and my cancer diagnosis in 2020 the emotional labour of working with Lamentations and Psalm 88 was too demanding. The Book of Job is a book of uplifting wit and humour, and the "unheimlich beauty" of Job 40-41 proved to be a cathartic text. As I struggled with fatigue, memory loss and brain fog, unpretentiously playing with puppet dolls proved to be fruitfully therapeutic. The playing connected me to my own creativity – my *eros* - and kindled sparks of thought chains that yielded academic analysis. Unlike Job I am too old to produce new offspring, but I can sublimate the erotic energy, the libido, and channel it into giving birth to a paper instead.

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Project Summary – Karin E. Hakalax

Background information about my initial and current project

Initial project:

Protesting the wrath of God: embodied lament of the wailing male. A psychoanalytic reading of biblical lament is an interdisciplinary project, a literary reading of biblical lament, treating the texts as fixed. In the exploring the gendered language and the cultural impact on the גטר of the texts are to be read through a feminist prism, making use of masculinity studies with a psychoanalytic approach. My study focuses on how the lamenting גבר, the fallen "strongman" of Lam 3:1 and Psalm 88 experiences divine fury; how it is embodied in the heavily gendered language of biblical Hebrew and how divine and human masculinities are negotiated in these texts. The underpinning idea in this project is that God is experienced as a violent enemy and impenetrable penetrator, whereas the lamenters experience themselves as fragile, powerless men with permeated, vulnerable skin. The affliction of the גבר is converted into gendered language about a powerful, punishing, impenetrable and penetrating deity, who throws down and rejects the emasculated, debased and rapeable subject. The centre of attention in my study is the embodiment of the wrath of God and the construction of gender and negotiations of masculinities in biblical lament texts, with Lamentations 3:1, Psalm 88:4-5 and Job 40-41 as my case studies. The thematical link is the גבר ,«strongman, hero» of these texts. The lamenter of Lam 3:1 utters that he is the גבר «who has seen affliciton under the rod of his [=God's] wrath». The psalmist of Ps 88:4 laments his state of being «counted as among those who go down to the pit אין־איל כגבר - like a man without strength.»

BDB translates גבר as «a man, as strong, distinguished from women, children, and non-combatants whom he is to defend"[1]. A necessary quality about a גבר is having the strength and power needed to protect the frail, sick and vulnerable. The suffering lamenters of Lam 3 and Psalm 88 are stripped of attributes and characteristics that constitute their masculinity, they suffer from a lack of "gever-ishness", gever-ability, gever-compability. Thus one of the aspects of the embodied wrath of God seems to be the shamed state of being feminised, being penetrated by God's phallic weapons «like a woman». My basic understanding of the concept of divine fury is that it is internal and constituted by forces that stem from the psyche, not by any external force. The underpinning assumption is that traumatic experiences, either in an immediate crisis or an event in early childhood, are translated into language about a furious god with unlimited power that violently victimises the subject. Many of the metaphors describe the subject as laid down, weak, small, helpless, needing and weeping – metaphors that evoke the image of an abandoned infant, crying for a mother's attention in vain. Thus yet another aspect of divine fury seems to be the state of being «like a child».

In 2018 I began to work on my thesis project. My initial idea was that my texts should have a tragic, unhappy ending. I deliberately chose sinister, triggering texts of trauma, but also of extraordinary poetic qualities and beauty. I imagined them to have a cathartic and therapeutic function. There is a cruel dramatic irony in the initial choice of the subject of my thesis: divine fury embodied in Psalm 88, the darkest and most hopeless poem in the entire

[1] Francis Brown, S.R. Driver, C.A: Briggs, eds., *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2001), 150.

Bible, and in Lamentations: a tragic poem about the devastated, abject mother Jerusalem, who grieves her dead children, - but, alas! what a useless whore, what a cruel, heartless mother she is! As one of my main psychoanalytic theories I had chosen to use Melanie Klein's theory about the good and evil breast. In 2019 my young daughter committed suicide due to depression, darkness and hopelessness. Then covid-19 hit. Then my house was infected by destructive flour beetles and bird fleas; even my computer got bugs and died. Then three of my teeth broke off. Then I was diagnosed with breast cancer, and I now suffer from treatment caused fatigue, which has some cognitive challenges. Then I lost my rights to receive sick leave money. Then there was a hole in the roof due to rain and water flooded down right to my desk, into my keyboard and made piles of paper wet. In short: things could be better. Nevertheless, instead of limping down the road to the dung heap outside the city gate, scrape my wounds and complain like the miserable Job, I choose to attend the OTSEM meeting. Pale but composed!

Current altered project:

Little did I know that my daughter's suicide and sickness would cast a huge shadow over my research. I've reconsidered the whole project. My initial choice of texts didn't prove to be very therapeutic, and I realised that I'd prefer to deal with a more amusing text with a happier ending, and which lament text is wittier than the Book of Job? However, I am still considering to write a chapter about Lamentations 3; the jury is out on the alternatives. Contemplating on how to rewrite the project I struggle with inner conflicts, and I have limited energy and time resources.

The Book of Job is a complex and multi-layered work of art, dripping with puns, sarcasms and parodic elements, written by an unreliable author and it has no sympathetic characters; the protagonist himself is pompous, self-aggrandising and self-righteous, his friends are pompous, dogmatic and annoying and the divine figure is pompous, boasting and ridiculous. (As Virginia Woolf put it: "I read the Book of Job last night, I don't think God comes out well in it). [2] Read as a whole the book of Job can be interpreted as a satire. [3] Humour is thus a crucial element in a book that contains intense complaints over severe suffering and pain. I read the Book of Job as a comedy, i.e. a text with a happy ending. Read through the psychoanalytic lens, the Book of Job is a story about psychic maturation. His mental pain gets resolved and a mature stage is achieved. [4] (There is however no mentioning of his skin being healed, he most likely is scarred for life. There is no turning back from the maturation through suffering to the naïvety of the first chapters. Job has been shaken to his core!)

However, the choice of method has also changed since I started out. I am now choosing to read the texts through a psychoanalytic lens, still using literary reading as my main method. This is a dramatic change, and the focus is now on the timeless universe of the male subconscious. (The male child's psychosexual development is quite different from the female's.) [5] There are different dimensions in an analysis: a focus on the *critical period* (crisis

[2] In a letter to Lady Robert Cecil- dated 12 November 1922

[3] Virginia Miller, "The Book of Job as a satire with mention of verbal irony", *St Mark's Review 239 (*2017): 51-62.

[4] Jack Kahn, Job's Illness: Loss, Grief, and Integration: a Psychological Interpretation, (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1975).

[5] Roasalind Minsky, *Psychoanalysis and Gender: an Introductory Reader*, (London: Routledge, 1996).

theory) when emotional risk occurs, a *psychodynamic one*, when psychopathology is seen as rooted in childhood experiences or the *cultural* dimension, where psychological reactions and symptoms are seen in relation to the specific culture one lives in.[6] I'm however trying to leave reflections on "negotiations of divine and human masculinities" and the philosophical problematising of power relations as it is extrapolated in critical theories out of the equation or downplay their importance.[7] [8] In a psychoanalytic interpretation the "power conflicts" are usually reduced to the dynamics in the psyche, between the inner needy, helpless child and the introjection of the omnipotent parental object into the subconscious. I still struggle with how to implement different theories – Object-Relations theory and Freudian drive theory are usually seen as incompatible interpretations in the same analysis.[9] One of the challenges of doing an interdisciplinary study is the unsecure state of working as an incompetent amateur within a field.

My feminist take on the nature of Biblical literature is a sober statement about its factual bias: it's written by elite men in a patriarchal society with patriarchal elite men as its implied audience. I follow David Cline when he states that he regrets "the damage done to the feminist cause by the repeated claim that the Bible is less masculine and sexist than it actually is."[10] It's not a human rights document, it's a Western cultural text rooted in Ancient Near Eastern religion, "full of repression and jouissance (self-shattering, almost sexual pleasure) in it's writing and reading" [11]. A feminist reading of the Book of Job typically focuses on Job's wife (who knows, maybe she just cursed God and died כאישׁה after giving birth to 20 children?) and other female characters, problematising the sexism and androcentrism of the texts.[12] These conceptions and interpretations are all valid, and highly important, but they deal with the conscious and observable, literal and manifest level of the text. A psychoanalytic interpretation digs deeper into the repressed layers of the subconscious and aims to reveal the uncanny, unpleasant and uncomfortable – most often sexual – repressed material that is totally oblivious to the author him/herself: the text doesn't know what it's saying.[13]

I approach it with the excitement of a lover of literature and a feminist invested in (mostly Freudian, Kleinian and Kristevan) psychoanalytical thoughts. Having been an avid reader of biblical texts as belletristic literature for many years, as well as an analysand in psychodynamic therapy for over a decade, I find great pleasure in and resonance between both fields. Psychoanalytic interpretations of visual art, music and literature is exciting and enriching, and opens up a door to the inner world. The biblical texts speak to us, evoke feelings and shape our lives, and provides rich material to any psychoanalytical interpreter. As Donald Meltzer puts it: "the critic respects the mystery of the art […] in the same way as the baby comes to respect the mystery that the riches of the maternal body represent for him". [14]

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[6] Jack Khan, *Job's Illness: Loss, Grief and Integration: A Psychological Interpretation* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1975),25.
[7] https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/critical-theory/
[8] https://courses.lumenlearning.com/introliterature/chapter/introduction-to-critical-theory/
[9] Further on this, see" Tiina Koivikko, Drives and objects - notes on the change of drive theory" *SPR 40* (2017): 19-28.
[10] David Cline, "Alleged Female Language about the Deity in the Hebrew Bible" in *JBL* 140 (2021), 249.
[11] Kristeva, "Reading the Bible", 93.
[12] Feminists on the Old Testament: https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195393361/obo-9780195393361-0020.xml
[13] Julia Kristeva, "Reading the Bible" in *The Postmodern Bible Reader*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 94.
[14] Donald Meltzer, *Psychoanalysis and art: Kleinian perspectives*, (London: Karnac Books, 2004).

My aim is to delve in the most uncomfortable material with theories that can be considered vulgar and scandalous, with a jargon that might feel strange and off-putting ("Anal sadism and rage in babies? Polymorph perversion in infants? Why this obsession with reducing everything to the sexual sphere?!") After all, sometimes a cigar is just a cigar, and a sea monster is just a sea monster! The crude, clinical language of the field can never do justice to the beauty of the encounter in the therapy room, but I still consider it an adequate analytic tool in the interpretation of art. [15] The basic psychoanalytic understanding of the human existence is the objective reality of the psyche and the subconscious, and the reality of the "universal infant". We are all needy babies, thrown out of the bliss in the protected world of amniotic fluids into a harsh and unwelcoming world of dire straits, violence, loss and unhappiness, and we all need compassion and a listener as benign as the therapist who can contain your laments. That includes the unreliable biblical lamenter, a literary product of the subconscious. I thus treat the biblical text as a canvas of repressed material where we can trace the underthreads of the tormented unconscious by revealing the underside instead of focusing on the manifest content.

[15] Michael Delahoyde, "Psychoanalytic Criticism", *Introduction to Literature.* https://public.wsu.edu/~delahoyd/psycho.crit.html#:~:text=Psychoanalytic%20criticism%20adopts%20the%20methods,of%20the%20author's%20own%20neuroses.

Elizabeth Hare

‘It is not good that the human should be alone’: Loneliness and companionship in Genesis 2

In Genesis 2:18, YHWH declares it is ‘not good’ (*lo tov*) for the recently created human to be alone (*lebad*). Up until this point, the human himself has expressed no dissatisfaction about being alone, and it does not appear to have impeded his ability to do the work to which he had been appointed.

It is YHWH who recognises this state of aloneness and who designates it ‘not good’. No reason is given as to why it is not good for the human to be alone, although a solution is swiftly provided in the creation of a woman. She is to be ‘helper fit for him’, and this paper will explore what precisely is meant by this. The human recognises her immediately as a creature of the same bone and flesh as he. The text does not make it explicit how, but it is clear that she is able to negate the human’s original state of aloneness.

This paper will explore why it was not good for the human to be alone, how the creation of a partner corresponding to him was able to alleviate the aloneness, and where we see these themes reoccur elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible. It will also discuss why YHWH deemed it not good for the human to be alone in Genesis 2, yet elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible uses the state of aloneness for beneficial purposes, such as to designate an individual appointed for a specific task.

'It is not good that the human should be alone': Loneliness and companionship in Genesis 2

Loneliness in the Modern World

It is by now well-known that human loneliness can lead to a number of negative consequences for health and wellbeing. Recent studies and meta-analyses have concluded that the strength of both objective and subjective social isolation or loneliness as a predictor of mortality is similar to that of other well-documented and well-established clinical risk factors, including smoking, high blood pressure, substance abuse, environmental quality, immunisation, and access to health care. According to some research, it can in fact be a greater predictor than that of other traditional clinical risk factors, including obesity, anxiety, and job strain.[1] These associations remain significant even after the studies adjusted for variables including demographics, baseline health, age, sex, socioeconomic status, anxiety, depression, and pre-existing social networks.[2]

We can speak only of correlation, of course, rather than causation, but it is clear that loneliness can correspond to serious health issues in the modern world. Research on loneliness has burgeoned in recent decades, across the fields of psychology, social science, neurology, medicine, and more. Since efforts to halt the spread of Covid-19 began, the importance of social interaction has become more widely recognised, as large numbers of people worldwide curtailed their usual social habits, and anecdotal reports of loneliness dramatically increased. To the best of my knowledge there remains, however, little work yet done on the subject of loneliness in the Hebrew Bible.

Despite this lack of interest, loneliness is a not insignificant motif in the Bible, both regarding the role it plays in specific texts, and in relating to broader biblical themes of the perennial existential human experience. It is a topic that is worth exploring because it can contribute towards wider discussions in biblical scholarship on emotions, divine absence, and friendship, as well as having the potential to impact the current interdisciplinary conversation taking place around modern loneliness.

This paper will investigate a few occurrences of 'aloneness' in the Hebrew Bible, focusing particularly on Genesis 2, and exploring why such aloneness is 'not good', and how it begins to be mitigated. It will then assess where these themes reoccur elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, and why aloneness is at times viewed as beneficial, unlike in Genesis 2.

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[1] See, for example, Matthew Pantell, et al., 'Social Isolation: A Predictor of Mortality Comparable to Traditional Clinical Risk Factors.' *American Journal of Public Health, Vol. 103, No.11*, 2056-2062 (2013); Nicole K. Valtorta et al., 'Loneliness and Social Isolation as Risk Factors for Coronary Heart Disease and Stroke: Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Longitudinal Observational Studies.' *Heart, Vol 102*, 1009-1016 (2016); and Julianne Holt-Lunstadt et al., 'Loneliness and Social Isolation as Risk Factors for Mortality: A Meta-Analytic Review.' *Perspectives on Psychological Science, Vol. 10, No. 2*, 227-237 (2015).
[2] Carla M. Perissinotto et al., 'Loneliness in Older Persons: A Predictor of Functional Decline and Death.' *Arch Intern Med, Vol. 172, No. 14*, 1078-1084 (2012).

Vocabulary and Methodology

It is necessary to begin by defining a few terms. There is as yet no single agreed definition of loneliness, and precise terminology differs slightly across studies. One of the most useful definitions for our purposes comes from Mima Cattan et al., who define loneliness as a subjective state of emotional isolation: the feeling of not belonging, or of the lack or loss of companionship. This is in contrast to social isolation, which is considered to be the objective absence or dearth of interactions between an individual and a social network, i.e., a disengagement from social ties, institutional connections, or community participation, potentially marked by living alone or having infrequent social contact.[3] These two states, while related, are not synonymous. This is borne out by common understanding and experience: we know that it is possible to live alone and not feel lonely, or to be consistently surrounded by people and still experience loneliness.

It appears, therefore, that the best way to describe loneliness is as the feeling of distress that accompanies the discrepancy between a person's desired relationships and their actual relationships.[4] The number of such connections a person has can be important, but perceived shortcomings in the quality of these connections are more closely linked to the feeling of loneliness. Social isolation can be an objectively quantifiable variable, but loneliness is a subjective emotional state – the perception of social isolation.[5]

These states occur in a number of different ways throughout the Hebrew Bible. In order to avoid imposing a subjective and anachronistic concept on ancient material, I shall frame the following discussion using the Hebrew cognates בד and בדד, which convey a semantic range of states: physical isolation, separation, emotional loneliness, or any combination of the above.[6] Biblical texts containing this vocabulary usually refer to the aloneness of an individual, but this is sometimes extrapolated to describe a city or a nation through the use of personification or metaphor. All the texts under discussion in this paper contain this vocabulary, to keep the discussion within manageable limits.

While Genesis 2 is our focus in this paper, other texts will be examined in conjunction with it in order to contribute to our understanding of loneliness as a motif within the Hebrew Bible. Despite the disparate nature of the texts, this is an acceptable methodology, due in part to the work of Brevard Childs in developing a canonical approach. Whilst I will not be importing his approach

[3] Mima Cattan et al., 'Preventing Social Isolation and Loneliness among Older People: A Systematic Review of Health Promotion Interventions.' *Aging and Society, Vol.25,* 41-67 (2005), pp. 42-43.
[4] L. A. Peplau and D. Perlman, *Loneliness: A Sourcebook of Current Theory, Research, and Therapy* (New York: Wiley, 1982).
[5] Holt-Lunstadt et al., 'Loneliness and Social Isolation as Risk Factors for Mortality', pp. 227-228.
[6] Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929), pp. 94-95.

indiscriminately, being mindful of its scholarly critiques, aspects of it may still be used to justify bringing different biblical texts into dialogue with one another.

Childs takes the canonical shape of the texts seriously due to their status as 'a literature which Israel transmitted as a record of God's revelation to his people along with Israel's response.'[7] I am not investing the same authority in the canon as Childs does, and nor am I availing myself of his approach for reasons of recorded revelation, but rather because it is the canonical form of the texts which has, over millennia, become normative for faith communities, and valued as a cultural artefact. It is also frequently the canonical texts which have been used in reception history throughout the ages.

Childs observes that, 'Canonical analysis focuses its attention on the final form of the text itself … it treats the literature in its own integrity.'[8] I do not wish to suggest that in general the final form is the only textual layer that should be considered, or that earlier strata should be ignored; I am merely noting that, in order to set parameters for this paper, I will be examining only the final forms of the texts, rather than each previous iteration as well.

I am aware that the canonical approach presents a number of difficulties, compounded by Childs using the term 'canon' to mean slightly different things at various points and, according to James Barr, treating the concept itself 'vaguely and unanalytically'.[9] Consequently, I only wish to go so far as to assert that, while I am using different texts in this paper, all of the material under discussion forms part of the same canon, so it is not inappropriate to draw them all into a wider conversation about loneliness. This being said, I still intend to avoid synthesising the disparate texts into a more homogeneous group.[10]

According to John Barton, Childs claims that, while there are 'diversities of belief attested within the Old Testament', it can be read, 'not perhaps as a *wholly* consistent work, but at least as hanging coherently together.'[11] I am not contending that the entire Hebrew Bible hangs coherently together, but I do propose that diverse texts can contribute to a coherent understanding of loneliness or, at least, an understanding of loneliness with a coherent centre, even if it becomes looser towards the edges.

In sum, whilst the examination of multiple strata, redactors, dates, authors, etc., are a valuable scholarly undertaking, they lie in the main outside the scope of this paper. Instead, this paper will a) use only the final forms of the texts, and b) assume the various texts under discussion, across the Torah and the Prophets and the Writings, can hang together coherently, at least to some extent. So,

[7] Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), p. 73.
[8] Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*, p. 73.
[9] James Barr, 'Childs' Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture', *JSOT* 16 (1980) 12-23, p. 13.
[10] John Barton, *Reading the Old Testament: Method in Biblical Study*. Second Edition (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2003), p. 85.
[11] Barton, *Reading the Old Testament*, p. 86.

while I do not say that a passage in 1 Kings will answer Genesis 2, both passages can be used to contribute to an overall picture of loneliness in the Hebrew Bible.

Genesis 2.18

Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner."[12]

ויאמר יהוה אלהים לא טוב היות האדם לבדו אעשה לו עזר כנגדו

According to the chronological timeframe presented by the biblical corpus, Genesis 2:18 is the earliest biblical reference to human loneliness. This being the case, prior to a discussion of what it means for the human to be alone, it will be helpful to conduct a brief review of the context of the verse.

Genesis 1:1 to 2:4a and Genesis 2:4b to 25 are widely thought to be originally separate accounts of the creation, placed side by side within the Pentateuch at a later date. This case, as John Barton states, 'is an exceedingly difficult one to refute or even to weaken.'[13] This does not mean, however, that the two accounts must be studied separately. Due to their placing, they have been read together for centuries, to the extent that neither now are independent units 'within the context of the Hexateuch'.[14] Consequently, reading Genesis 2:4b to 25 while being mindful of its position immediately following Genesis 1:1 to 2:4a, can enhance our understanding. Not doing so could lead to what Gordon Wenham terms a 'methodological blind spot', as editors of the final texts placed these passages together with a purpose in mind.[15]

Genesis 2:4b to 25, then, consists of the creation story from the so-called Yahwist, following immediately after the poetic creation myth of Genesis 1:1 to 2:4a, commonly thought to have derived from the Priestly source material.[16] Both chapters share similarities with Ancient Western Asian creation myths, such as the Enuma Elish, where order is also brought forth from chaos, and the waters are separated into distinct bodies. Despite the similarities in subject matter between the two Genesis texts, they do also display inconsistencies with each other, which their close proximity serves to highlight. For example, the statement of Genesis 2:5 that, 'No plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up' is incongruous following so soon after Genesis 1:12, 'The

[12] This quotation is taken from the NRSV; alternative and preferred translations are discussed below.
[13] Barton, *Reading the Old Testament*, p. 28.
[14] Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*. Revised Edition (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1972), p. 45.
[15] Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, (Dallas, TX: Zondervan, 1987), p. xxxvi.
[16] Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, pp. 6, 51-53.

earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it.'

Such inconsistencies, however, were clearly deemed slight enough not to preclude their being placed alongside one another by later editors, and reading the texts together provides interesting comparisons. For example, up until Genesis 2:18, everything God has made thus far has been 'good' (טוב), and when the human (האדם) was created in Genesis 1:31, God saw that everything was 'very good' (טוב מאד).[17] It is jarring, therefore, to reach Genesis 2:18 and read that the human being by himself (לבדו) is 'not good' (לא טוב). The collocation of לא and טוב occurs only 24 times in the Hebrew Bible, and on only four of these occasions does the text place these words in the mouth of God.[18] God describing something he himself has made as 'not good' is unique in the biblical corpus, and particularly strange.

Once our attention is piqued, questions arise. How exactly was the human on his own (האדם לבדו), and why was this not good? He had access to all other living things on the earth, birds of the air and beasts of the field, all of whom were formed out of the ground as he was, but these were apparently not enough to prevent him from being on his own. The animals were not described as being alone: loneliness appears to be a solely human condition, and the significant cause is that the human had no one else 'like him' (כנגדו). When the animals and birds were brought to him in 2:19-20, we are told that none of them was a helper like him (עזר כנגדו). But what does 'like him' mean, and why did his helper have to be 'like him' in order to prevent his being alone? This will be discussed below, but it should be noted here that the human had not expressed any dissatisfaction with his lack of companionship: it is YHWH God who has recognised this state and designated it as 'not good'. It would appear, therefore, that in this instance, לבדו refers to the human's physical state of being alone or socially isolated, rather than the emotional state of feeling lonely.

Why did YHWH God declare it not good for the human to be on his own? David Clines proposes that he is purely concerned with the human's lack of ability to reproduce by himself, rather than anything related to emotion.[19] While not disagreeing that reproduction is an essential element for this narrative, I suggest that there is a relational aspect that is concurrent with the physical one. The human's delighted response in Genesis 2:23 to his new companion does not mention reproduction, and 2:24 tells us, '[A] man will forsake his father and his mother and cling to his wife, and they will become one flesh', again neglecting to mention anything directly related to reproduction. As Phyllis Trible notes, 'No procreative purpose characterizes this sexual union; children are not mentioned. Hence,

[17] 'Elohim' is the divine name used in Genesis 1:1 to 2:4a; 'YHWH Elohim' in the rest of Genesis 2.
[18] Isaiah 65:2; Ezekiel 18:18; 20:25; and 36:31.
[19] David J. A. Clines, *What Does Eve Do to Help? And Other Readerly Questions to the Old Testament* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), pp. 34-35.

the man does not leave one family to start another, rather, he abandons (*'zb*) familial identity for the one flesh of sexuality.'[20] Relationality is equally as important as procreation in Genesis 2-3, as 'Each scene is concerned with relationships between man and the rest of creation.'[21]

Relationality is already hinted at in God's declaration, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea', etc. (Gen 1:26). The focus on humanity as made in the divine image implies a condition of relation, and the plural form of the verb 'to have dominion' (וירדו) suggests God's intention was always to create more than one human. Furthermore, it is difficult to deny that the God of the Hebrew Bible is one who seeks out and sustains relationship with his creation, a relationship which has nothing to do with reproduction. In other words, humans are specifically 'created for sociability.'[22] This being the case, the human's aloneness meant he was unable to fulfil an integral aspect of who he was created to be – it would be as if he were commanded to have dominion over a world which contained nothing other than himself.

In this instance, however, no explicit reasons are given as to why YHWH God decreed it not good for the human to be alone. In order to begin to ascertain why he prescribed it so, it is necessary to decide upon the meaning of האדם. If it is meant as a term for humanity as a whole, then this verse becomes a comment on the importance of companionship for humankind in general. But the context of Genesis 2 is the creation of one specific human. Trible observes that האדם does not have a sexual identification at this part of the narrative, and is not identified as a man until after the creation of the woman. 'Instead, the earth creature here is precisely and only the human being, so far sexually undifferentiated.'[23]

Be that as it may, it still appears that in this case YHWH God's pronouncement on loneliness is specific to this one instance, although it is possible to extrapolate this line of thought to a conversation on human loneliness in the wider biblical narrative. But all we can definitively say at this stage is that the human being alone is not good simply because God declares it thus. As seen already in Genesis, however, God's declarations have power and meaning, and whatever God says, is.[24]

Once the problem has been raised, YHWH God proposes an immediate solution, and acts on it in short order: to create 'a helper as his partner', עזר כנגדו (Gen 2:18b). Robert Alter remarks that this phrase is a notoriously difficult one to translate.[25] As alluded to above, the person able to deliver the

[20] Phyllis Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1978), p. 104.
[21] Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, p. 101.
[22] Von Rad, *Genesis*, p. 82.
[23] Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, p. 80.
[24] See the current scholarly conversation on Speech-Act Theory in biblical narrative for more on this topic, e.g., Walter Houston, 'What Did the Prophets Think They Were Doing? Speech Acts and Prophetic Discourse in the Old Testament', pp. 167-188 in *Biblical Interpretation Volume 1: Issue 2* (1993).
[25] Robert Alter, *The Five Books of Moses: A Translation with Commentary* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2004), p. 22.

human from his loneliness had to be somehow like him, or else they would not be suitable, as was the case with the animals. First, however, we must look at what is meant by the term 'helper' (עזר) in this context.

If it connotes inferiority, can the helper be enough 'like' the human to mitigate his loneliness? The point is moot, as neither the context nor the term signifies subordination. Regarding the context, in Genesis 1, men and women are created at the same time, and both are created in the image of God, implying absolute equality.[26] Secondly, עזר frequently means helper, but does not confer inferiority. Elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, wherever עזר occurs, it all but three times refers to God (evidently not an inferior partner in any relationship), and usually regards his help in a military capacity. Clines disagrees, suggesting that a helper is always inferior, even if it is a self-limiting inferiority in order to help with another's appointed task.[27] I do not concur: the very need for a helper demonstrates the inability of a person or party to achieve on their own what is necessary (e.g., in Josh 1:14).[28] For this reason, Trible prefers the translation 'companion' rather than 'helper'.[29] I favour 'partner' for similar reasons, particularly the inference of mutuality. This partner for the human is not superior to him, but neither is she less.[30]

This line of thought is progressed by the use of the compound prepositional phrase כנגדו, which I translate simply 'like him'. Trible phrases the term as 'corresponding to it';[31] Alter proposes 'a counterpart to him';[32] and Wenham suggests 'matching him', literally 'like opposite him', noting that it is found only in this verse.[33] As for meaning, 'like him' could be taken to mean 'similar to him', perhaps a creature with sentience, or speech, but at its core is the suggestion of humanity, and the implication that anything other will not be truly 'like him'. Other similarities, such as sentience and speech, are derived from this shared humanity rather than contributing to it. This likeness, or shared humanity, is recognised by the human when YHWH God brings the woman to him, as he describes her as 'bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh' (Gen 2:23).

With 'helper' and 'like him' together in hendiadic fashion, we gain the sense of a companion or partner, equal in rank and identity, where each half is fit for the other. While 'helper' could be seen as a superior term, referring as it most often does to God, the 'like him' tempers this implication.

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[26] Clines would disagree with this, as he says that to claim, 'that women as well as men are created in the image of God is to move beyond the horizon of the text'. Clines, *What Does Eve Do to Help?* p. 44.
[27] Clines, *What Does Eve Do to Help?* pp. 30-32.
[28] Wenham, *Genesis*, p. 68.
[29] Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, p. 90.
[30] For a much fuller reasoning of why the woman is not inferior, see Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, pp. 90-102.
[31] Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, p. 90.
[32] Alter, *The Five Books of Moses*, p. 22.
[33] Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, p. 138.

'According to Yahweh God, what the earth creature needs is a companion, one who is 'neither subordinate nor superior; one who alleviates isolation through identity.'[34]

This wholeness of the two together creates a direct contrast to the lone human's isolation.[35] Somehow, then, this partner is what prevents the human from being on his own. There is clearly more at work than mere physical proximity, otherwise the animals would have sufficed. Alongside לבדו referring to the human's physical state, as mentioned above, there is a secondary way in which the woman is able to prevent aloneness. If we can ascertain how she does this, we will know for what she is created, and may discover what she prevents, that is, what loneliness is.

But what does she do? She is not given her own tasks, and we are not told that she contributed to any of the work to which the human was appointed in the garden; but then we are never told that the human undertook any of that work either.[36] The only work of which the text informs us is the naming of the animals, but that was completed before the woman was created. Was she there to enable the human to reproduce? In part, for in Genesis 1:28, humankind (both male and female) is commanded to, 'Be fruitful and increase, and fill the earth and subdue it.' But as seen above, reproduction is absent from other key verses pertaining to the woman. So, if not for work, and not only for procreation, the woman must have been created for something else too. I suggest she was also created for relationship, which as we have seen is an integral part of being human, and this is a relationship only she could provide because only she was a partner like him. She prevents the human from being alone simply by virtue of her being *like him*. She has a kinship with him in a way that nothing else can, neither the animals nor YHWH God. This kinship assuages the physical aloneness which may have led to emotional loneliness over time.

While aloneness rather than loneliness is the focus in Genesis 2, there are other occasions in the Hebrew Bible where being alone is also 'not good', but the connections with an emotional state are more apparent. We shall look briefly at a few of these texts in turn.

1 Kings 19.10, 14

"I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away."

ואותר אני לבדי ויבקשו את נפשי לקחתה

[34] Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, p. 90.
[35] Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, p. 89.
[36] Clines, *What Does Eve Do to Help?* pp. 33-34.

In 1 Kings 19, Elijah is fleeing from Jezebel after YHWH's victory over the prophets of Baal at Mount Carmel, and complains to YHWH, 'I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away'. Elijah is both physically alone and emotionally lonely. He is physically far from other people, having fled from Jezebel's messenger, left his servant at Beersheba, and withdrawn by himself into the wilderness, a terrain frequently associated in the Bible with wandering and seclusion.

Elijah appears to feel this physical isolation keenly as it forms a key part of his complaint to YHWH, along with the threat to his life and the unfaithfulness of the Israelites, 'Now I myself remain alone'. Negative conditions resulting from Elijah's aloneness are certainly implied. He has recently undergone a series of difficult events: his colleagues have been put to death, his life was endangered, and he lacked food and water. His isolation means these events are more perilous: he has no comforter, no one with whom to share his workload, and no protector, making it easier for those who are seeking his life to succeed. For Elijah, his prolonged period of physical isolation, with all its attendant problems, exacerbated by the belief that he is the only prophet left, has led to a state of emotional loneliness. This is not unexpected, given what we have seen of humans as created for relationality.

This is a different situation from the human in Genesis 2, who was physically alone but did not express emotional loneliness. Furthermore, 1 Kings 19 does not explicitly state that Elijah's being alone is 'not good'. However, Elijah clearly feels that being alone is not going well for him, and YHWH takes steps to resolve this, allowing us to infer that Elijah's being alone is in fact not good, despite this never being overtly voiced.

As soon as Elijah presents his complaint of being alone, YHWH takes steps to mitigate it, demonstrating that this is not in fact the case. Elijah's protest included his fear that the Israelites were seeking his life, with the implication that they would be successful because he himself remained alone. In response, YHWH provides an impressive demonstration of his power, creating and controlling a great wind, an earthquake, and a fire. This is reminiscent of passages where God appears in strength to perform mighty works on the earth, often in answer to a prayer or a cry for help, such as in Judges 5:4-5, Habakkuk 3:3-6, Psalm 18:8-10, and Exodus 19:16.[37] Here, this serves to imply YHWH's superlative ability to act as Elijah's protector: if he can control such destructive elements, keeping Elijah safe from in the midst of them, how much more can he preserve his life against mere human activity?

YHWH addresses Elijah's loneliness by providing instructions for the anointing of Elisha (1 Kgs 19:16). Elisha is to become prophet in Elijah's place, that is, succeed him, but the two prophets will spend time together before this happens. When Elijah finds Elisha, Elisha leaves his family to go

[37] Mordechai Cogan, *I Kings: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 453.

after and minister to him (וילך אחרי אליהו וישרתו). The verb שרת is the same one used of Joshua and Moses (Ex 24:13, 33:11; Num 11:28), who also had a close relationship culminating in Joshua becoming Moses' successor.[38] Elisha's presence means Elijah had a companion with whom he could travel, and someone with whom he could share the work. The situation is manifestly different from Genesis 2 (Elisha has already been created, for one thing), yet there are underlying similarities between the two texts. As YHWH God provided a woman for the human in Genesis, to act as a partner and to provide companionship, here YHWH provides Elisha for Elijah. כנגדו is not used, but inasmuch as Elisha is a prophet of YHWH (especially given Elijah's lament that he was the only prophet left), he is in an important way 'like' Elijah. As in Genesis 2, there is mutuality and equality between the two humans – not just anyone would suffice as a suitable companion for Elijah. It appears that Elijah and Elisha travelled together, with Elisha ministering to Elijah, and at the opening of 2 Kings 2 they were both on their way from Gilgal. When Elijah was about to die Elisha refused three times to leave him (2 Kings 2:2,-6).

Exodus 18.14, 18

"Why do you sit alone, while all the people stand around you from morning until evening? … For the task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone."

מדוע אתה יושב לבדך ובדך וכל העם נצב עלוך מן בקר עד ערב…

כי כבד ממך הדבר לא־תוכל עשהו לבדך

There are four texts which use בד or בדד to describe Moses, but in the interests of space we shall restrict ourselves here to Exodus 18.[39] Jethro sees that Moses is sitting alone as judge for the Israelites and asks, 'What is this that you are doing for the people? Why do you sit alone, while all the people stand around you from morning until evening?' Moses explains that the people come to him to inquire of God, to settle disputes, and to learn God's statutes. In answer Jethro states firmly, 'What you are doing is not good. You will surely wear yourself out, both you and these people with you. For the task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone.' He then recommends Moses find trustworthy leaders among the people to judge the minor cases, leaving the more complicated ones to Moses. Jethro predicts, 'It will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you. If you do

[38] Ian W. Provan, *New International Biblical Commentary: 1 and 2 Kings* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1995), p. 150. Provan notes that שרת is also used in cases where succession is not relevant.
[39] See also Numbers 11:14, 17; Deuteronomy 1:9, 12; and Exodus 24:2.

this, and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure'. Moses listens to Jethro and follows his advice.

On this occasion, Moses is not physically alone, quite the contrary: his problems are caused by the superfluity of people around him. His situation does not appear to be bad in and of itself, as it was for the human in Genesis 2; the issue instead is that it has resulted in too much work for him to do by himself. He is not alone, but he is undertaking a task alone that is better suited to be tackled by a group of people working together. Moses, like the human in Genesis 2, does not express any concern about being alone. It is an external voice, that of Jethro, who points it out, describing it as 'not good' (לא טוב) in Exodus 18:17, exactly as YHWH did in Genesis 2:18. Unlike in Genesis where no reason is voiced, Jethro clearly explains why Moses' state is not good, 'Both you and this people who are with you will certainly wither away, for the matter is too heavy for you.' It is unsustainable for Moses to continue as he has been doing, and his inefficiency will have a 'debilitating effect on Moses and … impose hardship' on the people of Israel.[40] Jethro, like YHWH in Genesis, proposes an immediate solution, but here it is Moses himself who must choose to put it into action.

Exodus 18, then, speaks of aloneness but not physical isolation and not necessarily loneliness, meaning we are dealing with a different situation from the ones in the texts discussed above. Moses is neither physically alone, nor emotionally lonely, but he is suffering the consequences of being the only one undertaking a task too great for one person. As with Elijah, Moses needs someone can who assist with his designated work. But whereas for Elijah this involved an element of companionship, for Moses it appears to be exclusively to enable him to get the work done.

The solution, both Jethro's suggestion and Moses' implementation, does not affect Moses' physical state, only his singular status as the sole person able to judge disputes. And this solution appears to have been a success – the men Moses appointed did judge the minor cases, leaving the difficult matters for him. According to the narrative, this was just before Moses went on his own to the top of the mountain and received the Ten Words from God (Ex 19:20 ff.). It is possible that this could not have taken place if Moses were still sitting judging the people every day from morning until evening.

Lamentations 1.1

How lonely sits the city,
that once was full of people.

איכה ישבה בדד העיר רבתי עם

[40] Nahum Sarna, *Exodus* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1991), p. 99.

Lamentations 1:1 consists of a description of Jerusalem. Terrible tragedies are depicted throughout the book of Lamentations, often portrayed using emotive and jarring imagery. Traumatic events spill from the pages: child death, sexual assault, apparent abandonment by God. But the first image with which we are presented in the book's opening verse is that of a lonely widow, the personification of Jerusalem and its inhabitants. Not only is בדד used, but the city's incarnation as a widow paints her as the archetypal lonely individual within the world of the text. In this way, the woman-city sits without children or protector or status, and there is no one to keep the loneliness at bay.[41] The loneliness of the widow is made all the more striking by its juxtaposition with people and nations and lovers in the rest of verses 1 and 2.

Because the loneliness is regarding a personified Jerusalem, the meaning is slightly different from previous usages. The city is in some sense physically alone, as she has been abandoned by her friends and military allies. However, while there are fewer people in the city than there were, due to many being taken into exile, Jerusalem does still have inhabitants. There is also an emotional element to this loneliness, with the added dimension of abandonment: the implication that Jerusalem's 'husband', i.e., God, or God's presence, has withdrawn.[42] Although the loneliness in Lamentations could be seen as a corporate loneliness, describing all the citizens of Jerusalem, here the city is personified as an individual. As Adele Berlin writes, a 'city or people dwelling alone is secure, unmolested by enemies, protected by God (Num 23:9; Deut 33:28; Jer 49:31).'[43] But an individual dwelling alone has none of these securities, as we see is the case for personified Daughter Zion, as her enemies, former allies, and YHWH himself have turned against her.

But if pity is the intended reaction, then the attempt to evoke it is largely unsuccessful. Throughout Lamentations, the speakers cry out for someone to see, hear, respond to the suffering of Jerusalem: 'Look, O Lord', 'Pay them back for their deeds, O Lord', 'Remember, O Lord, what has befallen us'. While the other narrating voices may be swayed to Zion's side, YHWH does not reply, does not act, does not remember. Jerusalem remains a lonely widow, her status unchanged. Unlike with Elijah, where YHWH provides physical support in the form of food and companionship, and reassurance that he is there in the 'thin hush', in Lamentations YHWH does nothing. In Genesis 2, before the human had even noticed anything was wrong, God described it as 'not good' and changed it, but in Lamentations he remains silent. For Daughter Zion, being alone means not only being without a protector or a comforter, but more specifically being without YHWH. Both physical and emotional help is required, but here she receives none, bereft of human and divine attention.

[41] Christl M. Maier, *Daughter Zion, Mother Zion: Gender, Space, and the Sacred in Ancient Israel* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2008), p. 145.
[42] Adele Berlin, *Lamentations: A Commentary* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), p. 49.
[43] Berlin, *Lamentations*, p. 50.

In contrast to these occasions, however, there are other biblical texts where being alone is actively beneficial.

Exodus 24.2

"Moses alone shall come near the Lord"

ונגש משה לבדו אליהוה

In this text, Moses is physically alone, but does not suffer any of the negative consequences we have seen previously – quite the reverse. God has instructed the elders to draw a little closer to the mountain, but to remain at some distance, since 'Moses alone shall come near the Lord; but the others shall not come near, and the people shall not come up with him.' Moses remains on the mountain for forty days and nights, and meets YHWH there, who gives him the blueprints for the ark of the covenant, its furnishings and utensils, and details of the sacrificial ceremonies.

This presents a significant contrast to previous texts, where Moses was not physically alone, but was unwisely attempting to complete his designated tasks by himself. Here, the opposite is true: Moses is to remove himself from the people in order to become physically alone, because only then will he be able to meet with YHWH, a scenario where everyone else is specifically prohibited from being with him, let alone helping him.

In this passage, the designation of Moses as alone (משה לבדו) appears to be an unequivocally good thing. He is set apart, the only one permitted to ascend the mountain of YHWH and speak with him. This is very different from previous situations where Jethro, God, and Moses himself saw the impracticality and pitfalls of being alone, and are given credit for finding a solution. This difference is likely a result of several factors: the cause, the duration, and the consequences.

The cause: on this occasion God specifically instructed Moses to come alone, which was not the case in the other Moses passages, or in Genesis and 1 Kings. Also, this is a situation that would not benefit from additional company, as opposed to Exodus 18, where efficiency would have been increased if Moses had been sharing the workload from the beginning, and everyone would have profited from it.

The duration: in Exodus 24, Moses is alone for a set period of time, as opposed to Exodus 18 where there was no expectation of help or relief from his task, only the unrelenting judicial duty day after day, and he was wearing himself out. This is similar to the circumstances for the human in Genesis and Elijah in 1 Kings, as until a solution was proposed, they also had no fixed timeframe for when

their isolation might end. In Exodus 24, Moses is alone for a limited time. Having a known endpoint is important for managing negative emotions; forty days and nights is a long time, but a finite one.[44]

The consequences: in this scenario there were tangible benefits to Moses being alone. During this period he received privileged information, met with God, and was set apart for a purpose. Being alone on the mountain enables Moses to fulfil his calling and to inhabit the archetypal prophetic space in the Hebrew Bible: hearing the words of YHWH, and then transmitting them to the rest of the people. This is a sharp contrast to the human in Genesis 2, Elijah in 1 Kings 19, and Daughter Zion in Lamentations, none of whom benefitted from their aloneness.

Numbers 23:9

"Here is a people living alone, and not reckoning itself among the nations!"

הן עם לבדד ישכן ובגוים לא יתחשב

This circumstance of being set apart, of being singled out for a purpose, is also used on occasion for the people of Israel as a whole, such as in Numbers 23. In Numbers 22:1-6, Balak summoned Balaam to curse Israel because he was afraid of how numerous they were. But when Balaam saw Israel, God put a word in Balaam's mouth, and he was unable to curse them. He blessed Israel instead, and his blessing in Numbers 23:7-10 included the description of the people as dwelling alone (לבדד ישכן). בדד appears to be being used in the sense of being set apart, as was the case for Moses in Exodus 24. As with Moses, the people of Israel do not suffer any negative consequences for this special designation, being 'alone' among the nations. This may be because of the cause: being set apart by YHWH is an active choice on the deity's part, which precludes the people from suffering any of the negative effects. Alternatively, it may be because this text is referring to a corporate state of being set apart, rather than an individual one. While the people of Israel are set apart, turned towards God, they are not cut off from other people. While one person can suffer from being set apart, such as Jeremiah (Jer 15:17), the people as a whole do not suffer loneliness as a side-effect because each individual within Israel is surrounded by people 'like them'. This would suggest that it is individual loneliness (which may or may not result from being set apart) that is 'not good'.

[44] The forty days is likely intended to add a legendary aspect to the narrative, as forty is frequently used as a stock numeral, both in biblical texts and other ANE literature. Consequently, it is not necessarily to be understood in a strictly literal sense. For more on this see Christopher A. Rollston and Heather Dana Davis Parker, *1-2 Kings: A Commentary*, *The Transforming Word: One Volume Commentary on the Bible* (Abilene: ACU Press, 2009), p. 316. However, the point stands, as forty designates a long but limited time, whether the period was precisely forty days or not.

Concluding Remarks

בד and בדד most usually refer to physical aloneness or social isolation, but can also have the connotations of emotional loneliness. Often being alone is 'not good', whether that is explicitly said or implied by the circumstances of the surrounding narratives. Occasionally, however, there are specific benefits that result from being alone. One of the reasons for this difference appears to be caused by the purpose for this aloneness. If it has been imposed by God, as in Exodus 24 and Lamentations 3:28, then there are likely to be benefits to be reaped. If it is not imposed by God, and occurs over an unspecified amount of time, there are more likely to be negative consequences resulting from the condition.

Corporate aloneness is more likely to be beneficial than detrimental, except for when a community is personified as an individual. Therefore, it is advantageous for the people of Israel in Numbers 23, but unfavourable for the city of Jerusalem in Lamentations.

As with other emotions, loneliness can cause suffering, both mental and physical. Jeremiah sits alone, and suffers from unceasing pain, and incurable wounds (Jer 15:17-18). Daughter Zion dwells lonely, bereft of a comforter, and her stomach churns and her heart is wrung within her (Lam 1:20). Perhaps an increased understanding of the manifestations of loneliness in the Hebrew Bible can inform the current conversation that is working to mitigate the suffering caused by loneliness in the modern world.

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Elizabeth Hare

Summary of PhD Project and Paper

Recent studies suggest that a higher proportion of people in the contemporary western world suffer from loneliness than ever before, and are therefore at risk from attendant adverse consequences for health and wellbeing. There is a growing pool of psychological, sociological, and medical research on loneliness, particularly pertaining to physical and mental risk-factors associated with the condition, but a noticeable lack of corresponding interest within the field of biblical studies. My doctoral research investigates the condition of loneliness as found in the Hebrew Bible, by undertaking a lexical examination of the relevant Hebrew vocabulary and a critical analysis of a number of pertinent biblical texts. It includes a section on emotions more widely, particularly how biblical texts depict the physical embodiment of certain emotions, and a section on divine absence, and how such absence, whether perceived or actual, can contribute to a sense of loneliness in the biblical material.

The research is primarily a textual exercise, but contains a strong interdisciplinary element, combining the textual investigation with a study of the psychological evidence currently available on the topic of loneliness, working within medical and social discourses. The methodology articulates the centrality of the Hebrew terms *bd* and *bdd*, and establishes the importance of using biblical texts that contain this vocabulary. Texts have been selected primarily for their inclusion of the relevant vocabulary, and secondarily for their affinity to other texts in the study, such as internal Hebrew consistencies, dating, style, and theme, in order to prevent the research from becoming too disparate.

This paper consists of some of my thoughts on aloneness in the Hebrew Bible more generally, focusing particularly on the opening chapters of Genesis, and on how such aloneness is mitigated, and why. Reference is also made to other biblical texts, particularly those in which aloneness and/or loneliness are portrayed in a different way, or as having different consequences, although these are not explored in as much detail.

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The Persian king Cyrus in OG Isaiah

Abstract OTSEM 2021

In this paper I will analyze selected passages from OG Isaiah 40-48, passages that shed light on how the Persian king Cyrus is presented in the Old Greek translation of Isaiah, a translation produced in Ptolemaic Egypt in the second century BCE.

Firstly, I will describe *what* the translator *did* with these passages when translating them from Hebrew to Greek. Here I will read OG Isaiah in tandem with the Hebrew witnesses (the consonantal text of MT Isaiah and the Isaiah manuscripts from Qumran), describing how these verses have been translated, and how the Greek translation of these verses corresponds to the text(s) of the sometimes diverging Hebrew witnesses.

Secondly, I will look into *why* the translator might have rendered these verses the way he did. Especially 'non-transparent' renderings will be studied, and I will be searching for explanations on multiple levels. Such explanations may range from the translator having a different Hebrew *Vorlage,* influence from Aramaic on the translator, different kinds of mistakes, matters relating to translation technique and adaptations made to conform to Greek idiom, to more deliberate changes introduced by the translator in order to adapt the *message* of the passages. Thus I will discuss both 'mechanical', linguistic, and ideological explanations behind the Greek renderings.

Finally, I will draw some preliminary conclusions by looking at how these particular Greek verses contribute to the overall portrayal of Cyrus in OG Isaiah. The main focus of this paper will be to perform a detailed analysis of *parts of* the OG Isaiah material which (potentially) deals with Cyrus. Combined with study of further relevant passages, it is meant to provide a basis for answering higher level questions regarding the reception and re-presentation of Cyrus in OG Isaiah.

Searching for Cyrus in OG Isaiah 41

1 Introduction

1.1 Cyrus behind Isaiah 40-48

In Isaiah 40-48, in the midst of reassurance of divine help, harsh proclamations about ridiculous idols and their makers, mockery about future disgrace for female Babylon, rhetorical questions about the creation of the universe, and the calling for the attention of people in the farthest corners, the God of Israel claims to have grasped the right hand of Cyrus, king of Persia and anointed him (45:1).

This is done for the sake of Israel, but also for the world, and Cyrus, to realize that the God of Israel is the one and only god, and the one who lays kings, nations and cities before Cyrus.

While the passages that explicitly mention Cyrus are concentrated in 44:28 and 45:1, according to modern scholarship, Cyrus' presence is to be found all over chapters 40-48.

1.2 The plan for this and the following chapters

In the following chapters, we will examine how the Old Greek translation (OG) of these prophecies deal with Cyrus, or rather, how the translator interpreted the Isaiah scroll before him, with a particular interest in how he handled both clear and ambiguous references to Cyrus. Did he find Cyrus where modern scholars see him? Did he and his community have views on Cyrus and the Persian empire that shaped his translation, or might perhaps some other ideology have shaped his thinking about what the verses before him meant and how they should be translated? Or did he sometimes focus merely on the words and clauses in front of him, with little concern for what they might refer to outside the world of the text?

This chapter focuses on verses which speak of the Lord's arousing and summoning someone, with devastating effects on nations and kings. These verses are selected since their poetry seems to reflect Cyrus and his victories, but this is indeed poetry, not a historical account, which means that also regarding the Hebrew text(s)[1] it is sometimes difficult to discern what the intended message concerning Cyrus might have been.

The motivation for this research is to find the translator's interpretation of Cyrus. Still, this chapter will primarily be a study of these verses, commenting on how OG can be interpreted. This includes trying to understand what the Greek text can be intended to mean and how the translator might have arrived at these renderings.

Through this process, some suggestions about the potential motivation behind renderings will be given. Sometimes these suggestions will shed light on questions about Cyrus, and sometimes they

1. In the cases where I do not need to be specific about whether I refer to MT or 1QIsa^{a} (or another Hebrew witness), I will use the abbreviation H as a shorthand for the Hebrew consonantal text.

won't. This chapter will be followed by other chapters where we will continue to trace the footsteps of the translator through both explicit Cyrus' oracles and other verses where he seems to turn up. After such a journey with the translator throughout Isaiah 40-48, we will return to suggestions and observations from this chapter and see if they still hold.

1.3 Questions and answers, beginning and end in Isaiah 41

In this chapter, our attention is directed at the beginning and end of chapter 41, with a particular interest in verses 2-4 and 25. It will be demonstrated that there are close thematic and verbal connections between these passages.

Preceding chapter 41, and intervening between the passages to be discussed here, are verses directed to Jacob/Israel. In OG, although not in the Hebrew witnesses, the chapter is also followed by an address to Jacob/Israel (42:1). This means that from the Greek side, both beginning and end of chapter 41 are framed by verses that focus on Jacob/Israel; the first two pericopes with words of comfort and strength, the third one with statements of election for a mission.

Chapter 40 has started using rhetorical questions, and the point of the questions is to show the incomparability of the Lord of Israel. Therefore, the reader of Isaiah 41 will understand that the question of 41:2, too, is related to this same kind of argumentation.

2 OG Isaiah 41:1-5

2.1 Preparing for the questions of v. 2-4 (1a)

Verse 1 prepares for the rhetorical questions that are to follow in verses 2-4 and introduces words and concepts central in the latter part of the chapter.

OG	1QIsa[a]	MT
Ἐγκαινίζεσθε πρός με, νῆσοι,	החרישו אלי איים	החרישו אלי איים
οἱ γὰρ ἄρχοντες ἀλλάξουσιν[2] ἰσχύν[3]·	ולאומים יחליפו כוח	ולאמים יחליפו כח
Dedicate yourselves to me, islands,	Listen to me in silence, islands,	
for the rulers will replace [their] forces,	and let peoples replace [their] forces,	

Verse 1 starts by addressing islands. That in OG these islands are called to ἐγκαινίζεσθε (dedicate

2. In the LXX ἀλλάσσω appears to be the standard equivalent for חלף piel and hiphil. It is also used to translate other verbs that mean "change"/"exchange". In OG Isaiah ἀλλάσσω is used three times, always for חלף.

3. In the Hebrew Bible, כח is found 126 times, and more than 100 times it is translated by ἴσχυς. ἴσχυς translates several Hebrew words and is used 39 times in OG Isaiah, as an equivalent for ten different words, 11 times translating כח. ἴσχυς, therefore, has a broader usage (and meaning) in the book than the word it translates.

themselves) when H asks them to listen silently (החרישו), can be explained on the basis of confusion of consonants,[4] although Isac Leo Seeligmann sees it as an "etymologizing" rendering based on חדש.[5]

Although ἄρχοντες (rulers) might be surprising as a translation of לאמים (nations),[6] Seeligman has demonstrated that there turns out to be an ancient tradition for לאם to mean ἄρχων.[7] This suggests that when the translator wrote ἄρχοντες here, he was probably neither particularly creative nor "free", but chose one of the already "available" meanings for the word לאם. On the other hand, elsewhere he translates לאמים sometimes as ἄρχοντες,[8] sometimes as ἔθνος.[9] And by using ἄρχοντες, not ἔθνος, for לאמים in verse 1, and for סגנים in v.25b, the verses that we are particularly interested in here, (2-4, 25a), are framed by references to ἄρχοντες. We will return to the potential effect of this framing at a later point.

The translator offers his own interpretation of the relationship between the first two clauses. A *waw* joins the clauses about islands and nations in H, but the translator renders *waw* as γάρ. According to Steven E. Runge, γάρ introduces "background information that strengthens or supports what precedes."[10] This means that in Greek, the rulers' replacement of forces (v.1b) is presented as information that should motivate islands to dedicate themselves to the Lord (v.1a). This kind of interpretation gives us a glimpse of how the translator understood the text before him.

2.2 Introduction of κρίσις and "announcing"(1b)

The islands and peoples/rulers of the initial parallelism continue as the subjects of the following verbs. We will notice how the translator re-organizes them and changes one verb, introducing the theme of announcing, not present at this point in H, with the effect of building up suspense before the verses

4. The choice of ἐγκαινίζω for חרש is easily explained by the common mistake of confusing daleth and resh. See, for instance, Seulgi L. Byun, *The Influence of Post-Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic on the Translator of Septuagint Isaiah* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017), 184-85. ἐγκαινίζω is used as a translation of חדשׁ by other translators. Here the translator read the resh of החרישו as a daleth. Also the two other examples of ἐγκαινίζω in OG Isaiah (16:11; 45:16) seem to arise from the translator's reading חדשׁ, while the Hebrew has חרש.

5. He reads the rendering as intentional, among other renderings that also express the translator's focus on proselytizing. Isaac Leo Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah and Cognate Studies* (Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 289.

6. Seen in light of how other translators dealt with it, one would expect לאמים, an archaic term for nation, to be translated by ἔθνος or λαὸς. Apparently, לאומים was regarded as a somewhat "neutral" term by the LXX translators, for whether it is rendered as λαὸς or ἔθνος seems to depend on whether לאם occurs together with גוי (ἔθνος) or עם (λαός). Thus, when, in Gen 25:23, גוי and לאם are used in parallelism, we get ἔθνος for גוי, and therefore λαός for לאם. While in Hab 2:13 and Jer 51:58 (OG 28:58) עם is translated as λαός, and thus לאם is rendered as ἔθνος. In Psalms, in parallelisms, לאם is translated as λαός if it cooccurs with גוי, but as ἔθνος, if it cooccurs with עם. On its own (with no parallel) in Psalms, it is translated as λαός, except in Psalms 65:8 (OG 64:8). In Proverbs, it is unpredictable whether it is translated as either λαός or ἔθνος (once also as φύλη).

7. Not only is לאמים rendered this way in Gen 27:29, in the Targum to Gen and Is it is always rendered as מלכא. Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah and Cognate Studies*, 196.

8. In 34:1, we have גיים/ἔθνοι and לאמים/ἄρχοντες. In 43:4 the parallell is between אדם (sg)/ἀνθρώποι πόλλοι and לאמים/ἄρχοντες, in 43:9 גיים /ἔθνοι and לאמים/ἄρχοντες. Once he renders it as βασιλεῖς (51:4).

9. 17:12-13 (x2), 55:4 (x2), 60:2. In 49:1 we even have the same Hebrew terms as in 41:1; איים and לאמים, translated as νήσοι and ἔθνη.

10. Steven E. Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (Hendrickson Publishers, 2010).

that follow.

OG	1QIsa[a]	MT
ἐγγισάτωσαν καὶ λαλησάτωσαν ἅμα,	יגושו	יגשׁו
τότε κρίσιν ἀναγγειλάτωσαν.	אז ידברו יחדיו	אז ידברו יחדו
	למשפט נקרבה	למשׁפט נקרבה
Let them approach and talk together,	They shall step forward,	
	then they shall speak together:	
then let them announce judgement.	Let us come forward for trial.	

Instead of sticking to the organization of the Hebrew clauses, (jussive, אז, jussive, cohortative), the translator re-organizes the material: He adds καί instead of אז between the two first verbs. Then he moves τότε, the equivalent of **אז**, to a new position after the second verb, and replaces the cohortative of the Hebrew, "let us come forward for trial", with another imperative, *τότε κρίσιν ἀναγγειλάτωσαν*.

But *τότε κρίσιν ἀναγγειλάτωσαν* does not only represent a syntactical change: In Hebrew, there is no mention of proclamation or announcing. In fact, ἀναγγέλλω is not at all a natural choice for קרב, which is commonly translated by ἐγγίζω, *προσάγω*, *προσέρχομαι*, *προσπορεύομαι* and *προσφέρω*, but never elsewhere as ἀναγγέλλω. When the translator introduces it here, against the Hebrew, it seems to be a deliberate choice, to achieve some effect.

Firstly, it creates suspense and prepares for the question to follow in v.2-4, making the readers wait for what will be announced. Secondly, ἀναγγέλλω is used repeatedly in the final part of chapter 41, and by introducing ἀναγγέλλω at this point, the translator prepares for the last section of 41, where one could say that announcing is THE focus.

To summarise what we have found so far, we notice that **לאמים** is rendered as ἄρχοντες. This is relevant for the chapter as a whole, as will be demonstrated later. Second, there are several minor changes in 1b, and the results are that in OG, the final clause, "let them announce judgement", is a separate chunk. In this way, it gets more focus than that last clause had in H. Further, the verb chosen, ἀναγγέλλω, not only provides another verbal and thematic link to 41:21-29, it also directs the reader's attention towards what it is that is to be announced.

And what follows is one of many rhetorical questions found in this part of Isaiah, and moreover, perhaps one of the questions that Isaiah 40-48 is written to answer:

2.3 "Who"? Arousing, calling, and the role of justice in 2a

Verse 2a asks explicitly about the identity of the one *behind* the awakening of someone in the east. The rhetorical function of this question is to let readers understand that the Lord of Israel is

responsible. But this question also raises its own questions, including the question of the identity of the one who is aroused. Since the 16th century, it has become common to see it as referring to Cyrus, but the text is far from unambiguous, as will be demonstrated below. And while both the Hebrew and Greek mention arousing, calling and justice, they do not necessarily tell the same story.

OG	1QIsa[a]	MT
τίς ἐξήγειρεν ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν δικαιοσύνην, ἐκάλεσεν αὐτὴν κατὰ πόδας αὐτοῦ, καὶ πορεύσεται;	מי העיר ממזרח צדק ויקראהו לרגליו	מי העיר ממזרח צדק יקראהו לרגלו
Who aroused justice from sunrise, called it to follow at his feet and it will go?	Who aroused justice from sunrise, and called it (1QIsa[a])/he will call it (MT) to follow at his feet.	

Verse 2a starts by asking מי העיר ממזרק/τίς ἐξήγειρεν ἀπὸ ἀνατολών, but it is unclear whether the question ends there, the relation to what follows is ambiguous in Hebrew. One option is, with the Masoretic accentuation, to read H as "Who aroused from sunrise," period! Upon this segmentation and interpretation, צדק belongs with the following clause. Thus, it is צדק who calls someone to follow at its feet.[11] Read this way, it remains open who has been awakened.

OG is less ambiguous since the accusative case of both δικαιοσύνη and αὐτήν makes it clear that δικαιοσύνη is both awakened and summoned to follow.[12] The Greek text here turns out to be a relatively straightforward rendering of the consonantal text of MT (without the *waw* of 1QIsa[a]), although the masoretes did not share this interpretation.

This transparent rendering is, however, followed by a Greek plus,[13] καὶ πορεύσεται. While there might have been a וילך in the *Vorlage*, such pluses are relatively common in OG Isaiah, and I suggest that it has been provided by the translator. But how should καὶ πορεύσεται be interpreted?

The subject of πορεύσεται might be the same as the subject of the previous verbs: The one who has aroused justice and called it to follow him close, is also the one who will go. This may be supported

11. Or, if קרא is read as קרא II, צדק instead "meets him wherever he goes".

12. This seems to be how it is presented in1QIsaa, where a waw precedes the second verb, ויקראהו, suggesting that it was read as wayyiqtol. That means that it introduces a new clause and that צדק must belong with the verb העיר.

13. See Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Fortress Press, 2012), 221. "In the quantitative comparison of M with other texts, elements that are described as either a plus or a minus of M," thus "minus" then simply states that an element is there in MT, but not in the translation, without making judgements about for what reason it lacks in the other text.

by the fact that there are no signs of a change of subject here.[14]It, however, seems more likely that the translator supplied καὶ πορεύσεται to describe the response of δικαιοσὺνη, which having been called, will respond by going.[15]

2.4 The effect on peoples and kings, 2b

After asking about the identity of the one arousing and calling of justice, 2b turns to a description of how this setting justice in motion will affect nations and kings.

OG	1QIsa[a]	MT
δώσει ἐναντίον ἐθνῶν	ויתן לפניו גואים	יתן לפניו גוים
καὶ βασιλεῖς ἐκστήσει[16]	ומלכים יוריד	ומלכים ירד
He will give in front of peoples	(And) he will yield up peoples to him,	
and drive kings out of their senses	and trample/bring kings down	

In Hebrew גיים functions as the direct object, and the pronominal suffix as the indirect object, literally: "He will give peoples before him"(MT),[17] but without an equivalent for the pronominal suffix[18] in OG, we instead get "he will give <u>in front of</u> peoples".

Since H appears to make more immediate sense than OG, it is unclear why the translator would want to leave the personal pronoun out. Further, elsewhere in these passages, we will notice that in OG, transitive verbs are usually provided with direct objects, although they appear missing in MT.[19] This could suggest that the *Vorlage* of OG lacked the pronominal suffix. But since נתן לפניו is a Hebrew

14. In contrast to this, notice the addition of a personal pronoun and δὲ in 41:25.

15. The first examples given for πορεύομαι in GELS, are Gen 12:4 and Hos 1:3. It is specified that πορεύομαι (καὶ ἐπορεύθη) is used to report the response to an imperative. T. Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Leuven: Peeters Pub & Booksellers, 2009), πορεύομαι I.1. See also for instance in 3 Kingd 12:28, where καὶ πορεύομαι is a plus. Here its function primarily seems to be to report that the king responded, for the following up on the advice given, is reported by the verb ποιέω: καὶ ἐβουλεύσατο ὁ βασιλεὺς καὶ ἐπορεύθη καὶ ἐποίησεν δύο δαμάλεις χρυσᾶς. See also Josh 24:28, 1 Kingd 1:14b; 15:12, 3 Kingd 9:12, 4 Kingd 1:2.

16. Neither hiphil ירד, "bring down" of 1QIsa[a] nor the alternatives רדד "drive back, subjugate, conquer" or רדה "to rule" of MT explains the choice of ἐξίστημι, and it has been suggested that the translator read חדר, hiphil, "to startle", which it also translates in 32:11. Or perhaps he misread ד for ר and thought he saw the root נדד, hiphil ("to make flee"), with defective spelling? נדד is found repeatedly in Isaiah, is known by the translator, and is translated as ἐξίστημι in 10:31; 16:3 and 33:3. This would make sense of the consonants of MT, explain the choice of equivalent, and requires less emendation of the consonants than חדר. What speaks against it is that the hiphil is only attested once.

17. Due to the waw here, ויתן in 1QIsaa can also be read as wayyiqtol "and so he/who gave up peoples before him".

18. The manuscript tradition seems to be uniform on the rendering δώσει ἐναντίον ἐθνῶν. But the three later translators, apparently dissatisfied with the OG solution, introduced αυτου in Greek, mirroring the Hebrew witnesses, and translated it as εδωκε κατα προσωπον αυτου, or, according to Q, ἐμπροσθέν αὐτοῦ (Symmachus), or κατα προσωπον αυτου (Theodotion).

19. Cf. v.2 and 4, also v.25.

idiom meaning "yield up to"[20] it is likely to be original. We should therefore try to understand how δώσει ἐναντίον ἐθνῶν could be interpreted.

If we accept this text as referring to Cyrus' campaigns and assume that the translator too saw Cyrus in the background here, it is possible that the Cyrus-oracle of 45:1-7 can shed some light on the Greek rendering. Δώσει ἐναντίον ἐθνῶν does make more sense when read in light of what is promised to Cyrus in 45:1-7. There the Lord's calling and grasping of Cyrus' hand affects גוים/ἔθνη and מלכים/βασιλείς (45:1), it is said that the Lord will give to Cyrus; נתתי לך/δώσω σοί (45:3), not only for Cyrus himself to know who the Lord is (45:3) but for those in east and west to know, too (45:6). Accordingly, all those mentioned here; peoples and kings, (45:1) those in east and west (45:6), will experience or witness what the Lord does for and gives to Cyrus (45:3). And this could all be summarized in Greek by the words of 41:2; *δώσει ἐναντίον ἐθνῶν.* And if the minus (the lack of a "him" here) stems from the translator himself, the implications could be that he not only saw verse 2ff. as being connected with Cyrus, but that he also had the Cyrus-oracle in mind when translating 41:2.

2.5 Weapons and their owner(s), 2c

Where 2b dealt with how kings and nations would be affected by the awakening of justice, verse 2c turns to the effect on weapons. The metaphors offer some difficulties for the interpreter, and it turns out that H offers most problems, due to the singular form of both the weapons and the owner.

OG	1QIsa[a]	MT
καὶ δώσει εἰς γῆν τὰς μαχαίρας αὐτῶν	ויתן כעפר חרבו	יתן כעפר חרבו[21]
καὶ ὡς φρύγανα ἐξωσμένα τὰ τόξα αὐτῶν·	כקש נידף קשתו	כקש נדף קשתו
and turn their swords into dust[22]	(and) turn his sword into dust	
and as dry sticks, thrown away, their bows.	as stubble, blown away, his bow	

In OG ויתן כעפר חרבו is not translated with a comparative particle corresponding to כ, but with εἰς. Since εἰς, like כ, can be used with a double accusative,[23] about turning something "into" something else, OG too can be read as "turn ... sword(s) into dust". On the other hand, εἰς γῆν might also indicate movement towards the ground and is commonly used in the LXX in this sense,[24] while H cannot be

20. Jan L. Koole, *Isaiah, Part 3, Volume 1: Isaiah 40-48* (Kampen: Kok Pharos Publishing Company, 1997), 138.

21. נתן with the comparative particle כ is here used with two accusatives, in the sense to turn something into something else. HALOT, נתן, 13.

22. Or "to (the) ground."

23. GELS, εἰς 6.b. BDAG, εἰς, 8.b.

24. The later translators Symm, Aq and Th, translated כ literally, as ὡς, and chose a less ambiguous noun, χοῦν, making it clear that the clause was about the transformation of the weapons into fine-grained material.

read that way.

Another difference, however, seems more important. Concerning both the weapons themselves and those who own them, there are differences in number. Where H has singular; קשׁתו, חרבו, OG has plurals, both for the weapons and the owners: *τὰς μαχαίρας αὐτῶν* and *τὰ τόξα αὐτῶν*.

This probably is a deliberate move by the translator, where he is trying to solve problems for his readers. For in a straightforward reading of this text, "he makes as dust his sword, as chaff blown away his bow," the conqueror's weapons are destroyed, which hardly makes sense in context. Why would kings be trampled down/brought low (H) or driven out of their minds (OG) if the conquerer's own weapons fell to the ground or were destroyed? As Koole points out, it is better to interpret the imagery here as referring to Cyrus' enemies, and this is commonly done by making חרב and קשת plural,[25] which is precisely what the OG translator did! While this move on his part does not give us any indication of whether he had particular historical events in mind, he seems to have made efforts to produce a text that was logically coherent when describing a situation where kings are astounded (2b) since their own weapons are rendered useless.

2.6 Pursuing, peace, way, 3

In verse 3, those mentioned in the previous verse are now pursued, although (as in the previous verse) the lack of an explicit subject here makes the text ambiguous as to whether it is the Lord, justice, or some other "he" that does it. What is clear is that this, too, belongs to the effects of the arousing and calling in 2a.

OG	1QIsa[a]	MT
	וירדפם	ירדפם
καὶ διώξεται αὐτούς	ויעבור שלום	יעבור שׁלום
καὶ διελεύσεται[26] *ἐν εἰρήνῃ*	אורח ברגליו <u>לוא יבינו</u>	ארח ברגליו לא יבוא
ἡ ὁδὸς[27] *τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ.*		
and pursue them	and pursue them,	pursue them,
and his journey	and go through in peace,	go through in peace,
will be in peace.	the way he goes (?)	the road at his feet (?)

25. Koole, *Isaiah, Part 3, Volume 1: Isaiah 40-48*, 139.

26. It should be noted that the prefixed preposition does not necessarily add much to ἔρχομαι, so it does not necessarily imply going *through*.

27. ὁδός can mean either “way” or “ journey”. Both options are possible here.

they do not understand. he does not go (?)

What is perhaps most striking when comparing our texts here is the differences concerning the final clause. In MT, the "road at his feet" is followed by לא יבוא,[28] in 1QIsaa by לוא יבינו, but neither לא יבוא nor לוא יבינו is rendered in Greek. This means that verse 3 has to be put together differently for the reader of OG, MT and 1QIsa[a]. Concerning OG, ἡ ὁδος τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ must necessarily be interpreted as the subject of διέρχομαι (which precedes it).[29] It is, however, not evident that the Greek minus is caused by the translator.

The difference between H and OG here might have been caused by some scribal error, and a connection between the Greek plus *καὶ πορεύσεται* in v.2 and this minus[30] has been suggested.[31] Perhaps יבוא/*καὶ πορεύσεται* was left out by mistake, added as a correction in the margin (?) during the Hebrew or Greek transmission, and later put back into the main text by a scribe/the translator at the wrong place.[32]

2.7 Who did this, 4

The question that introduces verse 4 links back to the question of verse 2, reminding the readers of what is at stake, that this is not primarily about what happens to kings and nations, but about who causes it.

OG	1QIsa[a]	MT
τίς ἐνήργησε[34] καὶ ἐποίησε ταῦτα; ἐκάλεσεν αὐτὴν ὁ καλῶν αὐτὴν ἀπὸ γενεῶν ἀρχῆς, ἐγὼ θεὸς[35] πρῶτος, καὶ εἰς τὰ ἐπερχόμενα[36]	מיא פעל ועשה קורה הדורות מרואש	מי פעל ועשׂה קרא[33]הדרות מראשׁ

28. The reconstruction of 1QIsa[b] appears to support MT.

29. It cannot be a pending nominative, referring to the ταῦτα of the following clause: ἡ ὁδος τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ, τίς ἐνήργησε καὶ ἐποίησε ταῦτα, since the singular ὁδος does not agree with the plus ταῦτα.

30. Which could be construed as οὐ πορεύσεται.

31. Eugene Ulrich, Peter W. Flint, and Martin G. Abegg, *Qumran Cave 1. Ii: The Isaiah Scrolls, Part 2: Introductions, Commentary and Textual Variants* (Oxford: New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 2010), 161.

32. While this deserves further examination into which of the renderings is most likely to be original, there is no room for that in this paper.

33. HALOT דור, suggests to emend הדרות to הקרות, but it is clear from OG that the Vorlage read הדרות, since γενέα appears to be the only translation equivalent used for דור in the entire LXX, apart from Proverbs.

34. The relatively rare verb ἐνεργέω (x 7 in the LXX) only here translates פעל.

35. This is a deviation from the standard translation κύριος for the tetragrammaton. At this point, I have not been able to examine the possible origin and function of this deviation.

36. Elsewhere in the LXX, אחרנים is usually translated as ἔσχατος, sometimes ἕτερος, rarely ὕστερος. In 41:4, it is translated as ἐπέρχομαι. ἐπέρχομαι often seems to have a connotation of something sudden and hostile. In chapters 41-45, the neuter plural participle is used several times, usually as a translation of plural participles/adjectives: 41:4 (אחרנים), 41:22 (הבאות), 41:23 (האתיות), 42:23 (אחור), 44:7 (אתיות), 45:11 (האתיות).

ἐγώ εἰμι.	אני יהוה רישון	אני יהוה ראשון
	ואת אחרונים	ואת אחרנים
	אני הואה	אני הוא
Who effected and caused this?	Who prepared and did,	
The one calling it from the beginning of ages[38]	calling the generations from the beginning?	
called it.		
I, God, am first,[39]	I, the Lord, am first,[37]	
and throughout[40] what is coming,	and with (the) last,	
I am.	I am he.	

While in Hebrew, the new question "who prepared and did" is very open, in OG, a direct object is provided, making it clear that the question concerns all that has been mentioned in 2-3.

The answer is provided in two stages. First, it is answered as a third-person statement, קרא הדרות מראש, rendered as a "double translation", where קרא is rendered both as ἐκάλεσεν and ὁ καλῶν "the one calling", and in both cases the translator has supplied αὐτὴν. And the effect is that in OG, δικακοσύνη is the one who is called, and has in fact been called from the beginnings of time. To the question "who was behind this" (v.4a), OG does not answer "the one calling the generations from the beginning" (H), but "the one who has called justice" all this time!

And when the Lord now declares "I, God, am first" in OG, he therefore also claims to be the one who has summoned justice from the very beginning.

This repeated focus on justice is particular to OG and seems to place Cyrus in the shadows.

2.8 After the Q&As: Seeing, fearing, coming, 5

With verse 5, the focus is again on peoples/islands and far away places, and vocabulary from verse 1 is repeated. But now, they also see and fear.

OG	1QIsa[a]	MT
εἴδοσαν ἔθνη καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν[41]	ראו איים ויראו	ראו איים וייראו

37. It seems most natural to have the tetragrammaton as part of the subject, rather than the predicate, since "I am the first YHWH" seems weird.

38. While this word was chosen by the translator as the standard equivalent of דר, "generations", and can have this meaning in Greek, it is translated as "ages" here, since this appears to be its meaning in its immediate Greek context.

39. This could just as well be translated as "I am the first god".

40. While εἰς used of time can denote a limit of time (II 1 in LSJ), it can also indicate a period (LSJ, II 2), hence the above translation.

41. When φοβέω is used in middle/passive like here, the most common meaning is "to be afraid, fear, be frightened", while it can also mean "to be put to flight, flee".

τὰ ἄκρα τῆς γῆς ἤγγισαν καὶ ἦλθοσαν ἅμα[42]	קצאוות הארץ יחדו קרבו ואתיון	קצות הארץ יחרדו קרבו ויאתיון
People saw and were frightened, the ends of the earth approached and came together	See, islands, and fear, ends of the earth together, approach and come	People saw and feared, the ends of the earth tremble. they have approached and have come

While the Hebrew verbal forms of this verse are ambiguous, the translator rendered them as aorist indicatives, choosing to have them describing them as past, instantaneous actions. When the response of peoples is described as something belonging to the past, it suggests that the preceding verses, too, refer to the past, although several verbs have been future indicatives.

3 OG Isaiah 41:25 The answer

3.1 From 41:1-5 to 41:21-29

After a glimpse into how the fearing people decide to help each other producing idols (v.6-7), the text turns to Jacob/Israel (v.8-20). Jacob/Israel is addressed directly, and the Lord declares his affection and election and promises strength and help.

The language of promises and divine provision for Israel, characterizing verses 8-20, is from verse 21 replaced by warnings and challenges, in vocabulary which links back to v.1 and 5. The Lord himself warns someone that the time for their ריב/κρίσις is coming (v.21). Although there is some blurring between those who trust in idols and the idols themselves, it turns out that now the addressees are idols. They are being challenged concerning their ability to predict (v.22-23) and affect (v.23) future events so as to prove that they are gods (v.22). They and their skills are declared to come from dust and labelled an abomination (v.24).

3.2 I did it! 25a

This prepares for the declaration of 41:25, "I raised!" And while "I raised!" belongs within the rhetoric of this particular section, as is its climax, it also answers the question of 41:2. The same Hebrew verb is used in both verses; מי העיר (v.2) - העירתי (v.25), and OG has two closely related verbs; τίς ἐξήγειρεν (v.2) - ἐγὼ δὲ ἤγειρα (v.25)!

OG	1QIsa[a]	MT

42. There are differences between the Hebrew witnesses. 1QIsaa has the verb חרד where MT has יחדו. MT is reflected in OG's ἅμα.

ἐγὼ δὲ ἤγειρα τὸν ἀπὸ βορρᾶ καὶ τὸν ἀφ᾽ ἡλίου ἀνατολῶν, κληθήσονται τῷ ὀνόματί μου·	העירות מצפון ויאתיו ממזרח שמש ויקרא בשמו	העירותי מצפון ויאת ממזרח שׁמשׁ יקרא בשׁמי
But I aroused the one from north, and the one from the rising of the sun, they will be called by my name.	I aroused from north, and he came from the rising of the sun (and) he will be called by his (1QIsa[a])/my (MT) name.	

The first words of 25, ἐγὼ δὲ, marks the change of subject and new development in the argumentation. Since δέ, according to Steven E. Runge, "represent[s] the writer's choice to explicitly signal that what follows is a new, distinct development in the story or argument, based on how the writer conceived of it,"[43] δὲ here indicates that the translator saw v.25a as introducing a new step in the disputation with the idols. This new development is the revelation that in contrast with the idols, who have just been declared as dust and an abomination (v.24), the Lord is the one who has raised someone up from the north.

2.3.1 Who has been raised?

But *who* has he raised? As in 41:2, the direct object of העירותי must be inferred from the context. MT seems to report the response of the one who is awakened through the verb ויאת "he came". This verb is, however, not rendered in Greek, and it has been suggested that the translator in this case[44] read the consonants as an accusative particle[45] belonging to ממזרח, which might explain why he added articles τὸν απὸ βορρᾶ, τὸν ἀφ᾽ ἡλίου ἀνατολῶν where they lack in H.

As a result, in OG, two figures have been awakened: τὸν απὸ βορρᾶ and τὸν ἀφ᾽ ἡλίου ἀνατολῶν,[46]

43. Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 31.

44. Elsewhere he renders אתה as φέρω (21:14), ἐρχομαι (41:5), δεῦτε (56:9), τὰ ἐπερχόμενα (41:23; 44:7; 45:11).

45. In his notes to 41:25, Richard R. Ottley discusses Scholz' suggestion that the *Vorlage* had ואת (conjunction + accusative marker). He also draws attention to a Hebrew marginal reading without *alef* (ויתי). Richard R. Ottley, *The Book of Isaiah According to the Septuagint (Codex Alexandrinus) (Critical Apparatus)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1906). It has also been suggested that the rendering is caused by the translator interpreting it as an Aramaic accusative particle, יָת. Byun, *The Influence of Post-Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic on the Translator of Septuagint Isaiah*, 23.

46. Modern translations of the OG also read it this way: "But I stirred up the one who is from the north and the one who is from the rising of the sun; they shall be called by my name" (NETS). "I have roused the one from the north and the one from the east, they will be called by my name." (LES, 2nd ed).

where the Hebrew only has one,[47] thus the translator has brought an extra participant to the scene. Seeligmann gives these two figures a collective interpretation and sees the rendering as one of several that express a diaspora focus on proselytizing. He paraphrases, "[t]he inhabitants of the North and the Land of the Rising Sun will be called by God's name".[48]

It is, however, far from certain that there is such a theological drive behind this rendering. It might primarily be the translator's attempt to make the most sense of the text before him. For H appears to be saying "I awakened from the north, and he came from the east",[49] which seems somewhat confusing. In contrast, the translator's rendering "I awakened the one from the north and the one from the east" is easily understood. If this interpretation is correct, it suggests that here the translator did not care much about "the world behind the text". He was not focusing on who v.25a might refer to, but rather on whether it made sense to make such a statement at all.

2.3.2 Called - by whose name?

We have seen that in H, one person has been awakened and has come. This probably refers to Cyrus. However, in OG, two figures have been raised: "The one from the north" and "the one from the east". And this cannot be two different ways of referring to the same person, as the plural κληθήσονται τῷ ὀνόματί μου[50] makes clear. (H has a singular verb).

But how should we understand κληθήσονται τῷ ὀνόματί μου?[51] Here καλέω in combination with the dative, τῷ ὀνόματί μου, appears to either mean "they are referred to (=called) by my name", or "they are summoned (=called) by my name".[52] Given the language of arousing, coming, and the mention of different compass points, as well as in light of its repeated use in this sense in the surrounding chapters, it seems most natural to read the verb as “summon”. Thus, “they will be summoned by my name.”[53]

3.3 As clay, as a potter, 25b

What follows is an image of clay, potter and trampling (25b). The transition from v.25a to v.25b is,

47. This has been noticed by, for instance, Blenkinsopp: “In Isa 41:25, for example, the translator was misled by the one aroused from the north and the sunrise in the mt (i.e. Cyrus) into positing two individuals”.Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40-55: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven / London: Yale University Press, 2008), 123.

48. Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah and Cognate Studies*, 289.

49. This translation of MT is based on the premise that MT is segmented the way the translator did it, reading 'from sunrise' with what precedes it rather than what follows it.

50. Probably adapted to plural by the translator to agree with the two figures mentioned.

51. Here follows some representative examples of how these terms are combined in OG Isaiah; all of which are translations of the Hebrew expression קרא בשׁם: ὁ καλῶν τὸ ὄνομά σου (45:3) (one accusative), ἐκάλεσά σε τὸ ὄνομά σου (43:1) (to accusatives), πάντας ἐπ’ ὀνόματι καλέσει (40:26) (with ἐπί and dative), ἐγὼ καλέσω σε τῷ ὀνόματί μου (45:4) (one accusative + dative), οἱ κεκλημένοι τῷ ὀνόματι Ισραηλ (48:1) (+dative) and our current passage κληθήσονται τῷ ὀνόματί μου (41:25) (passive verb + dative).

52. In both cases the dative is probably best understood as a dativ of manner of action. T. Muraoka, *A Syntax of Septuagint Greek* (2016), §22 wlb-wn/p. 174.

53. It should be noted that the same expression is used in 45:4 the Lord says directly to Cyrus: ἐγὼ καλέσω σε τῷ ὀνόματί μου καὶ προσδέξομαί σε.

however, somewhat challenging to make sense of: Someone is coming ויבא (MT)/ויבאו (1QIsa[a]), סגנים are compared to clay (כמו חמר), and someone, probably Cyrus, to a potter (כמו יוצר). The language is, however, very condensed, and in H the relationship between בוא and סגנים is not immediately apparent.

MT seems to say, "and he came, governors as clay". The plural of 1QIsa[a] allows for the translation "and governors came", which is better, but it does not make much sense connected to what follows; "governors came as clay". The best solution concerning the potter-imagery seems to be to take סגנים as those who are compared to clay. ירמס טיט should be read, not as belonging with the participle ("as a potter tramples on clay"), but as a separate clause about the one being compared to the potter: "As a potter, he will trample on clay". Still, this does not explain what to do with the initial verb ויבא/ויבאו. Therefore, this verb seems to need some kind of fixing to make sense in context, and the translator's rendering seems to be influenced by this need.

OG	1QIsa[a]	MT
ἐρχέσθωσαν ἄρχοντες, καὶ ὡς πηλὸς κεραμέως[54] καὶ ὡς κεραμεὺς καταπατῶν τὸν πηλόν, οὕτως καταπατηθήσεσθε.	ויבואו סגנים כמו חמר וכמו יוצר וירמוס טיט	ויבא סגנים כמו חמר וכמו יוצר ירמס טיט
Let rulers come, and as potter's clay, and as a potter trampling on the clay, in this way you will be trampled down.	And governors came – as clay, and as a potter and he will trample mud.	And he came – governors as clay, and as a potter he will trample mud.

3.3.1 Problems and solutions concerning בוא

OG has a plural verb here; ἐρχέσθωσαν, and perhaps the *Vorlage*, like 1QIsa[a], had ויבאו. Or maybe both the scribe of 1QIsa[a] and the translator, struggling with interpreting a *Vorlage* which looked like

54. The word κεραμέως is an explicitating Greek plus, as pointed out by Mirjam van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah: An Analysis of Its Pluses and Minuses* (Society of Biblical Lit, 2014), 37., where she also draws attention to the expression πηλὸς κεραμέως being used in 29:16 and 45:9. In 29:16, it is a straightforward translation of MT. In 45:9, as here, κεραμέως is a Greek plus.

MT (ויבא),[55] tried to solve the problem by making the verb plural.

Many modern interpreters solve these difficulties with ויבא סגנים by emending the verb ויבא to ויבס.[56] While this might well have been the original reading, the translator's *Vorlage* must have read בוא, not בוס, since he rendered it as ἔρχομαι.

The plural ἐρχέσθωσαν solves some of the problems connected with 25b in MT since ἐρχέσθωσαν agrees with ἄρχοντες (סגנים). And rendering it as an imperative, "let rulers appear,"[57] allows it to be read as a command connected to the imagery that follows, although not syntactically.

3.3.2 Trampling and clay

Then follows the potter-trampling-clay imagery, which in OG ends in an explicitating plus: οὕτως καταπατηθήσεσθε.[58] Ziegler sees the plus as stemming from the translator,[59] as a solution to a problematic Hebrew text. With οὕτως καταπατηθήσεσθε, the potter-trampling-clay imagery is connected to the preceding context, where from verse 21, "you" (2pl) are addressed repeatedly both in H and OG and challenged to announce what is coming in the end (23), to convince the audience that they are gods.

3.3.3 Who is trampling, who is being trampled on?

In MT, apart from the initial העירתי "I awakened," all verbs in 25 are third person masculine singular, and, apparently, one figure, generally thought to be Cyrus, is responsible for all the actions that follow (יקרא, ויבא, ירמס). This one, who is called, and who has come, therefore also appears to be the one who כמו יצר, "like a potter" ירמס טיט "will trample down clay". It remains somewhat unclear what the role of סגנים is in MT, but a likely interpretation is that they are the ones who will be trampled down.

In OG, we have noticed the introduction of plurals. These plurals have consequences for the overall interpretation of OG 41:25, including 25b. Might τὸν απὸ βορρᾶ and τὸν ἀφ' ἡλίου ἀνατολῶν be the ἄρχοντες of 25b?

55. Ziegler, while being unaware of the Qumran scroll(s), thinks that the translator's *Vorlage* already had ויבא, thus leaving the translator with a text that he had to 'fix' in some way, and to which he, therefore, added the final clause. J Ziegler, *Untersuchungen Zur Septuaginta Des Buches Isaias* (1934), 95.

56. Koole, *Isaiah, Part 3, Volume 1: Isaiah 40-48*, 198-99. John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40 66* (Grand Rapids / Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 98. Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40-55*, 204. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen Zur Septuaginta Des Buches Isaias*, 95.

57. Perhaps the translator interpreted the verb as jussive.

58. καταπατηθήσεσθε seems to be a second translation of the Hebrew verb ירמס, which first is translated as καταπατῶν, then as καταπατηθήσεσθε, thus as a "double translation." Vorm-Croughs, *Og Isaiah, Pluses and Minuses*, 168. See also 141-142 for the terms "double translation" and "doublet". This "double translation" seems to be of the kind where "[o]ne word or phrase is used a second time and complemented with extra words to form a new clause." Thus, it most likely stems from the translator's creativity, giving us a rendering that is both tied to the source text and at the same time is "inventive," (ibid. 171).

59. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen Zur Septuaginta Des Buches Isaias*, 72.

And further: Are these ἄρχοντες those who are compared to clay and who will be trampled on, ὡς πηλὸς κεραμέως ... καταπατηθήσεσθε? Or is the purpose of letting the ἄρχοντες appear that they shall trample, ὡς κεραμεὺς καταπατῶν τὸν πηλόν?

Two other passages might influence the *reader's* interpretation of 41:25. In OG 16:4, we both have ἄρχων and ὁ καταπατῶν:

> καὶ ὁ ἄρχων (reading שׂד as שׂר?) ἀπώλετο ὁ καταπατῶν (רמס) ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς,
> "and the ruler who tramples on the earth has been destroyed".

Here OG introduces a ruler not present in H,[60] and while this ἄρχων is trampling, he is also someone who, himself, is destroyed.[61] In 22:18 ἄρχων and καταπάτημα are combined: The house of an ἄρχων (אָדוֹן) will be reduced to καταπάτημα (הרס?).

However, despite this similarity in vocabulary, 16:4 and 22:18 are unlikely to have influenced the translator's rendering of 41:25. For readers of OG, these verses could suggest that it is the ἄρχοντες of 41:25 who will be trampled on. Or even if the ἄρχοντες are the ones trampling (like in 16:4), they, themselves, too may be destroyed.

3.3.4 Κρίσις and ἄρχοντες in chapter 41 as belonging to another level of the discourse?

To come closer to a conclusion concerning the translator's rendering (and interpretation!) in v.25b, we now need to take another look at how ἄρχοντες is used earlier in chapter 41.

What immediately precedes the question τὶς ἐξήγειρεν ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν δικαιοσύνη (v.2), is orders to have ἄρχοντες (לאמים) draw near, discuss, and announce κρίσις. Is the role of these ἄρχοντες to come to a *decision* (κρίσις) concerning that question? And is κρίσις in 41:1 the decision about who aroused justice? This could imply that the mention of islands and rulers in v.1, in fact, the entire v.1, functions as a rhetorical device in OG; to prepare for and draw attention to the following questions.

In 41:21, the theme of κρίσις reappears, and it is imminent: Ἐγγίζει ἡ κρίσις ὑμῶν. While H has משפט (v.1) and ריב (v.21), OG in both cases has κρίσις, which now is specified as ἡ κρίσις ὑμῶν, suggesting that κρίσις now seems to be a *verdict,* the verdict concerning "you".

I suggest that ἐρχέσθωσαν ἄρχοντες does not continue the thought of 25a, but returns to the theme of κρίσις, (v.1, 21) which finally will be announced or carried out by the ἄρχοντες (v.25b). They will come, and they will either announce the crushing of the gods or effectuate the verdict by crushing them.[62]

60. Probably due to a resh/daleth interchange.

61. In this verse, the ruler is trampling, but he is still the one who has been destroyed.

62. As explained above, sometimes the line between those relying on idols and the idols themselves is blurred: Who is from dust? Are the idols dust, which is producing dust? Or are those who make idols dust, and their idol-production skills likewise dust?

3.3.5 The consequences for the questions of awakening and summoning

This connection between v.1 and v.25b also affects the interpretation of v.2-4 and 25a. For one thing, it creates a more explicit link between these two parts of the chapter (rulers, imperatives),[63] where there is already a link in through the arousing and calling (v.2, v.25a). It appears that these verses concerning arousing and calling are framed (in OG only) by ἄρχοντες. They are being assembled (v.1 and v.25b) to come to a decision that they shall announce (v.1). This decision, or verdict, is said to be imminent (v.21). And I suggest that it is finally announced (or executed) as trampling down idols (v.25b). These verbal links give us have a structural reason to let v.2 and v.25 inform each other. It helps us see that the awakening of justice (v.2) *is* the awakening of "the one from the north" and "the one from the east" (v.25a).

After the imagery of trampling and clay, which eventually leads to the crushing of idols, the text returns to questions about announcing and predicting future events. The Lord declares that he will give Zion dominion (OG v.27), while nations and idols will be gone and silent (v.28). Even those who make the idols are hopeless (v.29).

4 Connecting and concluding

Although it is the consonantal text itself that allows for the initial question of v.2 to be a question about the awakening of justice (צדק), the translator, through the repeated addition of feminine pronouns referring to justice (δικαιοσύνη), brings attention to justice throughout verses 2-4. While making OG less ambiguous than the Hebrew, it also raises justice to prominence. By adding two references to δικαιοσύνη in verse 4, OG makes it that all the effects on kings, nations and weapons (v.2b-3) are related to the awakening and summoning of justice (v.2a). This repeated focus cannot be a coincidence but has to be deliberate.

What, then, are the effects of such a shifting of emphasis from H to OG? And how does it affect what Isaiah 41 says about Cyrus?

In OG, the Lord is even more clearly associated with justice, in fact as the one calling it from the beginning of ages (v.4). But does this new emphasis blot out the "references" to Cyrus from OG? I do not think so. This imagery is far from specific, whether in H or OG. And as I read these verses, Cyrus' actions are assumed in both versions. But through the focus on δικαιοσύνη, OG is more abstract and therefore also more general than H.

Cyrus may be one of several serving as tools for justice, as also OG v.25 seems to indicate: The one from the north, the one from the east; the Lord of Israel calls anyone he wants! And this does not

63. The connection between 41:1 and 41:25 is weaker in MT. Only in OG do we have indirect commands both in verse 1 and 25, and only OG uses the same word the two passages ἄρχοντες since it spoke of לאמים "nations", in 41:1, but סגנים "officials" in 25.

exclude Cyrus. The translator is aware of him, and there is a possibility that 2b (δώσει ἐναντίον ἔθνων) is rendered in view of what is said in the Cyrus oracle (45:1-7). But he "opens" his translated text more: Nations and kings should fear justice, which has been called from the beginning of ages!

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The project “Not ‘my shepherd’?” The reception and re-presentation of the Persian king Cyrus in OG Isaiah

-and the paper “Searching for Cyrus in OG Isaiah 41”

My doctoral project has the title “Not ‘my shepherd’?” The reception and re-presentation of the Persian king Cyrus in OG Isaiah. In this project I study how the translator of OG Isaiah dealt with Cyrus in his translation. Cyrus is something of a hero in Isaiah, being the one who allows the Jews to return from Babylonian exile and rebuild the temple. But he is at the same time a tool in the hand of the Lord of Israel, as his anointed one (45:1), who fulfills the Lord’s desires (44:28).

My project is about examining how the translator of the Old Greek version of Isaiah thought about Cyrus and dealt with him in his translation, in light of the translator’s own context; Ptolemaic Egypt, 2nd century BCE.

This is complex. The complete witnesses to Isaiah, MT and 1QIsa[a] often diverge, and the translation technique behind OG Isaiah seems to allow for idiomatic and wooden renderings side by side, word-for-word renderings as well as paraphrase. And OG Isaiah scholarship is split over how to interpret the translation. Where some sees the translator as rewriting and actualizing the ancient prophecies in light of contemporary events, others finds him to be “faithful” to his *Vorlage*, simply updating some terms, sticking to “lower level” explanations, rather than to matters of ideology and theology, as explanations for his renderings.

The title of the project reflects the claim of 44:28, which in Hebrew says that he (Cyrus) is “My shepherd” (רעי), but which in OG turns out as an advise to Cyrus to be wise (φρόνειν), hence the question in my title: “Not ‘my shepherd’?”.

The outline of the project is (at the moment!) as follows:

1. Introduction

1.1 Cyrus in ancient sources

1.2 Old Greek Isaiah

1.3 Theoretical perspectives

-translation theory/discourse grammar (?)

-postcolonial theory

1.4 The context: Ptolemaic Egypt

2. Cyrus in OG Isaiah

2.1 Searching for Cyrus in OG Isaiah

- in chapter 41: Arousing, summoning

- in 44:24-48: He is my shepherd/He must be wise?

- in 45:1-7: Cyrus, the Lord's anointed

- in 45:13, 46:11, 48:15

-Conclusion: Cyrus as presented in OG Isaiah

2.2 Cyrus in Qumran?

Does 1QIsa[a], a Hebrew version almost contemporary with OG Isaiah, present its own views on Cyrus?

Is it possible to find particular views on Cyrus from the other Isaiah mss. from Qumran?

(2.3 Cyrus of OG Isaiah vs. Cyrus in some classical Greek works?)

Cyropaedia (Xenophon),

Herodotus histories (?)

3. OG Isaiah's Cyrus illuminated by postcolonial perspectives

The results of the analysis in chapter 2.1 will determine how much weight the postcolonial perspective will get in the final dissertation.

4. Conclusion

Having studied Isaiah-verses concerning Cyrus in Greek translation, as well as in mss. from Qumran, (and also in light of how some non-biblical Greek sources?), using perspectives from translation theory and postcolonial theory:

How is the Cyrus of OG (re-)presented,

what is particular to this representation of him,

and what is the most fruitful way to understand it?

Points for the discussion of the OTSEM paper:

I would especially like to get response regarding my presentation of the material.

1. Is this a good way of presenting the material, when the end-goal of the project is to find the translator's interpretation of Cyrus?

2. Concerning the presentation of the Hebrew material (in tables with translation):

I struggle with how to present the Hebrew witnesses. Should I include the text of both MT and 1QIsaa in my tables? And should I translate them both, or are they best left untranslated, but should be left to be commented upon in the discussion?

3. Concerning the contents, I wonder whether my suggestions regarding ἄρχοντες as a kind of framing devise is at all useful here.

The Role of Metaphors in the Construction of Gendered Threat of the Prophesying Groups in Ezekiel

The paper argues that metaphors and figurative language are integral in the construction of the threat of prophesying groups in Ezekiel 13. The metaphors that are used to conceptualize the prophets of Israel in Ezek 13:1–16 highlight the harmful weakness and inadequacy of the group. Conversely, the figurative language related to the prophesying women in Ezek 13:17–23 emphasizes their relative power, skill, and intent to harm the people of Yahweh. These consequences of metaphorical expressions are apparent especially in the Masoretic Text of Ezekiel 13.

Additionally, the paper suggests that the metaphorical expressions in Ezek 13 need to be understood against the ideas of gender in the book of Ezekiel and the wider context of the Hebrew Bible and the ancient Near East. The metaphors of Ezek 13:1–16 cast the prophets of Israel into situations such as siege warfare where their skills, resolve, and consequently masculinity are being tested. On the other hand, the women of Ezek 13:17–23 who are accused of trapping or hunting their victims exhibit traits of activity and power that transgress or subvert notions of ideal female behavior. The deviation from gendered roles and performances, which occurs in both sections of Ezekiel 13 can be viewed as an additional aspect of the threat that the prophesying groups represent.

Focal Points of Discussion

This OTSEM-paper does not represent a one single chapter from my dissertation, as it is more or less arranged and modified from different sections of the thesis and focused under a specific theme. Hence, it is in certain way comparable to an extended overview of analysis. This means that the discussion of the relevant texts is not always as detailed as it could be. Possible focal points of discussion are:

1. Does the argumentation work, is something very unclear

2. How the notion of gender could be approached

3. Analysis of metaphors/other figurative expressions, possible methodological issues

Of course, all observations and comments are welcome!

The Role of Metaphors in the Construction of Gendered Threat of the Prophesying Groups in Ezekiel

Introduction

The aim of this paper is to investigate how metaphorical and figurative language is connected to both gendered presentation and threatening features of the groups accused in Ezekiel 13. Ezek 13 is a section in which the prophets of Israel and afterwards the prophesying women are condemned. Hence, the chapter contains an explicit division of gender as a visible structural feature. A more difficult question is, however, whether the gendered notions are also present in the individual metaphorical expressions that occur throughout the text. The prophets of Israel are via simile compared to jackals, then metaphorically cast as city defenders in siege warfare and finally described as a group that plasters a wall that is eventually destroyed. The women on the other hand are conceptualized as capable hunters, who trap the נְפָשׁוֹת of the people of Yahweh. What is the relation of these metaphorical expressions to the established gender of the groups?

In the scholarship of enemy images, it is attested that metaphors are often used to conceptualize threat of opponents. In a text such as Ezekiel 13, it is necessary to ask do the metaphors further strengthen the gendered aspects of the text. Do these metaphors contain gendered features, or are they mainly connected to the conceptualization threat? Also, if there are gendered aspects that for example challenge notions of normative or ideal masculinity and femininity, how explicitly are they conveyed through metaphors? Metaphorical language is always to a certain degree open to the interpretation that is dependent of the cultural background knowledge of the audience. However, it is important to ask how clearly issues of gender are implied by these metaphors.

Some Remarks on the Methodology

The methodological framework that this paper utilizes depends on the scholarly fields studying threat formation, metaphors and gender. All three concepts need to be first elucidated to some degree. First, the notion of threat is derived from the framework and concept of enemy image. An enemy image is a concept that has primarily and originally been used in scholarly fields of international politics, peace studies and social psychology, but has occasionally been adapted to Biblical Scholarship[1] For the purposes of my dissertation and this paper I have defined enemy image as *a textual description of a*

[1] Most notably by Eidevall 2009.

group that is conceptualized as a threat with a variety of negative stereotypes, metaphors, and other rhetorical devices.[2]

The key feature of the enemy image is the notion of threat.[3] A possible way to further classify the idea of threat is provided by the framework of Intergroup Threat Theory (ITT). This theory states that there are two types or categories of threats. First, threats can be understood as *realistic* threats that affect the physical wellbeing and safety of the subjects or endanger the resources that are mandatory for the survival of the group. However, there are also *symbolic* threats, which affect the social integrity of the groups by challenging the beliefs and values they may hold. According to ITT, these threats are perceived threats, which means that the theory is not interested whether there actually exist hostile outgroups or forces that can cause harm to the ingroups and their members.[4]

This particular definition of threat already implies that the formation enemy images cannot be separated from questions and issues of group identity. The formation of enemy images is not necessarily a result of a "real" threat, but often rises from experienced ingroup anxieties. In this sense, the formation of an enemy image provides a way to facilitate ingroup cohesion, and potentially increase attention to various values and beliefs of a group.[5] From this brief overview it is clear that enemies are not necessarily historically or factually correct descriptions of groups, as they are utilized to convey a convincing threat to an audience.[6]

In the formation and communication of threats, metaphors can be very important. For instance, it is a common observation that works of propaganda often compare enemies to animals, vermin or diseases in order to effectively dehumanize them. In other words, while for example war propaganda

[2] The definition is comparable with for example the one presented by Eidevall 2009, 5–6 who defines enemy images "textual (or, sometimes, pictorial) descriptions of groups or nations, where negative, stereotype characterization is combined with the notion of a perceived threat"

[3] Gaufman 2017, 27. After an overview of literature, she comes to a conclusion that "…the only factor remaining omnipresent is the representation of the enemy as a threat to the self…"

[4] Stephan et al. 2009, 43–46. Daniel Bar-Tal has defined belief as a large category that can contain for example norms, values, expectations, and dogmas. The aspect of shared group values and beliefs has been emphasized by Daniel Bar-Tal. Bar-Tal notes that while an individual person may have intensely personal and private beliefs and opinions, many beliefs are common or societal by their nature. Shared beliefs are communicated through various institutional frameworks, media, and communities. Societal beliefs are something that are deemed characteristic to the society by its members. This means that they hold a special importance. This kind of belief could appear as a form of narrative. Bar-Tal argues that for instance Serbians may share a societal belief of victimhood that is based on the collectively shared memory of the historical Battle of Kosovo. While society may have numerous shared societal beliefs often only few of them gain level of importance that they begin to characterize the society. Bar-Tal calls this combination of beliefs ethos, which is unique to a particular society. See Bar-Tal 2000, xii–xv.

[5] Vuorinen 2012, 1–3.

[6] Gaufman 2017, 32–34 notes that the threatening imagery that is being utilized in an enemy image is not a random collection of negative conceptions but is being motivated by previous experiences and collective memories of the group. In other words, the imagery has particular resonance if it evokes concepts and stereotypes and metaphors that have certain stability in the world of the audience. This also means that imagery that is related to certain traumatic events could have significant potency as they carry a sense of threat that has become established in the minds of the audiences.

may contain references to actual activity of enemies, it often utilizes figurative language to further highlight the threat.[7]

There are several theoretical frameworks that can be used to analyze metaphors. In this paper I primarily utilize the framework of conceptual blending developed by Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner.[8] Blending is understood as an integration of specific mental spaces structured by frames[9] of knowledge. For instance, a specific debate of two politicians is a unique event i.e. mental space that is gains its structure from more entrenched and yet culturally specific frame of political debate. A single scope blend, which is one of the more common conceptual blends in various metaphors, involves two input spaces or mental spaces that are integrated. Additionally, it includes a generic space, which contains structural features that are present in both input spaces. For example, even if a metaphor is formed from two differently framed mental spaces such as political debate and a boxing match, they may share features such as an interaction between subject/agent and object, which is enough to create commonalities for the formation of the blend.[10] A blend in the single-scope network inherits its structure and frame from one of the input spaces. However, the blend itself may be a result of selective projection. In other words, only some features from each input spaces might be visible in the blended space, and new properties may emerge.[11]

Fauconnier and Turner claim that the benefit of blending is related to the matter of compression. When blending occurs, events and objects are able to gain a more human and immediate scale. In the emergent blended space, for instance the relations of causality, identity and time are being compressed, which in the case of metaphors makes complex or abstract concepts achieve a more

[7] Chilton 2005, 39–41; Steuter & Wills 2008, 204 state that "Metaphors offer a way of selecting, labeling, and understanding "facts," a process that may filter or distort what is perceived.".

[8] For conceptual blending, see Fauconnier & Turner 2002. Discerning biblical metaphors can be done various ways, but currently one can observe a popularity of frameworks informed by cognitive linguistics. Many scholars utilize conceptual metaphor theory developed by Lakoff and Johnson, which sees metaphors as a feature of human mind and cognition that results in various different metaphorical expressions. See Lakoff & Johnson 1980, 3–6, 115–119. In the framework of this theory, metaphors are viewed as cross-domain mappings. In such mappings often abstract concept is conceptualized with a more tangible one. For instance, LIFE IS JOURNEY is a prototypical metaphor that demonstrates the theory. See Kövecses 2010, 4-14.

[9] The exact difference between conceptual domains and frames is not always too clearly defined. Recently, Zoltán Kövecses has argued that image schemas, domains, frames and mental spaces form a hierarchy where image schemas are the most schematic and abstract level of structure and mental spaces are the most conceptually rich. All these organize human experience, but on different levels of detail and specificity. To illustrate the differences of levels, Kövecses utilizes the concept of BUILDING. BUILDING is a basic conceptual domain, that is structured by image schemata such as CONTAINER and VERTICALITY. However, the domain of BUILDING can be a source for more specific frames such as CONSTRUCTION or FUNCTION. In other words, the more specific levels depend on the more schematic ones. Kövecses nevertheless acknowledges that the domains are at times used in an interchangeable manner with frames. See Kövecses 2017, 321-347.

[10] Fauconnier & Turner 1998, 139.

[11] One may consider for example statement "This surgeon used his tools like a butcher!" In this blend, the implied meaning of incompetence rises from the incongruity of the frames. Both surgeon and surgeon are professions that require skill, and incompetence is not a feature of these individual frames or input spaces. See Grady, et al. 1999.

human scale. If one states that "She really knocked out her opponent in the last night's debate", the speaker states a metaphor that has intensified the conduct of political debate. This is why metaphors and blends occur so often in the human communication and thought.[12]

It is important to note, however, that in the cognitive framework metaphors are a ubiquitous feature of human thought. In other words, texts are likely full of metaphorical expressions. For practical reasons, it is not feasible to focus on every metaphorical structure or expression within a text. In the context of Ezekiel 13, it is necessary to focus on metaphors that appear to *deliberately* alter and affect the conceptualization of condemned groups. According to Gerard Steen, the deliberate metaphorical language can be distinguished by certain ways. This can be observed clearly in similes wherein word "like" signals to the recipient that he or she is required to do a comparison between two very different frames or domains. However, not all metaphors are clearly identified by lexical markers. A deliberate metaphor might be set up by an introduction of domain or a frame that is significantly different or incongruent from the target.[13] Hence, the metaphorical expression is so novel that the audience has no choice but to interpret it figuratively.

Finally, it is necessary to consider the issue of gender in this context. In the context of biblical scholarship, gender studies can be viewed as a lens that is interested of performances and descriptions of characters and groups against certain cultural norms and ideals that are connected to for instance masculinity and femininity. In other words, the interest often lies in situations where characters transgress or subvert ideal performances.[14]

An important and highly difficult question is what traits actually constitute ideal biblical masculinity or femininity. There have been various criteria for hegemonic[15] biblical masculinity. One can for

[12] Fauconnier & Turner 2002, 322–324.

[13] Steen 2011, 54–60 states that "When a metaphor is used deliberately, it instructs the addressee to momentarily adopt another standpoint, in another frame of reference, and to reconsider the local topic from that point of view." Framework of deliberate metaphors has been utilized in biblical scholarship by de Joode, Johan & van Loon, Hanneke 2014.

[14] Ken Stone 2007, 183–184 states that "instead of studying "men" or "women" as such, gender criticism analyzes critically the cultural notions and social processes that function not only to differentiate "men" from "women," but also to differentiate men or male characters from other men or male characters, and some women or female characters from other women or female characters. It also highlights instances in which gender takes unexpected forms or fails to conform to dominant assumptions, including the widespread assumption that gender can always be understood in strictly binary terms (e.g., male versus female, or masculine versus feminine). Refusing to be confined by this assumption, gender criticism even explores such gender-related topics as "female masculinity" or intersexed bodies –hardly conventional objects of analysis for either "men's studies" or women's studies" as traditionally practiced."

[15] According to this framework developed by R.W. Connell, a society or a community has an ideal form of masculinity that can be described as hegemonic. This ideal is supported by various institutions (military, government, etc.) that grant it the necessary authority. Since hegemony is an ideal, men can easily fail to adhere to the traits that are considered hegemonic or in a specific context. Connell has noted that men who are not able for one reason or another to conform to the hegemonic ideal or embody traits that are viewed feminine, are representatives of subordinated masculinity, which can lead to discrimination or exclusion. On the other hand, even those who mostly strive to adhere to the hegemony do

example utilize features outlined by Susan Haddox who states that avoidance of being feminized, strength, virility and skill as a warrior, honor, and ability to persuade constitute certain features or areas of an ideal masculinity.[16] The use of such criteria are, however, complicated when one discusses groups such as prophets. Prophets of the Hebrew Bible often transgress or subvert norms of hegemonic masculinity by their behavior, yet they are not condemned for such actions.[17] In other words, while texts may sometimes convey fairly straightforward ideas of male performance it is dependent on the context whether deviance or adherence to ideals is viewed as positive or negative.

Ideal femininity is at least equally elusive concept. According to Hilary Lipka traits such as maternity, passivity, association with private spaces and households could be connected to a typical feminine performance.[18] Similarly Susan Haddox has argued that while men and masculinity are associated with activity, open or public spaces, and women and femininity conversely are relegated to passivity and private or domestic spheres.[19] However, at the same time some women are able to deviate from strict adherence to aforementioned traits. For example, a woman such as Deborah is shown to a capable leader, demonstrating a possibility of an acceptable masculine performance. However, at the same time a woman such as Jezebel is clearly condemned for her masculine actions.[20]

not necessarily reach its every criteria but can gain some benefit from supporting its structures and conventions. Hence, the hegemonic masculinity requires complicit masculinities. Finally, Connell notes that masculinities of different ethnic groups can be viewed marginalized in relation to the hegemonic ideal. See Connell 2005, 71-81. While the theory of Connell is concerned with contemporary issues of gender, scholarship has shown that the Hebrew Bible represents a wide variety of relational masculinities that can also be considered as hegemonic, complicit, subordinate or marginalized. See Nissinen 2016, 221-224.

[16] The criteria of Haddox are largely comparable with ones suggested by David Clines 1995, 212–241 who has focused on the traits of king David as the masculine ruler. The traits of Clines are ability to fight, persuade others, stay separate from women, bond with other males, musicality and beauty. The two latter traits have been criticized as beauty seems to be associated more with youth, and musicality does not seem to be a trait that can be linked to masculinity in general. For the critique of these traits of masculinity. For criticism, see Briggs 2015, 59; Lipka, 2016, 188 and Moore, 2010, 249–250. According to Hilary Lipka, masculinity seems to be primarily related to strength. While male strength could manifest in various settings such as domestic households, it would clearly be present in warfare, where both the physical strength and inner resolve of an individual man would be evaluated. A successful warrior could retain his masculinity and status within the community. Indeed, while the definitions do show some disagreement about the exact features of masculinity, it appears to be quite clear performative aspects of masculinity are emphasized in the biblical contexts.

[17] When one assesses the prophets of Hebrew Bible, the examples of hegemonic performances are very rare, mostly limited to the almost hypermasculine characters of Moses or Elijah who anyway can be considered something more than just transmitters of divine knowledge. Indeed, Rhiannon Graybill 2016, 14 has recently formulated that "Prophecy can be read as a series of failures of masculinity—or, alternately, as transformations to the very representation of "masculinity" as a category." See also Nissinen 2016, 227-228 and 2017, 297.

[18] See Lipka 2020, 128-129. The lack of research on femininities within biblical scholarship is noted by Lipka. However, the issue is present also on contemporary gender studies, as Paechter 2018 121 notes "While there has been considerable investigation into how we understand different masculinities and the relationships between them, corresponding attention has not been given to theorisations of femininities. It is not altogether clear why this should be the case. However, it is noteworthy that most research into how we might understand gender, and in particular into dominance in gender relations, has not included specific and detailed consideration of femininity as a concept.

[19] Haddox 2016, 182.

[20] Lipka 2020, 145.

As noted in the discussion of threat formation, symbolic threats could be related to the values and belief systems of the group, which could include hierarchies and relations of gender. Thus, breaches and deviations in gender roles could be in themselves dangerous offences and function as threats that constitute an effective enemy image. Indeed, there is evidence that deviances from gendered roles are at times considered threatening in the context of the Hebrew bible. For example, Amy Kalmanofsky has argued that the presence of strong women such as Jezebel is related to social disruption.[21] In other words, when women deviate too strongly from their ideal performance, a disaster may occur.

In the context of Ezekiel, the presence of threatening and gendered metaphors has been noted especially in chapters 16 and 23. According to Tamar Kamionkowski, these texts demonstrate a presence of anxiety towards the disruption of gender hierarchy during the time of Exile. According to her, the book of Ezekiel advocates a gender dynamic and thinking where the boundaries of female and male performances and roles are clearly defined. However, the traumatic event of the exile presents a danger to this ideal dynamic.[22] From this standpoint, a presence of gendered and metaphorical threats should not necessarily be viewed extraordinarily in Ezekiel 13.

Ezekiel 13

In this paper, the structural features and possible textual history of Ezekiel 13 can only be discussed briefly. The chapter can be viewed as a structurally self-contained part of larger section (Ezek. 12:21–14:11) that is concerned with prophecy.[23] It is also possible to argue that the text has two halves that mirror each other in form. Ezek. 13:1–16 and 17–23 both share similarities in structure and some of the lexical items. They begin with preambles in which the prophet is addressed, afterwards the charges against the misconduct of the prophets are presented, and finally, the prophets are judged. [24] Therefore, it is reasonable to argue that the text can be viewed as a unit wherein two groups are being condemned and connected to the idea of false prophecy.

The literary history of the text is likely complex and there have been numerous attempts to discern its various redactionary layers of the section. In the case of Ezekiel 13:17-23, verses 22-23 are likely a later addition, which solidifies the connection to verses 1-16, which contain their own possible layers.[25] The solutions concerning the text that exhibits both literary unity and disruptions are

[21]Kalmanofsky 2016, 190. However, certain biblical text appear to show that women can be threatening even if they conform to non-masculine behavior. For instance, Gale Yee notes that women lacking official authority could resort into schemes and manipulation that could bring shame to men. Yee 2003, 50–52.
[22] Kamionkowski 7-9,
[23] Greenberg 1983, 6.
[24] Greenberg 1983, 242; Hals 1989, 86; Block 1997, 393–394.
[25] Most recently, Francesco Arena 2020, 130-131 has argued the core of Ezekiel 13:1–16 concerned prophets of peace and consisted of verses 13:1–3, 6, 9–11a. Arena notes that this interpretation is different to the one for example suggested

understandably numerous, and when one takes into an account the differences visible in P967, it is clear that the history of this text is complex. This paper focuses on the text as it is contained in the Masoretic Text, fully acknowledging that it represents a later development in the book of Ezekiel.

Simile of Jackals in Ruins in Ezekiel 13:4

MT (BHS)	Translation
כְּשֻׁעָלִים בְּחָרָבוֹת נְבִיאֶיךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל הָיוּ׃	Like jackals in ruins are your prophets, Israel

The first section where prophets are viewed from a perspective other than transmission of divine knowledge occurs in Ezekiel 13:4, which compares the prophets of Israel to Jackals[26] in ruins. The presence of כְּ is a clear indicator of a deliberate simile. This verse and simile are somewhat peculiar from literary critical standpoint, as they address the prophets in the third person. Indeed, many scholars regard this verse as a late addition to the text of Ezekiel 13.[27] However, the simile is challenging even from the standpoint of cognitive linguistics. Similes are often understood as expressions that explicitly seek to make a comparison.[28] While this makes them different from proper metaphors, they also can be analyzed as single-scope blends, which nonetheless carry fewer potential inferences than more open-ended metaphorical blends. This is because similes often include an explanatory element, which makes the point of comparison explicit.[29] Here, however, such element is crucially missing. In other words, the verse leaves open what aspect and quality of prophets the simile targets.

by Zimmerli who saw verses 3, 5, 7a and 8f forming the original core with verses 10b, 13-14a as additions, or Pohlmann who advocates 1-3, 6, 10–12 as the core of the section.

[26] There is some uncertainty whether the word שׁוּעָל denotes exclusively a single species of animal, as it can be understood depending on the context as either a fox or a jackal. Here it seems more likely that the שׁוּעָל should be understood as a jackal. The primary reason for that is the fact that verse indicates the presence of multiple animals, and jackals, unlike foxes, live in packs. However, the word contains a considerable degree ambiguity regarding the exact species. The Masoretic text mentions שׁוּעָל in six different contexts, which provide some information about the features of the animal. In Judges 15:4 Samson is able to catch three hundred of them, which despite the incredible nature of the feat, could imply that the animals were commonly found in groups. They can be found in deserted and ruined areas (Lam 5:18, Ezek 13:4) but sometimes also in vineyards, which they can spoil (Songs 2:15). Psalm 63:10 conveys the idea that these animals eat remains of the dead people. Finally, Nehemiah 4:3 states that the animal can ruin a wall. From these verses it is possible to conclude that שׁוּעָל is an animal of negative reputation and connotations. It is associated with ruins and death and can sometimes even cause the degradation of human made structures or buildings. It can definitely be said that by choosing this particular animal the simile does not present the prophets in favorable light. For discussion of the animal, see for example Margalith 1985, 225–226.

[27] Cooke 1936, 139, for instance notes that the addressing of the people in the verse "reads like the exclamation of a scribe or a student written in margin". Allen 1994, 201 also sees it as an interruption in the flow of the text, likening it to "jubilant redactionary comment".

[28] Israel et al 2004, 15.

[29] Dancygier & Sweetser 2014, 176. Dancygier and Sweetser note that the famous quote "Life is like a box of chocolates. You never know what you're gonna get." from the film Forrest Gump, is an illustrative example of a broad-scope similes. The first sentence presents a comparison that would be difficult to understand without the following sentence that elaborates *why* life is like a box of chocolates. In other words, broad-scope similes could be very difficult to understand without elaborative parts.

It should be noted that while the lexical items of the verse are not especially difficult interpret, there interestingly is not a completely clear scholarly consensus about the exact meaning of this verse. Some have argued that the verse highlights the potentially destructive and mischievous nature of the prophets.[30] Others claim that the accusation points to the idea that the prophets are comfortable in the aftermath of disaster.[31] The meanings are not necessarily exclusive, as Moshe Greenberg has argued that prophets both cause the ruin and benefit from it.[32] In other words, there is some uncertainty about what aspect of the prophets the simile targets.

If the simile is understood as a single scope blend (see fig. 1. In the appendix), it does not appear to target the prophetic communication or transmission of divine knowledge, but rather the state of the prophets, which had not been explicated in verses 1-3 of the chapter. In my view, the simile achieves some notable things from the standpoint of threat and enemy images. It dehumanizes and disparages prophets by connecting them to an animal that has a negative reputation in the Hebrew Bible. The possibility that prophets benefit from destruction is not explicit, but it is certain that ruins would offer an environment where jackals could thrive. Moreover, the blending may cast doubt to the motivations of the prophets by implying that they could easily preserve their lives in the situation after a disaster.[33] The accusation is not a light one, if the prophets are labeled as a group that actually gains benefit from the catastrophic events.[34]

However, the simile does not appear to have a notable gendered dimension. The verse does not seem to question the masculinity of the prophets in an explicit or implicit manner. The prophets are not compared to a powerful animal such as a lion, which could be linked to masculinity, nor does it connect prophets to clearly defined traits such as weakness that could have gendered connotations.

Metaphor of Siege Warfare in Ezekiel 13:5

MT (BHS)	Translation
לֹא עֲלִיתֶם בַּפְּרָצוֹת וַתִּגְדְּרוּ גָדֵר עַל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל לַעֲמֹד בַּמִּלְחָמָה בְּיוֹם יְהוָה׃	You have not gone up into the breaches, or built a wall for the house of Israel, to stand in battle in the day of Yahweh

[30] Cooke 1936, 139; Zimmerli 1979, 293.
[31] Eichrodt 1986, 163; Block 1997, 401.
[32] Greenberg 1983, 236.
[33] Eichordt 1986, 163 arrives to similar conclusions.
[34] Contra Allen 1994, 201 who argues that "The ironic point appears to be that the discredited prophets, who envisioned a wonderful future for Israel, have been reduced to mulling over their disappointment, skulking in their ruined hopes." While the simile undoubtedly discredits the prophets, it appears more likely to point to the self-preservation and resilience of the prophets of Israel.

After the simile of Ezek 13:4, the text introduces a deliberate metaphor that once again allows the reader or audience to view prophets from a perspective that is not related to the transmission of divine knowledge. The verse is essentially an accusation directed towards the inactivity of prophets. They are accused of three things. They have not gone into the breaches, they have not built a wall, and they have not stood in battle in the day of the Lord. It is most likely that the verse refers to a situation of siege warfare, where a city wall has been breached and the defenders are required to make a wall or barricade to repel the attack.[35]

This metaphor of siege warfare can be understood as a conventional single scope blend where two differently framed mental spaces are integrated. The prophets of Israel in Ezekiel 13 have been described earlier in the chapter as a group that follows their own heart and is incapable to convey the message of Yahweh. In other words, the prophets are inadequate in a fairly general sense that concerns the prophetic transmission of divine knowledge. This understanding of prophecy forms likely the first input space of the blend.

The second input space is framed by the knowledge of siege warfare. Defenders of the city have a clear and tangible goal during the breach. They need to fight off the invaders, go to the breach and repair it with a makeshift wall. If this does succeed, the immediate danger is averted, but in the case of failure the changes of survival have dramatically diminished. In other words, the survival of the city and its inhabitants are directly related to the actions of the defenders.[36] While this is not an all-encompassing description of the complexities of the siege, it is a suitably compact presentation of combat where individual character and agency matters.

When the conceptual blending is represented with a single-scope conceptual integration network (see figure 2), it is possible to see how these spaces interact. First, they share a general space of agent, action, object and consequences. However, as noted before, these spaces are very different. By blending prophesying and siege warfare, the metaphor raises the stakes of prophesying to heightened levels. For instance, if the metaphor conceptualizes the relatively abstract attitudes of the audience with the very concrete wall that can be repaired[37], the metaphor implies that prophets have a direct way of affecting the people.

[35] See for instance Brownlee 1986, 188; Joyce 2009, 120. A Slightly different interpretation is given by Greenberg 1983, 236 and Daniel Block 1997, 401 who understand the verse as a metaphor that evokes an idea of vineyard that is threatened by marauders. However, the fact that prophets are required to go up to the breaches seems to point to city walls that are accessed with a counter-ramp during the time of breach. See Eph'al 2009, 95–96.
[36] Eph'al 2009, 67-113.
[37] See Brownlee 1983, 188.

Perhaps even more importantly, if prophesying is understood in terms of warfare, it becomes a concrete struggle for the survival. Furthermore, due to the representation of the pivotal point of siege warfare as a breach, prophets have direct responsibility over the destruction or safety of Jerusalem. While adequately performed prophecy could be important for the security of Yahweh's people, the metaphor allows the text to emphasize the consequences of inadequate prophetic office in the most dramatic manner. The catastrophe is blamed entirely on the prophets. The metaphor and the blending transform prophesying into an activity that is dependent on the agency and the actions of the intermediaries.

Additionally, this metaphor could contain aspects that are important from the standpoint of gender. Warfare is a setting that is emphatically connected to masculinity and masculine performances, as fighting and risking one's life corresponds to both physical and mental constitution. Going to the breach and building a wall under a pressure can be understood as an act that requires a great deal strength, skill, and courage, as there is a good possibility that defenders could be killed in combat. Conversely a failure in such situation could reasonably be viewed as something that undermines masculinity.[38] However, many of these possible aspects are implicit. The metaphor does not overtly humiliate the prophets of Israel by actually feminizing them or claiming that they had lost their composure in a dangerous situation. One could imagine that a likely reason for not going to the breach has to do with lack of courage, but that is not explicated in the verse.

Metaphors allow different interpretations often related to the knowledge and cultural background of the audience. Hence, one must be careful not to overinterpret or exhaust the possibilities of the expression in question. In any case, the metaphor here appears to emphasize the consequences of the prophecy. Prophets are already in verses 1-3 described as a group that is fundamentally unable to deliver proper words of Yahweh, and the metaphor makes the consequences of this inadequacy as severe as possible. Moreover, this metaphor also continues the motif of ruin that was established in verse 13:4 as a habitat of jackals.

Metaphor of Plastering in Ezekiel 13:10-16

MT (BHS)	Translation
יַעַן וּבְיַעַן הִטְעוּ אֶת־עַמִּי לֵאמֹר שָׁלוֹם וְאֵין שָׁלוֹם וְהוּא בֹּנֶה חַיִץ וְהִנָּם טָחִים אֹתוֹ תָּפֵל׃	therefore, indeed therefore they have misled my people, saying, peace, and there is no

[38] This pattern is also visible in texts and iconography of the ancient Near East. Cynthia Chapman 2004, 46-47 notes that the Assyrian reliefs depicting the siege of Lachish show that even those soldiers who apparently participated in defense but ultimately failed were emasculated visually. In a more general sense, the situation of siege and breach is something that invites potential gendered dimensions as in ancient Near East cultural milieu cities were conceptualized as feminine entities. See for instance Galambush 1992, 20–21.

	peace, and one/he builds a wall and they plaster it with whitewash
אֱמֹר אֶל־טָחֵי תָפֵל וְיִפֹּל הָיָה ׀ גֶּשֶׁם שׁוֹטֵף וְאַתֶּנָה אַבְנֵי אֶלְגָּבִישׁ תִּפֹּלְנָה וְרוּחַ סְעָרוֹת תְּבַקֵּעַ׃	say to those who plaster with whitewash, it will fall. There will be an overflowing rain, great hailstones will fall, and a stormy wind will break out.
וְהִנֵּה נָפַל הַקִּיר הֲלוֹא יֵאָמֵר אֲלֵיכֶם אַיֵּה הַטִּיחַ אֲשֶׁר טַחְתֶּם׃	and behold, the wall has fallen, will not they say to you, where is the plaster you have plastered with?
לָכֵן כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה וּבְקַעְתִּי רוּחַ־סְעָרוֹת בַּחֲמָתִי וְגֶשֶׁם שׁוֹטֵף בְּאַפִּי יִהְיֶה וְאַבְנֵי אֶלְגָּבִישׁ בְּחֵמָה לְכָלָה׃	therefore, thus says the Lord Yahweh: I will make a stormy wind break out in my fury, in my anger, there will be an overflow of rain, and great hailstones in fury to destroy it.
וְהָרַסְתִּי אֶת־הַקִּיר אֲשֶׁר־טַחְתֶּם תָּפֵל וְהִגַּעְתִּיהוּ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ וְנִגְלָה יְסֹדוֹ וְנָפְלָה וּכְלִיתֶם בְּתוֹכָהּ וִידַעְתֶּם כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה׃	and I will break down the wall that you have plastered with plaster, and bring it down, so that its foundation will be revealed, and it will fall, you will be consumed in the midst of it, and you will know that I am Yahweh
וְכִלֵּיתִי אֶת־חֲמָתִי בַּקִּיר וּבַטָּחִים אֹתוֹ תָּפֵל וְאֹמַר לָכֶם אֵין הַקִּיר וְאֵין הַטָּחִים אֹתוֹ׃	and I will complete my wrath upon the wall, and upon those who have plastered it with plaster; and I will say to you (there is) no wall and those who plaster it
נְבִיאֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַנִּבְּאִים אֶל־יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם וְהַחֹזִים לָהּ חֲזוֹן שָׁלוֹם וְאֵין שָׁלוֹם נְאֻם אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה׃ פ	the prophets of Israel who prophesied of Jerusalem and saw peace and there was no peace, oracle of Lord Yahweh

The second proper metaphor that concerns the prophets of Israel is developed throughout verses 10-15. First, the verses reveal that the message of the prophets has been one of peace. Afterwards, the verse argues that while someone (or some group)[39] has built a wall, the prophets have plastered it. However, Yahweh directs his anger towards this plastered wall. This wrath, which manifests in the frightening natural phenomena causes the wall to fall. This has several consequences. The plastering is shown to be futile as the foundations beneath it are revealed, and the prophets themselves are annihilated, as the wall and the city of Jerusalem are destroyed.

[39] The exact identity builder is obscured by the pronoun הוּא, which has led to a certain amount of disagreement in the scholarship. A possible alternative is to understand the pronoun referring to the people of Yahweh. The people have constructed a certain supportive or defensive structure, which may have some underlying faults. See for instance Block 1997, 407 Another alternative argued by Brownlee 1986, 190 is that the pronoun would refer to one person, for example a prophet. In other words, one prophet would have built the wall and others would have plastered it.

It is widely agreed in the scholarship that the text can be understood as a deliberately metaphorical description of a prophetic failure.[40] The section invites the audience to understand the plastering as a frame that conceptualizes and affects the understanding of prophesying. In this case, the differences between the frames of the metaphor offer a highly novel perspective to the action that is being condemned.[41]

But why does plastering offer a suitable frame for a negative portrayal of prophetic activity. How is the metaphor able to turn a procedure that is related to the construction of buildings into something that is negative? In general sense, plastering is not an operation that fundamentally enhances the defensive properties, or substance of the wall. Rather, it affects the surface. Plaster is a physical substance that can be sensed visually, and it can possibly be aesthetically attractive to the observer.[42] The transmitted prophecies obviously do not have a clear physical form and require different kind understanding to be interpreted. Therefore, the blend makes the relatively complex action of prophesying into a simple matter of visual and physical substance (See figure 3). Plaster is also something that is clearly manufactured and has a human origin. The blending could thus effectively highlight the questionable origins of the prophecies of peace.

While the efficacy of the metaphor can be understood as the creative integration of various properties of different mental spaces, the metaphor where physical buildings are being plastered and eventually revealed seems also depend on image schematic structures. Image schemas are dynamic and recurring patterns that structure human experiences and form basis for various conceptual metaphors.[43] In the activity of plastering, a schema that seems to be utilized is the one of containment. Containment schema is one of the most basic image schemas as it draws from common human experiences where various objects and actions are conceptualized in the terms of exteriors, interiors and boundaries. For

[40] See for instance, Zimmerli 1979, 295; Greenberg 1983, 237-239; Duguid 1994, 94; Block 1997, 406-407; Wong 2001, 217-219.

[41] de Joode & van Loon 2014, 42-44.

[42] First, it is an action that is denoted by verb טוּחַ, which can mean a procedure where buildings are coated with some material that can be either plaster or even valuable metals. In other words, the action itself is not unusual nor does the verb have any clear negative connotations. However, the substance that is applied to the wall in this process is denoted by word תָּפֵל that can also be understood as something deceptive. For instance, in Lamentations 2:14 the visions of prophets are described with this particular word. Therefore, it is often translated as whitewash that has no protective qualities. See Zimmerli 1979, 295. However, it should be noted that the plaster is later in verse 12 denoted with word טִיחַ, which does not seem to have specific connotations. To conclude, the exact nature of the plaster is not made explicit in the text. The word תָּפֵל may have some negative connotations, which means that the plaster is in this case something that is related to the misleading of the prophets. If the חַיִץ means a loosely built and weak wall, the process of plastering is emphatically an action that has no benefits concerning the endurance of the wall, as it affects only the appearance of the surface. If the wall in question is indeed meant to be a defensive structure, this action could be described as short-sighted or unwise, which makes an interesting comparison to the fact that the prophets are explicitly labeled foolish in verse 13:2. For discussion of possible interpretations, see also Arena 2020, 132-133.

[43] Johnson 1987, xiv.

example, clothes form a boundary that separates the exterior from interior, food is placed into containers and people traverse between indoors and outdoors.[44] Similarly, the plaster could be understood as a boundary that separates the foundation and the real state of the wall from the exterior that is affected by the prophets.

It is possible that in this metaphor prophesying becomes peripheral action, which does not reach the most urgent issues that threaten the people of Yahweh. At the same time, it forms a deceiving yet transient boundary that actively hinders the ability of the people to make appropriate choices and avoid the eventual catastrophe. However, this metaphor despite of its different frame is not completely separate from the previously established notion of siege warfare. Both metaphors convey that the prophets pose a danger for the security of the people of Yahweh. Once again prophets are connected to the ruins and falling physical structures.

Whereas the previous metaphor of siege warfare could rather easily be connected to the gendered dimension of war, this metaphor appears to contain fewer or less explicit issues of gender. One could possibly argue that the metaphor attacks the masculinity of the prophets by questioning their ability in the matters of construction and building, which could signify masculine prowess if performed properly.[45] Aside this possibility, the metaphor does not appear to have a too clear connection to the masculinity of the prophets.

Metaphoricality of Trapping in Ezekiel 13:17-23

MT	Translation
וְאַתָּה בֶן־אָדָם שִׂים פָּנֶיךָ אֶל־בְּנוֹת עַמְּךָ הַמִּתְנַבְּאוֹת מִלִּבְּהֶן וְהִנָּבֵא עֲלֵיהֶן:	and you, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your people, who prophesy out of their own heart, and prophesy against them
וְאָמַרְתָּ כֹּה־אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה הוֹי לְמִתַפְּרוֹת כְּסָתוֹת עַל כָּל־אַצִּילֵי יָדַי וְעֹשׂוֹת הַמִּסְפָּחוֹת עַל־רֹאשׁ כָּל־קוֹמָה לְצוֹדַד נְפָשׁוֹת הַנְּפָשׁוֹת תְּצוֹדַדְנָה לְעַמִּי וּנְפָשׁוֹת לָכֶנָּה תְּחַיֶּינָה:	and say, thus says the Lord Yahweh: Woe to those who sew כְּסָתוֹת [46] upon all joints of arms and make הַמִּסְפָּחוֹת [47] for the heads of every size, to trap נְפָשׁוֹת Will you trap הַנְּפָשׁוֹת of my people and keep נְפָשׁוֹת alive for yourselves?
וַתְּחַלְּלֻנָה אֹתִי אֶל־עַמִּי בְּשַׁעֲלֵי שְׂעֹרִים וּבְפִתֻּתֵי לֶחֶם לְהָמֵית נְפָשׁוֹת אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תְמוּתֶנָה וּלְחַיּוֹת נְפָשׁוֹת אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תְחַיֶּינָה בְּכַזֵּבְכֶם לְעַמִּי שֹׁמְעֵי כָזָב: ס	you have profaned me among my people for handful of barley and pieces of bread, to kill נְפָשׁוֹת who should not die and keeping alive

[44] Dewell 2005, 371-372.
[45] See Kirova 2020, 165-166. Kirova argues that while women could perform various male roles to a certain degree in the Hebrew Bible, the role of builder was not available to them.
[46] An obscure word denoting an item that was sewn by the women.
[47] An obscure word denoting an item that was made by the women.

	נְפָשׁוֹת who should not live, by your lying to my people who listen to lies.
לָכֵן כֹּה־אָמַר	אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה הִנְנִי אֶל־כְּסָתוֹתֵיכֶנָה אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּנָה מְצֹדְדוֹת שָׁם אֶת־הַנְּפָשׁוֹת לְפָרֹחוֹת וְקָרַעְתִּי אֹתָם מֵעַל זְרוֹעֹתֵיכֶם וְשִׁלַּחְתִּי אֶת־הַנְּפָשׁוֹת אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם מְצֹדְדוֹת אֶת־נְפָשִׁים לְפָרֹחֹת:	therefore, thus says the Lord Yahweh: Behold, I am against your כְּסָתוֹת with which you trap הַנְּפָשׁוֹת like birds, and I will cut them from your arms, and I will set free הַנְּפָשׁוֹת you trap, the נְפָשִׁים like birds
וְקָרַעְתִּי אֶת־מִסְפְּחֹתֵיכֶם וְהִצַּלְתִּי אֶת־עַמִּי מִיֶּדְכֶן וְלֹא־יִהְיוּ עוֹד בְּיֶדְכֶן לִמְצוּדָה וְיַדַעְתֶּן כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה:	And I will tear your מִסְפְּחוֹת and send my people out of your hand, and they shall be no more in your hand as prey, and you shall know that I am Yahweh.
יַעַן הַכְאוֹת לֵב־צַדִּיק שֶׁקֶר וַאֲנִי לֹא הִכְאַבְתִּיו וּלְחַזֵּק יְדֵי רָשָׁע לְבִלְתִּי־שׁוֹב מִדַּרְכּוֹ הָרָע לְהַחֲיֹתוֹ:	because you have saddened the righteous heart with lies, although I have not caused sadness to him, and you have strengthened the hand of wicked, that he should not turn from his wicked way to stay alive
לָכֵן שָׁוְא לֹא תֶחֱזֶינָה וְקֶסֶם לֹא־תִקְסַמְנָה עוֹד וְהִצַּלְתִּי אֶת־עַמִּי מִיֶּדְכֶן וְיַדַעְתֶּן כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה:	therefore, you shall no more see vanity nor divine divination and I will deliver my people out of your hand, and you shall know that I am Yahweh

Ezekiel 13:17-23 is arguably one of the most puzzling texts in the book of Ezekiel, and has garnered various scholarly solutions.[48] The text has numerous issues that make the interpretation difficult: On the one hand, the women in the verses appear to be female prophets, providing a counterpart for the prophets of Israel condemned in verses 1–16. Ezek 13:17–23 describes a group who are initially called "daughters of your (Ezekiel's) people who prophesy from their own heart". In other words, the verse and its literary setting in Ezek 13 connects the group to prophecy. Additionally, the women are accused of lies (v. 19), seeing vanity, and divining divinations (v. 23).

The description is nevertheless complicated by several elements and details of the text. First, unlike the prophets of Israel, the women are not given an explicit epithet, but their activity is denoted by a participial form הַמִּתְנַבְּאוֹת. While prophesying is usually denoted with *niphal*-stem, here the verb is in rarer *hithpael*. Moreover, the text also claims that this group manufactures items that are denoted by obscure Hebrew words כְּסָתוֹת and מִסְפָּחוֹת, which occur only in the context of Ezekiel 13:17–23, and are thus *hapax legomena* in the practical sense. According to the text, these items are manufactured

[48] Outside of commentaries, the verses are discussed for example by Brownlee 1950; Saggs 1974; van der Toorn 1994; Korpel 1996; Bowen 1999; Berlejung 2003; Schmitt 2012 and 2014; Stökl 2013; Ackermann 2014; Evans 2014; Hamori 2015; Steiner 2015; Liebermann 2020. It can be noted that the interest in verses 13:17–23 has not diminished over the course of time. On the contrary, it can clearly be seen as one of the most difficult texts in the book of Ezekiel, as noted most recently by Liebermann 2020, 213.

for arms and heads, but their ultimate purpose is to harm people of Yahweh whose נְפָשׁוֹת become trapped like birds. Additionally, the women use bread and barley to profane Yahweh, and lies in verse 19 are connected to the threatening idea of killing and saving people. Indeed, while the women are structurally connected to the issue of prophecy, it is possible that the text constructs an image of a group where various divinatory and cultic practices are being conflated and presented in a negative manner.[49]

In this paper I will focus on the feature of the text that may have the clearest figurative properties in the section. The metaphorical aspect is connected to trapping and its relation to the items manufactured by the women in verse 18. I will first briefly discuss the items. Aside from trapping, it is highly difficult to connect the two items to a specific frame of cultic or ritual activity.[50] If manufacturing of items is viewed as an input/mental space in a metaphorical blend, it is somewhat sparse. It contains agents that are the aforementioned daughters of your people. Additionally, it contains as an action the manufacturing of items. The objects of the action are the arms and heads, but the exact effect or the purpose of the activity is left unknown. They were possibly textiles[51], but it is highly speculative whether the items were utilized for example in healing rituals or as clothing in a cultic activity.

These items, however obscure, are a focal point of verses 20-21. The activity of Yahweh is directed towards them, which suggests that the power of women cannot be clearly separated from the items. The items appear to be highly important in this section. Hence, I will call this frame of manufacturing of ritual items whose purpose and effect are not revealed in the mental space that is organized by this rather vague frame.[52]

But how should trapping be understood in this context? It needs to be noted that trapping is not necessarily regarded as a clearly figurative or metaphorical aspect of the text, as scholars have

[49] In my forthcoming dissertation, I argue that it is possible that the description women could be explained as a double-scope blend where boundaries of prophesying and ritual activity that is conceptualized as trapping become less distinguishable.

[50] The solutions range from paraphernalia used in healing (Bowen 1999, Ackerman 2015, 54, see also Evans 2014, 77) to amulets or even clothing (Eichrodt 1983, 169-170)

[51] The manufacturing of the former is denoted by a Piel form of verb תָּפַר that is used of sewing. Hence, the former could be some kind of textile or a cloth. However, in the case of the latter item the more general verb עָשָׂה does not reveal so much information about possible material.

[52] For example, Nissinen 2018, 319 defines ritual as"--social action and symbolic communication, distinguished from ordinary action by some specific quality such as time, place, agency agenda, purpose or a message." By relating the items to ritual, I include various possibilities about their use. First, they could be utilized in ritual magic for healing or they could primarily evoke ideas of malevolent witchcraft. Second, the ritual would in this case also include religious practices wherein people or statues of deities were being clothed. Additionally, I will include a possibility suggested by Eichrodt (1983, 169-170) that the items were worn by women as either clothing or amulets.

considered the possibility that the women of the text were accused of actual hunting of souls or vitality.[53] However scholars have also noticed metaphorical possibilities of the activity. For example, Angelika Berlejung has importantly noted in her 2003 article on Ezekiel 13:17-23, that the while verb צוד could refer to "real" hunting of animals, it is more often connected to situations where people are being hunted by Yahweh or other subjects. Hence, the verb contains well established figurative and metaphorical aspects.[54]

Trapping in Ezekiel 13 could be represented as a clearly framed mental space that is introduced by verb that denotes hunting or trapping of prey[55] in verse 13:18. The action of trapping is further elaborated in verses 20 and 21, which present an idea of a prey that is being caught in the items. The frame is significant for two reasons. First, it presents agents (hunters) with a clear purpose towards the objects (prey). This means that the text of Ezekiel 13:17-23 could form a mental space with relatively clear agents, action, instruments, objects and effects. Second, it is very closely tied to the frame of obscure items whose purpose would otherwise be left almost completely open in the text.

The frame of trapping can also be related to various kinds of background knowledge. Berlejung has highlighted the possible connection to the hunting practiced by malevolent witches of *Maqlû* and the seductive acts of the foreign woman in proverbs 6:26. Both possibilities are plausible, as *Maqlû* does indeed conceptualize harmful activity as trapping. Similarity to proverbs 6:26 is even more striking due to a reference of bread that is also mentioned in Ezekiel 13:19.[56] Nevertheless, such connotations are implicit. The text does not directly call trapping witchcraft or magic nor does it convey notion of sexual danger in a clear sense.

It could also be possible that the frame of hunting invokes more general background knowledge that can be associated with hunters and their dynamic with prey. It can be argued that when hunting is used as a source in a metaphorical expression, it emphasizes the agency and power of the subject and highlights the peril and the helplessness of the object. T. M. Lemos has noted that the data from ancient Near East widely shows the prevalence of conceptual metaphor WAR IS HUNT, which may

[53] See for instance Saggs 1974, 5–7 and Steiner 2015, 24–26, 28–39, 49–50.
[54]Berlejung 2003, 198-201.
[55] Here, the prey is called נֶפֶשׁ. The meaning of the Hebrew word is highly dependent on the context. In the most concrete or physical level, it could refer to throat or neck of a person. However, it can also denote will, passion or feelings. Additionally, נֶפֶשׁ can mean life of a person, a person or a plurality of persons. Since the word can denote a person or people, it would certainly be possible to hunting as metaphorical harming of multiple persons. See Lys 1966, 182, Wolff 1970, 10-25.
[56]Berlejung 2003, 202-206. The similarity between Ezekiel and Proverbs has also been discussed by Esther Hamori 2015, 168–171, 204–208, and Liebermann 2020, 232–233. Hamori sees a possible connection between the women of Ezekiel and the woman of Proverbs 6:26. However, Hamori argues that the language involving death in certain descriptions of proverbs may have risen from perceptions of necromantic activity practiced by women.

be related to even more general metaphors that utilize hunting such as CONQUEST IS HUNT or POWER IS HUNT.[57] This may also be evident in the metaphors that are used to conceptualize the supremacy of Yahweh in the book of Ezekiel. In two occasions, Yahweh spreads his net over an adversary, whether king Zedekiah in Ezekiel 12:13 or an Egyptian pharaoh, as in Ezekiel 32:3. In the former, the status of the victim is described with word מָצוֹד that occurs also in Ezekiel 13:21, which makes the activity comparable to some degree.

Overall, this background knowledge involving spheres of power, activity and agency may be important from the standpoint of gender. The frames that may seemingly highlight the power of women may in fact trigger a highly negative response in the audience. For instance, Gale A. Yee notes that in a patriarchal society, the portrayals of powerful women who are then condemned may in fact enforce norms.[58] It can be argued that while hunting could be a potent source to conceptualize the overpowering or dominating aspects of some activity, it can also highlight the dangers related to women. While connotations to witchcraft or seduction are certainly possible, they are not necessarily required to make the metaphor gendered in this particular context.

In verses 13:17-21 it seems that there is a clear integration between the mental spaces of hunting and manufacturing of the items. The fact that hunting provides a clear organizing frame for the items over a significant portion of the text, implies a metaphorical single-scope blend that is deliberate. In the conceptual integration of trapping and ritual items, the latter gain a clear and tangible purpose. They are viewed as traps or snares that are manufactured in order to harm the people of Yahweh.

Since the initial mental space of items is highly vague, the input space of trapping is able to completely obscure the potential beneficial or ritual means of the said paraphernalia. This kind of metaphor can be understood as not only giving a more understandable human scale to the items, but as a clear distortion.[59] Paradoxically, while the text puts high attention to items of the women it almost completely eradicates the traces of their potential original purpose from the reader. This may be purposeful tactic that is similar to verse 13:17, which does not disclose the exact profession of the women.

Finally, the blending causes the items to have a clear albeit malevolent effect. In this sense, it is possible to think that an emergent property of the blend is that the items more clearly resemble magical tools. This is likely since magic can be understood as a ritual activity that seeks to have

[57] Lemos 2017, 44–45.
[58] Yee 1993, 107.
[59] Steuter & Wills note that "Metaphors offer a way of selecting, labeling, and understanding "facts," a process that may filter or distort what is perceived."

defined effects.[60] Additionally, since the trapping seeks to harm the prey, the metaphor could make the items bear a similarity to harmful practices of witches such as ones described in *Maqlû*. Thus, the blending could have emergent properties that depend on the knowledge that the audience may possess. If they were aware of traditions involving witches that for example bind figurines, the implications from the standpoint of an enemy image could be notable. While trapping is in itself not necessarily connected to witchcraft, the blending enhances this possibility.

Discussion: Do the Metaphors Convey a Gendered Threat

This overview of the most notable metaphorical expressions shows that Ezekiel 13 appears to exhibit certain features that are typical to enemy images. First, it is obvious that both prophets of Israel and the women of Ezekiel 13:17-23 are presented as threats. The former are connected to the fall of Jerusalem, and the latter to the harm that is directed towards the people of Yahweh. Second, this threat is communicated through metaphorical expressions. Ezekiel 13:1-16 utilizes metaphors of siege warfare and plastering to emphasize the idea that prophets are responsible for the catastrophe. Similarly, the metaphor of hunting makes the danger of women highly tangible, and distorts whatever purpose their instruments might have originally had. Additionally, the metaphors compress certain features of the activity. In Ezek 13:1-16, the metaphors cast the consequences of the catastrophe entirely on the prophets, virtually dismissing the role of audience in the process of prophetic interaction. Similarly, the metaphor of hunting makes the possible interaction between women and the people of Yahweh entirely one sided, and possibly absolves the latter of responsibility.

Additionally, the metaphors and their use does not appear to be haphazard or random way of emphasizing dangerous aspects of the groups. In Ezek 13:1-16, the metaphors appear to form a coherent network insofar they all contain references to ruins or destroyed structures. Even if the frames of plastering and city defense are different in various ways, they highlight the importance of physical safety that is being threatened and can eventually collapse, as conveyed by simile of Jackals. This means that the imagery could be motivated by the exilic trauma that is visible in the book of Ezekiel.[61] While one can reasonably argue that the text exhibits various redactionary layers, the motif

[60] Nissinen 2018, 321-322. One could use cognitive framework of Jesper Sørensen. In his theory, Sørensen distinguishes between various kinds of magical agency. Some magical rituals represent "agent-based agency" where the practitioner of the ritual is integral for the success of the performance. For instance, the efficacy of the ritual may depend on a fact that it is performed by a person with clearly defined official role within a community. In certain cases, it may even be necessary that the agent holds a specific heritage which connects him or her to the qualities that are considered essential for the act. However, the efficacy of the ritual may depend on the objects that are being used. In object-based agency, amulets, relics, and other paraphernalia have agency because they are connected to some sacred agent. In such case it is strongly connected to agent-based agency, which ultimately guarantees the power of the object or ritual instrument. In other cases, however, the objects are effective because they are categorized as distinguished items that can be separated from their profane or common counterparts. See Sørensen 2007 63-72.

[61] For discussion of Trauma in the book of Ezekiel, see Poser 2012.

of ruins appears to be an element that effectively gives the imagery coherence. Similarly, the metaphor of trapping is extended and allows the otherwise obscure items function in a well arranged manner as victims are harmed by the traps, and their removal allows Yahweh to neutralize the threat in a tangible manner.

However, a question still persists how strongly these metaphors that certainly are instrumental in the communication of threat, are connected to issues of gender. The metaphor of siege warfare has notable gendered implications as it conveys a martial situation where the masculine performance of prophets could be tested. Still, even this metaphor does not make this test and failure of masculinity as completely explicit. There is no clear feminization of the prophets, and the verse does not reveal the mindset or possible cowardice of the prophesying men. The fact is, that the gendered inferences exist here mostly as an implication. In the simile of jackals, there appears to be no connection to undermining of masculinity, and similarly the plastering of wall does not appear to dwell on the matters of gender.

The gendered aspects in the metaphor of hunting also rest on implication. While scholars have noted a similarity between seductive figure of Proverbs, there is nothing explicitly sexual in verses 13:17-23. In itself, the trapping appears mostly conceptualize the power of women over their victims. In other words, the metaphor makes the women subversive or transgressive characters, but it does not necessarily connect them to sexually dangerous characters such as woman of proverbs, or personifications who are condemned in Ezekiel 16 and 23.

Does this mean that while metaphors are highly essential from the standpoint of threat construction, they are not necessarily too clearly or completely connected to the division of gender? While the gendered inferences of individual metaphors vary, there appears to be an interesting contrast between what causes the threat and danger in these metaphors. The prophets of Israel are cast into situations, where the danger is connected to their inadequacy. They are unable to do the activity that is expected of them. By contrast, the situation is reversed in the case of prophesying women. The metaphor shows them to be highly capable in activity that is not expected of them.

In other words, the danger that is communicated by these metaphors is that the male prophets of Israel are incompetent, and the women are in too capable. The men demonstrate a lack of skill, resolve or foresight, but the women show that they can do exactly what they set out to do, and are conceptualized with a frame that emphasizes violence and dominance.[62] There is no doubt that the women can harm

[62] One can compare this to woman of Ezekiel 16, as Kamionkowski 2003, 127 interestingly states that "At a subtle level within the text of Ezekiel 16, wife Israel's crime is that she is acting like a male."

the people of Yahweh, and would be successful without the intervention of the deity. In this sense, the metaphors create a heightened contrast between the two halves of the chapter and performances of men and women. On this general level, it does not matter if the audience has the background knowledge to connect the metaphor of siege warfare to feminization of fleeing soldiers, or the metaphor of hunting to the notion of seduction.

But how plausible is that such meaning would be conveyed by the interaction of different metaphors? This kind of contrast of men and women could be viewed to be in line with certain tendencies visible in the book of Ezekiel. Tamar Kamionkowski has noted that the book of Ezekiel contains an idealized dynamic of gender relations, which is subverted in Ezekiel 16 and 23 to communicate the trauma and anxiety of the exile. However, according to her in Ezekiel 16 the deity eventually repairs the disrupted state of gender.[63] It is possible that something similar occurs also in Ezekiel 13, when gendered prophets are condemned and their threat neutralized? Moreover, Ezekiel 13 consciously invokes the imagery of exilic trauma, which can also be seen connected to a crisis of masculinity.

The prophets present not only a threat to the physical safety of the people but towards the gender hierarchy that was disturbed in the Exile. In other words, the gendered threat does not emerge from implications of individual metaphors but from the contrast of metaphorical descriptions of men and women. In this sense, while the threats are conceptualized as realistic and physical danger, the underlying danger and threat of Ezekiel 13 may also be a symbolic one.

[63] Kamionkowski 151-152.

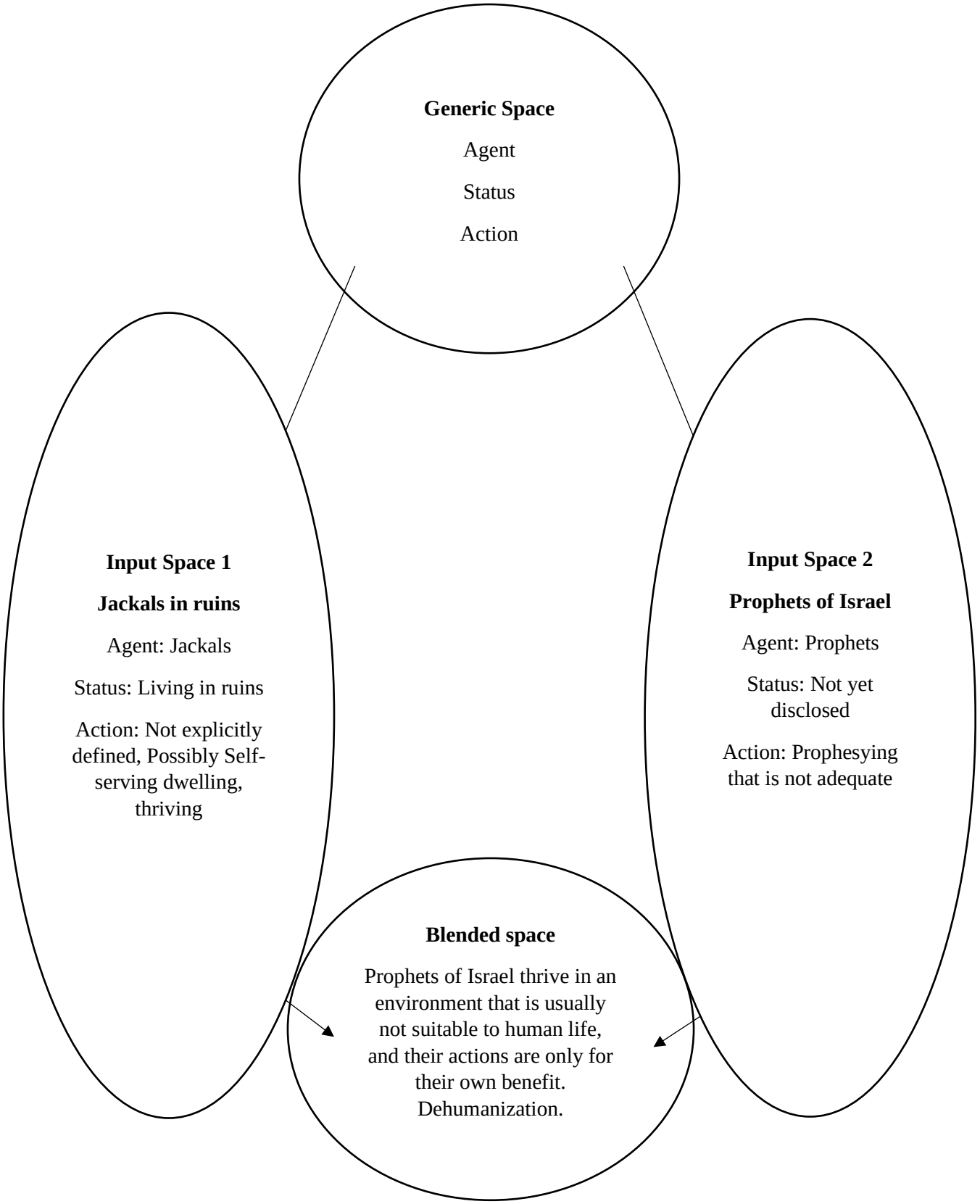


Figure 1. Single-scope network of prophets and jackals in the Masoretic text of Ezekiel 13:4.

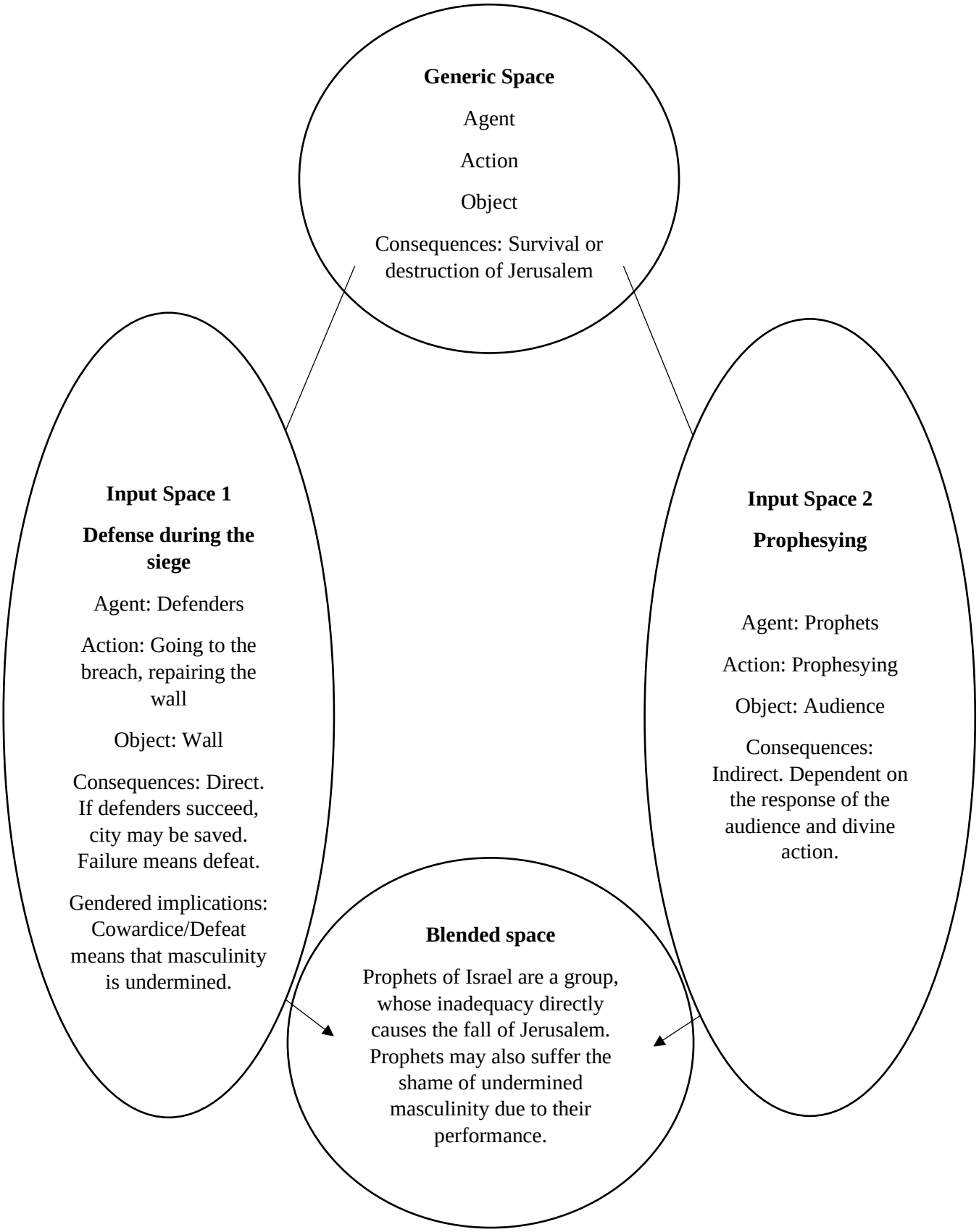


Figure 2. Single-scope network of city defense and prophesying in the Masoretic text of Ezekiel 13:5.

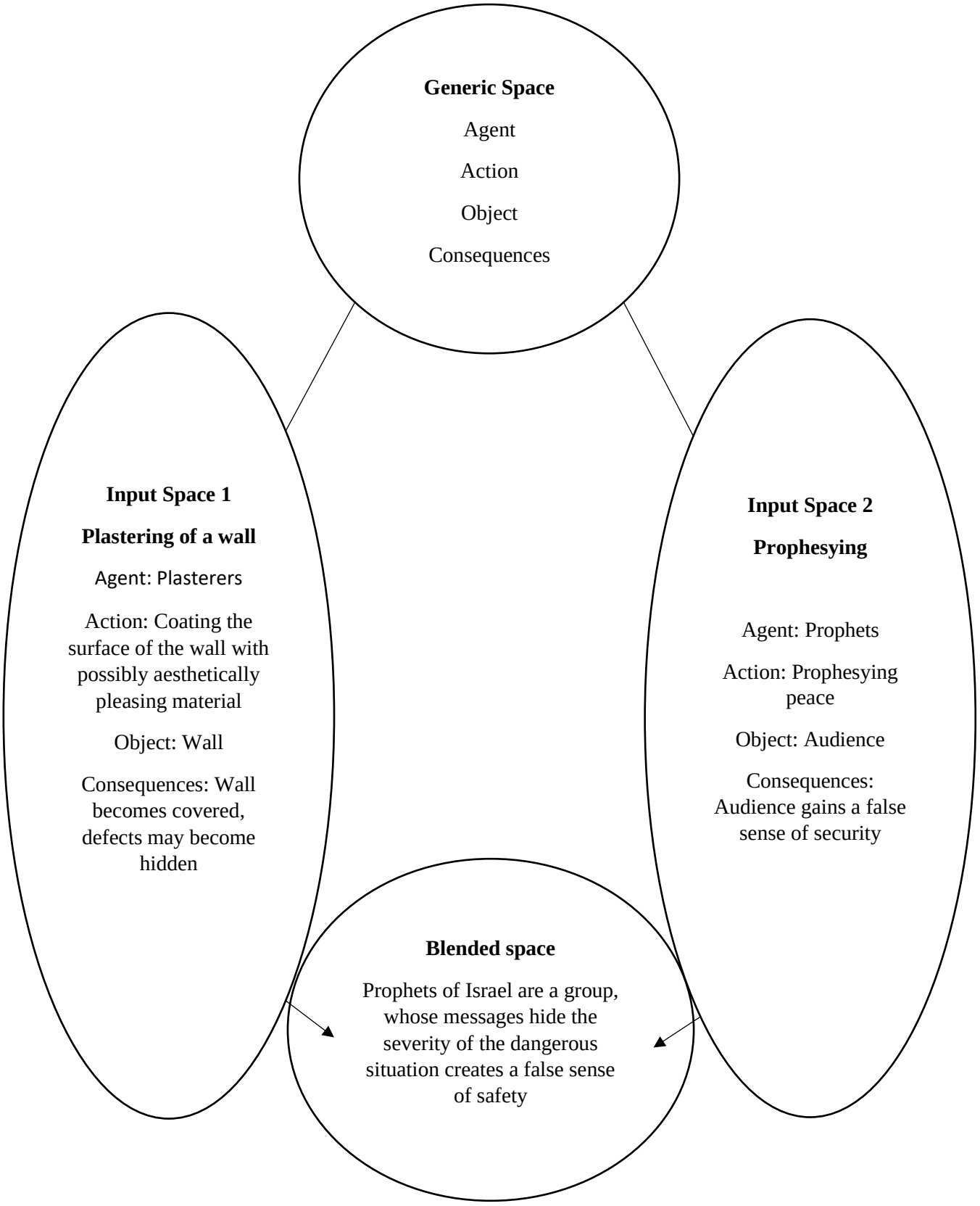


Figure 3. Single-scope network of plastering and prophesying in the Masoretic text of Ezekiel 13:10-16

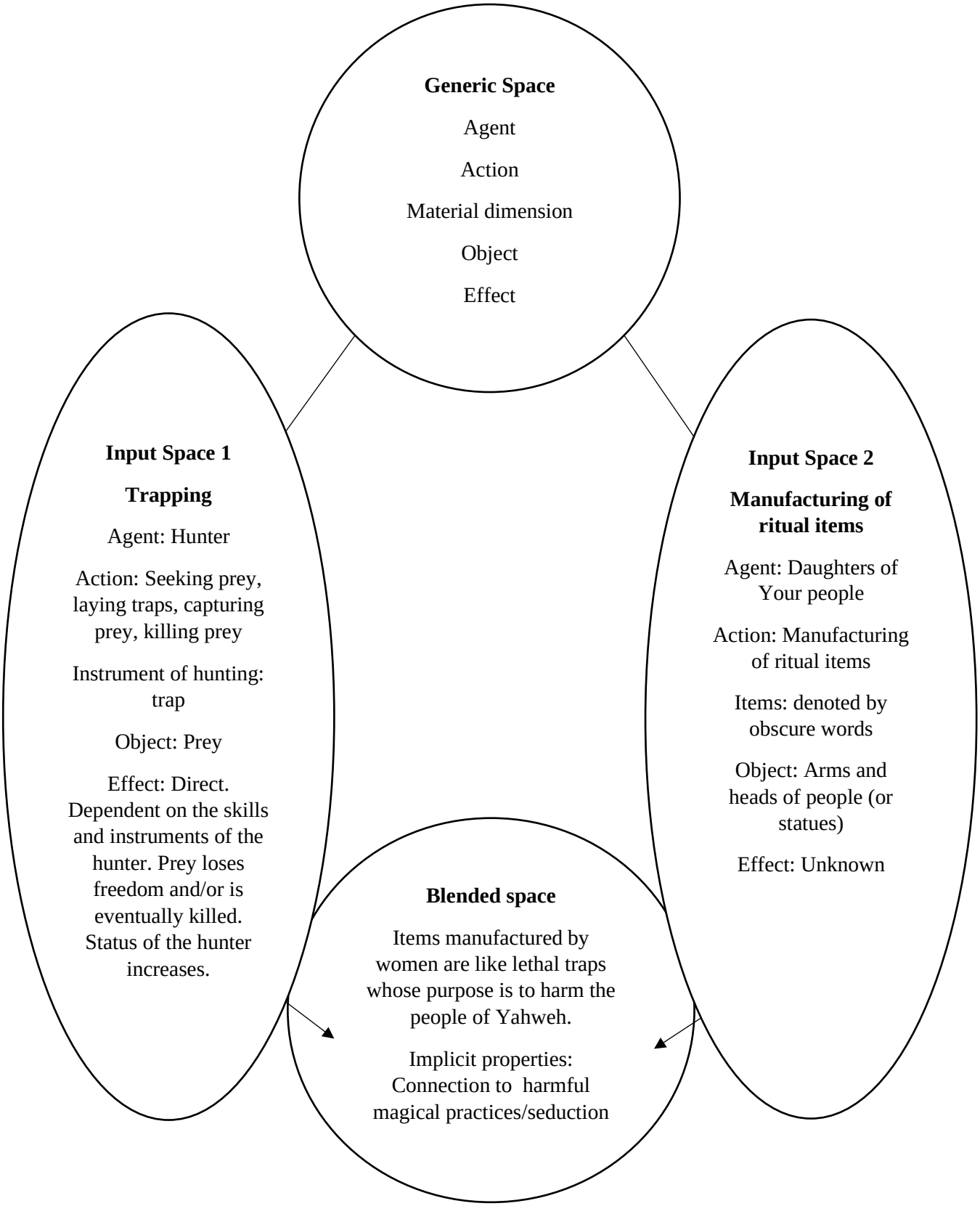


Figure 4. Single-Scope blending of trapping and ritual/cultic paraphernalia in Ezekiel 13:17-23

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Summary

The title of my dissertation is *Enemies of my People: Metaphorical and Gendered Construction of the threat of prophets in the Book of Ezekiel*. The text of Ezekiel gives detailed portrayals of groups who partake in prophetic activity but do it in a manner that provokes the wrath of deity and the condemnation that is delivered via prophet Ezekiel. In other words, the book of Ezekiel provides its audience a specific image of "false" or inadequate prophets. The texts concerning prophets are interesting due to certain features. First, Ezekiel 13 contains an explicit *gendered* division between male and female groups. Second, the groups are often described via *figurative language and metaphors*. Finally, the activity of prophets is clearly connected to serious catastrophes and even mortal danger. The prophets of Israel are connected to the fall of Jerusalem, and the prophesying women are accused of directly harming and killing the people of Yahweh. Additionally, the women are even accused of profaning the deity. There is a sense of *threat* that provokes the intervention of Yahweh

The aim of the dissertation is to analyze the prophetic groups of the book from the following four interrelated sets of questions:

1. What kind of threat do the prophets present in the book of Ezekiel? Is the threat connected to the physical safety of the group or is it related to breaches in accepted values or norms?
2. How is the threat represented, and how do the metaphorical and figurative expressions accentuate or alter the image of prophets?
3. What is the role of gender in the description of prophetic groups? Does the gender affect the presentation of threat and expressions that are utilized in the texts?
4. How does the imagery differ in the Masoretic Text and Septuagint? Do the differences affect the aspects of threat, figurative expressions or gender?

The importance from this study is twofold. First, the study seeks to elucidate texts that have been deemed highly difficult to understand in the context of Biblical scholarship. Additionally, it will shed light on the Greek text that has often been utilized in the recovery of the earlier textual form.

While the thesis seeks to elucidate difficult texts of the Hebrew Bible, it also seeks to utilize new combinations of methodological approaches and theoretical frameworks. While the concept of an *enemy image* is not entirely foreign in the field of biblical scholarship, it is rarely applied. Moreover, this thesis proposes that the study of enemy images could benefit from an application of metaphor and gender theories. Metaphor theories and gender studies have an established place in the

contemporary biblical scholarship, but I argue that their combined use with the aforementioned theoretical framework of enemy images and threat construction can provide new information and insights about the texts concerning prophetic groups.

This OTSEM-paper could be likened to a thematic compilation of findings from a larger chapter concerning the Masoretic text of Ezekiel 13. It does not represent a one single chapter of the actual dissertation. The focus is here on the metaphors, their connection to gendered aspects, and whether the overall threat of the prophets can be viewed as gendered aside from the clear structural division of Ezekiel 13:17-23. In the paper, I will first briefly go through methodological framework, that hopefully makes the discussion of texts and metaphors more understandable. Afterwards, I will assess the purpose of metaphors found in Ezekiel 13. How they conceptualize the prophets, and whether the metaphors in themselves are clearly gendered. Since I will discuss four different metaphorical expressions, the level of analysis is somewhat general. I am, however, more than willing to discuss details if something seems odd due to the current form of the paper!

I come to the conclusion that the metaphors of Ezekiel 13 exhibit gendered aspects to a varying degree. The metaphor of siege warfare and metaphor of hunting that are presented in Ezekiel 13:5 and 13:17-23 likely have the clearest gendered features. Conversely the metaphor of plastering and simile of jackals have little to do with the masculinity of the prophets per se. There is, however, a possibility that while the gendered implications of individual metaphors vary or are at times unclear, they overall convey the idea that prophets of Israel are weak, and the women are dangerously strong. In this sense, the metaphors may convey a threat that targets clearly defined boundaries and performances of gender.

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Exploring the Interpretive Effects and Editorial Motivations for G's Juxtaposition of Prov 29:22-27 and 31:10-31

Abstract:

It is well known that G and M Proverbs differ in the placement of two sizable text-blocks (30:1-14 and 30:15-31:9). It is also true that both text-forms end the book with the famous alphabetic acrostic celebrating the אֵשֶׁת חַיִל in 31:10-31. However, the two text forms differ as to what passage immediately precedes the famous acrostic. In M, the discourse from Lemuel's mother (31:1-9) precedes; and in G, the end of the Hezekiah collection (25-29) precedes. In this paper, I examine the textual seam uniting G Proverbs 29:22-27 to G Proverbs 31:10-31—the order of textual material according to G but with M's verse numbers. I want to know what kinds of literary cohesion might be present between the two passages so I can understand possible editorial motivations for juxtaposing these passages as well as the interpretive effects of the juxtaposition. What kind of cohesion exists between the passages in Greek? Does retroverting G's Hebrew source heighten the perception of literary cohesion as we read the two passages in Hebrew? What kind of literary strategy is activated in the juxtaposition e.g., comparison/contrast?, corroboration?, question/ answer?, contradiction? I intend to show that not only is 31:10-31 an acrostic, but 29:22-27 also represents an acrostic in miniature form which introduces the following full acrostic for the purpose of contrasting the "fruit" of a certain type of man with the "fruit" of a certain type of woman. This gives us a glimpse into the reasons which motivated an ancient editor to juxtapose texts. Finally, I will discuss whether this juxtaposition is likely the work of G's translator, or if the juxtaposition was present in his Hebrew source.

The University of Oxford

Alternative Literary Arrangements in G and M Proverbs:
An Analysis of the Interpretive Effect and Editorial Motivations of Textual Juxtaposition

A Dissertation Submitted to

the faculty of Theology and Religion

in Candidacy for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Hebrew Bible

by

Joseph Justiss

Oxford, England

May 2021

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Abbreviations

A	Codex Alexandrinus
B	Codex Vaticanus
BHS	Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia
GVor	My reconstruction of G's *Vorlage*
HB	Hebrew Bible
ICC	International Critical Commentary
JBL	The Journal of Biblical Literature
JHS	The Journal of Hebrew Scriptures
JSOT	The Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
LSJ	Liddell and Scott A Greek-English Lexicon
SLA	Single Line Abbreviation
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary

Chapter 5

Exploring the Interpretive Effects and Editorial Motivations for G's Juxtaposition of Prov 29:22-27 and 31:10-31

In this chapter, I explore the question of how Prov 31:10-31, the famous acrostic to the אֵשֶׁת חַיִל, is affected by the immediately preceding verses in G (29:22-27). Both G and M conclude the book with the acrostic. In G, the acrostic comes at the close of the Hezekiah collection (25-29). In M, it is juxtaposed to the teaching of Lemuel's mother, perhaps as a kind of extension of the teaching in 31:1-9.

In this chapter, I begin by retroverting G's Hebrew parent text which is comprised of 29:22-27 and 31:10-31. Next, I conduct a basic lexical analysis to determine the most often reiterated concepts of the passage. This will allow me to identify the topic of each passage and compare them. Next, I compare the literary effects of G's arrangement and the editorial logic discernable therein. Finally, I offer some thoughts on which order most likely had chronological priority.

Retroverting G's Vorlage

Basic Text-Critical Procedures

For verses 29:22-31:31 in G, I analyze the translation decisions to assess where if anywhere G likely witnesses to real variant readings. As I read through G, I followed the following basic steps: (1) I determined the relationship between all elements in G and M, and asked myself whether or not G departs from a mimetic[1] mapping of M. (2) I sought to understand the reason for the deviation as either some form of linguistic/philological technique, interpretive

[1] A mimetic translation "attempts to map the maximal number of linguistic features of the source onto the receptor text and aims at consistency in correspondences between the vocabulary of the source and the target." Fox, Proverbs: An Eclectic Edition, 39.

commentary, or a corruption that arose during the transmission of Greek manuscripts for which the translator of G was not responsible. This requires identifying the type of variant represented by the deviation as either a true variant, a non-variant, a variant/non-variant[2] , or a pseudo-variant.[3] (3) If a variant was not likely due to some form of exegesis or inner-Greek corruption, I retroverted the variant in Hebrew by searching the CATSS database[4] for known Hebrew equivalents behind G's Greek using intuition when there were none, or when they were scarce.

As noted in pervious chapters, I am guided by Fox's five indicators of a Hebrew Variant in G Proverbs to identify real Hebrew variants in G's source: (1) components that do not serve the translator's ideological or literary tendencies, (2) awkwardness in G's Greek given his polished literary style, (3) awkwardness in M and G suggesting a corruption of the Hebrew source in both, (4) external Hebrew support, and (5) a combination of these 4.[5]

In explaining transformations in G, I am also guided by van der Louw's basic maxim that,

> *Behind each transformation stands a literal rendering that has been rejected* [italics original]. Thus, when we encounter a 'free rendering' we should not only categorize it as a transformation, but also investigate its rationale by studying the literal translation that was not chosen. In many cases the translational problem then surfaces. The rejected literal rendering…should be scrutinized first from a linguistic angle, then from the viewpoint of style, logic, communicative purpose, culture and world view/ideology. *This order should be kept for we cannot point to ideology where simply the norms of the target language have been obeyed* [italics mine].

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[2] A variant related to the difference between grammatical categories and non-content words like conjunctions, plural/singular discrepancies, pronouns, active/passive voice in verbs, prepositions, the article, etc. See Tov, The Text-Critical Use, 169–70.

[3] A variant that can be reliably retroverted based on known Hebrew Greek equivalents but occurred only in the translator's mind. See Ibid., 178.

[4] Emanuel Tov and Frank Polak, comps., The Revised CATSS Hebrew/Greek Parallel Text (Jerusalem: Accordance Bible Software, 2009).

[5] Proverbs: An Eclectic Edition, 55–58.

It is this last point that I want to emphasize here. The cautious scholarship of these three researchers teaches us is that we should try very hard to explain any variant in G linguistically before rushing too quickly to posit ideology or theology as the reason for the transformation.

Delimiting the Passage

I have to start my analysis of this section in G somewhere in chapter 29. I have chosen to start my analysis with 29:22 because vv. 22-27 represent the nearest distinct literary unit before the acrostic begins with 31:10. Hurowitz has argued for the unity of this passage based on its alphabetic structure.[6] In a previous chapter, I called upon Hurowitz's observations of alphabetic consciousness in 24:1-22 and I showed how this consciousness extends into Prov 30:1-14 in G's arrangement as a kind of closing to the Words of the Wise collection. Hurowitz argues that here too, at the close of another major collection in Proverbs, we find another partial alphabetic acrostic.[7] I now summarize his observations and interact critically with some.

29:22: אִישׁ־אַף יְגָרֶה מָדוֹן וּבַעַל חֵמָה רַב־פֶּשַׁע

An angry man stirs up strife,
And a wrathful man a lot of transgression.

29:23: גַּאֲוַת אָדָם תַּשְׁפִּילֶנּוּ וּשְׁפַל־רוּחַ יִתְמֹךְ כָּבוֹד

A person's pride brings him low,
But a lowly person obtains glory.

29:24: חוֹלֵק עִם־גַּנָּב שׂוֹנֵא נַפְשׁוֹ אָלָה יִשְׁמַע וְלֹא יַגִּיד

One who divides (spoil) with a thief hates himself.
Though he hear a curse, he won't testify.[8]

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[6] Victor Avigdor Hurowitz, "Proverbs 29.22-27: Another Unnoticed Alphabetic Acrostic," JSOT 25, no. 92 (2001).

[7] Ibid., 122.

[8] My translation depends on Fox who points out the similarity of this verse with Lev 5:1. Leviticus envisions a scenario in which one who has knowledge of a crime and fails to bear witness in court will be punished by God. Likewise, Zech 5:3-4 explains how God sends for the curse (אָלָה) to execute divine justice against thieves who have gone unpunished. See Michael V. Fox, Proverbs 10-31, The Anchor Yale Bible 18B (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 845–46.

29:25: חֶרְדַּת אָדָם יִתֵּן מוֹקֵשׁ וּבוֹטֵחַ בַּיהוָה יְשֻׂגָּב

Fearing people sets a trap,
but the one who trusts in YHWH will be set on high.

29:26: רַבִּים מְבַקְשִׁים פְּנֵי־מוֹשֵׁל וּמֵיְהוָה מִשְׁפַּט־אִישׁ

Many seek the ruler's face,
But a man's ruling is from YHWH.

29:27: תּוֹעֲבַת צַדִּיקִים אִישׁ עָוֶל וְתוֹעֲבַת רָשָׁע יִשַׁר־דָּרֶךְ

The righteous abominate the man of vice,
While the wicked abominate the properly behaved.

Hurowitz notes how the six verses begin with 5 verses of the alphabet in alphabetical order as highlighted here in larger font. Even though the whole alphabet is not graphically represented, by beginning with *alef* and ending with *tav* and by maintaining the alphabetical sequence of the included letters, it seems clear that the compiler intended to represent the complete alphabet. Note also the double reinforcement of *alef* at the beginning of v. 22 and the double reinforcement of *tav* in v. 29. Hurowitz also suggests that the beginning of the b-line in v. 22 is supplying the *bet* while vv. 23 and 26 operate both acrostically and telestically to supply the *gimel-dalet* and *resh-shin* sequence respectively.[9] Furthermore, as the *gimel* line includes two occurrences of *dalet*, the *resh* line includes an alliterative clusters of *shins* (4x).

We now turn to the double occurrence of *het* in vv. 24-25. In an effort to have the first three verses begin with successive letters of the alphabet running from *alef* to *he* and skipping every other letter, Hurowitz proposed emending חוֹלֵק to הוֹלֵךְ on the basis of Prov 1:11 and 15 which speak of the notion of "walking" (הלך) with a thief. The problem with this emendation is that the internal evidence shows that "divide with" makes perfect sense in context and G also

[9] While this might be less convincing that the other acrostic elements, Scott B. Noegel has shown other examples of telestichs in the literature of the ancient Near East and points out that Philippe Guillaume has argued that Lam 5:19-22 combines acrostic, telestich, and menostich to produce the phrase אֱלֹהֶיךְ רָם מְד (your God is highly exalted). "Wordplay" in Ancient Near Eastern Texts, Ancient Near Eastern Monographs 26 (Atlanta: SBL, 2021), 226. See also Philippe Guillaume, "Lamentations 5: The Seventh Acrostic," JHS 9, no. 16 (2009).

reads חוֹלֵק (μερίζεται "divides"). Rather than seeing חוֹלֵק as a scribal corruption of הוֹלֵךְ due to graphic and phonetic similarity, I propose that the phonetic similarity is exactly the point. By writing חוֹלֵק, the composer can capture cleverly the semantic notion of taking part in unjust gain while also suggesting the anticipated *he* line paranomastically with its striking phonetic similarity to הוֹלֵךְ.[10]

Hurowitz points out that the alphabetic structuring of the six verses and the *inclusio* of אִישׁ־אַף (v. 22) and אִישׁ עָוֶל (v. 27) give the passage lexical cohesion and a literary unity.[11] For these reasons I begin my analysis of this segment in Proverbs with 29:22 as opposed to some verse earlier in chapter 29.

Identifying Real Variants in G

Proverbs 29:22 presents us with a real variant.

29:22: אִישׁ־אַף יְגָרֶה מָדוֹן וּבַעַל חֵמָה רַב־פָּשַׁע
An angry man stirs up strife,
And a wrathful man a lot of transgression.

ἀνὴρ θυμώδης[12] ὀρύσσει[13] νεῖκος,
ἀνὴρ δὲ ὀργίλος ἐξώρυξεν ἁμαρτίας.
A hot-tempered man digs up strike,
And a quick-tempered one digs out[14] sin.

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[10] Hurowitz points out how both Murphy (WBC) and Toy (ICC) in their respective commentaries were tricked psychologically into treating the verse as it if did indeed read הוֹלֵךְ in their comments on the verse. This is proof that the intended effect of the paronomasia which I am arguing for indeed does work. See Hurowitz, "Proverbs 29.22-27", 124.

[11] Ibid., 123.

[12] This verse provides a good illustration for what van der Louw's contention that behind every transformation (from M's construct noun phrase to a noun + adjective phrase in G) lies a rejected literal translation. It would be contrary to Greek idiom to translate with something like ἀνὴρ ῥινός.

[13] Wolters points out that B reads ἐγείρει in the a-line, but this is likely influenced by the translation in Prov 10:12. Al Wolters, Proverbs: A Commentary Based on Paroimiai in Codex Vaticanus (Beaverton: Brill, 2020).

[14] I take this aorist to be gnomic, expressing a general tendency. For the gnomic aorist see Evert van Emde Boas et al., The Cambridge Grammar of Classical Greek (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), sec. 33.31 which states that "The gnomic aorist occurs with telic verbs…; it is not normally used with stative verbs…For truly 'timeless' truths the present indicative is used." Here ὀρύσσω is an accomplishment which expresses a culmination of the action and is, therefore, telic.

GVor: אישׁ אף יִכְרֶה מדון ובעל חמה רב־פשׁע

It is easy to match all Hebrew elements to Greek elements. Although in the other three occurrences of גרה, G translates rather freely (15:18; 28:4; 28:25), we can safely assume G had כרה in his source text here as the paronomasia between ὀρύσσει and ἐξώρυξεν seems intentional. Fox is surely right that this would not have arisen unless כרה was in the *Vorlage*.[15] Note the use of ὀρύσσω for M's כרה in 16:27 and 26:27. Unlike Fox, I do not believe the text was corrupted from יגרה due to graphic similarity between כ and ג.[16] This is not a common confusion. Rather, G's Hebrew source intends to portray the angry man as one who labors to bring forth harmful things in contrast to the אֵשֶׁת־חַיִל who labors to bring forth beneficial things, but more on this below.

In 29:23, "G assumes that תמך means "support"…and supplies an appropriate subject, the Lord."[17] There is likely no variant *Vorlage* here.

Matters are complicated in vv. 24-25 by G's liberty in creating of a quatrain on the dangers of partnership with a thief.[18] The attempt to connect the two verses logically could point to G's recognition of some kind of unity suggested by the Hebrew since each verse begins with *het* though it is unclear if G recognized the alphabetic nature of vv. 22-27 as a whole.

I see no reason to posit any real variants behind G in these two verses. In v. 24 G seems to envision "a situation in which people have sworn an oath beforehand [ὅρκου προτεθέντος] to

[15] Fox, Proverbs: An Eclectic Edition, 376.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid., 377. Fox has shown that G does not understand that תמך can mean "to grasp". See Ibid., 108.

[18] Ibid., 377.

report untoward behavior when they have heard of it, but break their oath by failing to do so."[19] Thus G offers interpretive commentary on the Hebrew אָלָה.

In v. 25 it is unclear whether G is (1) providing a double translation of חֶרְדַּת אָדָם (fear of people), (2) his mind read חֶרְפַּת אָדָם (shame of people), or (3) either φοβηθέντες or αἰσχυνθέντες should be considered a hexaplaric addition. I favor the latter and view φοβηθέντες as hexaplaric. Thus, we have neither double translation by G, nor a real variant here. In an article detailing mistaken hexaplaric signs in the Syro-hexapla of Proverbs, Fritsch pointed out that the Syro-hexapla has αἰσχυνθέντες under the asterisk, which would mean that Origen added this word from another Greek source.[20] However, φοβηθέντες is clearly closer to the Hebrew sense of חֶרְפַּת and should have been marked with asterisk, indicating an adjustment of OG toward the Hebrew. Furthermore, 29:25cd in G should be seen as hexaplaric additions. Again, these are marked with obelus in the Syro-hexapla, but should have been marked with asterisk, indicating an attempt to offer a Greek rendering closer to the Hebrew.[21]

In 29:26, we encounter a curious translation choice with θεραπεύουσιν πρόσωπα ἡγουμένων (respect rulers) to M's מְבַקְּשִׁים פְּנֵי־מוֹשֵׁל (seek the presence of [an audience with?] the ruler]). Wolters explains that 29:26a is an almost verbatim repetition of 19:6. In his note on 18:5 where θαυμάσαι πρόσωπον ἀσεβοῦς (to respect the ungodly) he explains that "θαυμάζω is one of a series of Greek verbs construed with πρόσωπον in the LXX which have to do with showing respect. Others are αἰσχύνομαι, ἐπιγινώσκω, θεραπεύω, λαμβάνω, and ὑποστέλλω."[22] He also explains that, "We find the same redundant use of πρόσωπον with the genitive of the person in

[19] Al Wolters, Proverbs: A Commentary Based on Paroimiai in Codex Vaticanus (Beaverton: Brill, 2020), 265. See Ibid. for his arguments for taking ὅρκου προτεθέντος as "to swear an oath beforehand".

[20] Charles T. Fritsch, "The Treatment of the Hexaplaric Signs in the Syro-Hexaplar of Proverbs," JBL 72, no. 3 (September 1953): 179.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Wolters, Proverbs: A Commentary, 205.

18:5, 19:6, 27:17, 28:21, 29:5, and 29:26."[23] This information gives us pause in suggesting variants in 29:26 even though in 19:6 the Hebrew reads יְחַלּוּ (entreat). The attempt to multiply *shins* in this verse as argued above likely motivated the near synonym here (בקשׁ). The translator allowed 19:6 to color his understanding of the sense here although the Hebrew seems to imply seeking an audience with a ruler perhaps for some ruling which can only ultimately come from YHWH as the b-line states.

We can now turn our attention to the acrostic (31:10-31). Although I need to explain my reasoning in a few difficult places, I find no evidence that strongly favors any real variants in these verses.

In 31:10 it is possible that G had יָקָר (precious/valuable) instead of רָחֹק (distant/far) as is the case in 3:15 where G uses *τίμιος* for יָקָר in a near identical proverb. In 31:10, it is impossible to know because G captures the meaning of what we have represented in M without being overly mimetic; indeed, G might be influenced by 3:15 in his translation choice here. In 11b, Fox thinks that G intentionally avoids suggesting that the woman has a "price" as this could be interpreted "indelicately".[24] However, the Hebrew seems to be highlighting, not the expensiveness of her purchase price (מְכֹר) with possible connotations of slavery or prostitution, but rather the immense value of her "merchandise" which she produces.[25] Logically, G seems to process the idea like this: If she produces valuable merchandise, she herself is immensely valuable. Rather than positing ideological reasons for G's transformations, logic and contextual exegesis seem more likely here.

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[23] Ibid., 131.

[24] Fox, Proverbs: An Eclectic Edition, 393.

[25] See Neh 13:6 for this sense of מְכֹר. The acrostic is devoted to highlighting her valuable merchandise. For this reason, I find it uncompelling to suggests that 31:11b implies that this woman was bought as property. Rather, she is depicted throughout as the wife of a nobleman (31:23) who herself shares in praiseworthy status (31:28-29, 31) and dignity.

At first glance, in 31:11b it seems G either (1) transforms the masculine verb יֶחְסָר to feminine and makes the wife the subject, or (2) perhaps had לָהּ (spoil is not lacking for her) in his source as suggested by BHS. Fox favors the first option and thinks G ignores the syntax of the Hebrew. However, Jäger perceptively pointed out that rather than ignoring the syntax of the Hebrew, G takes the subject of יֶחְסָר to be שָׁלָל (so that spoil is not lacking) and not בַּעְלָהּ from the a-line.[26]. Thus, "So that spoil is not lacking," is construed logically by G to communicate that the wife is not lacking spoil. This goes along with G's general tendency to enhance parallelism,[27] here in this verse by making the a-line refer to the husband and the b-line to the wife. Furthermore, the addition of καλῶν is an "overexplanation"[28] also a known tendency of G. No variant is witnessed in this verse.

The apparent minus of וְלֹא־רָע in 31:12 is curious, but we should note that A does read καὶ οὐ κακόν. The minus is either due to G's judgement that it was superfluous, but this would go against his tendency to over explain, or as A suggests, the minus is an omission in the transmission of Greek manuscripts.[29] We should not posit a minus in G's parent text.

In 3:13, G uses a more specific term for דָּרְשָׁה (she seeks/sought?). For the curious choice of εὔχρηστον (useful) for חֵפֶץ, I would point out that חֵפֶץ is rare in G Proverbs (3x), and G seems to be uncertain of its meaning in 3:15 (3:15ab seem to be OG) and seems to think the word

[26] Johann Gottlob Jäger, Observationes in Proverbiorum Salomonis Versionem Alexandrinam (Meldorpi et Lipsiae: Reinhold Jocob Boei, 1788), 224–25. He states "יחסר respicit maritum, sed Alex. ἡ τοιαύτη οὐκ ἀπορήσει: nempe verbum referebat ad שלל, in qua coniunctione sententiam aeque conferre in uxorem poterat, atque in maritum." יחסר referred to the husband, but Alexandrinus reads "such a one does not lack"; without a doubt the word (I think he means A's Greek rendering) was referring to שלל by which it was able to join the sentence together equally to wife and also to the husband.

[27] Fox, Proverbs: An Eclectic Edition, 52–54.

[28] Ibid., 51.

[29] Perhaps due to homoioteleuton: ΑΓΑΘΑΚΑΙΟΥΚΑΛΑ or ΑΓΑΘΟΝΚΑΙΟΥΚΑΛΟΝ.

means something like "profitable/valuable" in 8:11 as he renders the word with τίμιος. We should posit no variant *Vorlage* in this verse.

In 31:14, τὸν βίον is a curious translation of לַחְמָהּ. However, it is likely just interpretive commentary on the sense of "food" as something like "life sustenance".

In 31:17 it is impossible to know if G's plus εἰς ἔργον reflects a variant source text. After choosing to render Hebrew וַתְּאַמֵּץ (she strengthens her arms) with ἐρείδω (apply), a "favorite verb of the Proverbs translator",[30] G needed to supply an argument specifying to what she applies her arms. The generic term εἰς ἔργον is good evidence that G's source indeed had no object specified. Thus, we should posit no variant. Relatedly, in 31:18 the choice of τὸ ἐργάζεσθαι was likely just an attempt to bring the verse in line with the wording of v. 17 and to explain that the woman knows the work to which she applies herself is in fact good. G knows what סחר means, given G's rendering of the term in 3:14 and 31:14. Thus, here too we likely have no variant *Vorlage*.

Fox notes that G and all the versions derive כִּישׁוֹר from the root כשׁר (to be successful/advantageous) which explains G's τὰ συμφέροντα (advantageous things)—no variant.[31]

Wolters has pointed out helpfully that καρπὸν in 31:20 is a Greek word for "wrist" or "hand" and does not therefore reflect a variant for M's יָדֶיהָ.[32] We should posit no variant here.

I need to treat the details of v. 21 closely because it evidences particularly interesting variants in G which appear to contain more evidence that G's source text was written in an archaic script as I argued for in my M.A. thesis.[33]

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[30] Wolters, Proverbs: A Commentary, 268.

[31] Fox, Proverbs: An Eclectic Edition, 395.

[32] Wolters, Proverbs: A Commentary, 269. See LSJ s.v. καρπός (B).

[33] Joseph Justiss, My Words/The Words of Agur?: An Analysis of the Translation Decisions in LXX Proverbs 30 [unpublished MA thesis] (Jerusalem: Polis: The Jerusalem Institute, 2017). See especially pp. 23-24 and pp. 82-84. Accessed via academia.edu at

31:21: לֹא־תִירָ֣א לְבֵיתָ֣הּ מִשֶּׁ֑לֶג כִּ֥י כָל־בֵּיתָ֖הּ לָבֻ֣שׁ שָׁנִֽים

She will not fear snow concerning her house,
For her whole house is clothed in scarlet.

οὐ φροντίζει τῶν ἐν οἴκῳ ὁ ἀνὴρ αὐτῆς, ὅταν που χρονίζῃ·
πάντες γὰρ οἱ παῤ αὐτῆς ἐνδιδύσκονται.
Her husband does not worry about those in the house whenever he spends time somewhere. For her whole family[34] is dressed.

The main problem here is that G offers a statement about the husband's lack of fear/worry for the household while he tarries on a journey. M is clearly a statement about the wife's lack of concern for her house at the prospect of snow. We might be tempted to propose a variant which had a masculine form of ירא instead of M's feminine form. Jäger thought that ἀνήρ was "inserted obtrusively at the discretion of scribes to help the faulty reading χρονίζῃ because a journey was more fitting for the husband than for the wife."[35] This is a tempting emendation because one can imagine a scenario in which ὁ ἀνὴρ αὐτῆς was placed in the margin by a scribe as a gloss explaining that the one not worrying should be identified as the husband. Without the reference to the husband, the verse reads quite naturally in Greek in concert with the preceding verse as a continuation of things the woman does or does not do. Then, a later scribe early on in the transmission process incorporated the gloss into the main text. De Lagarde seemed also to favor striking ὁ ἀνὴρ although he did so in order to allow for another conjecture namely, to allow for χιονίζῃ (whenever it snows) instead of χρονίζῃ (whenever he spends time).[36] The problem is that we do not have any Greek witness, as far as I am aware, to support either the minus of ἀνήρ

https://www.academia.edu/37362287/My_Words_The_Words_of_Agur_An_Analysis_of_the_Translation_Decisions_in_LXX_Proverbs_30

[34] Wolters points out that the idiom οἱ παῤ αὐτῆς can refer to one's envoy but also in Koine to one's close associates i.e., one's family or relatives. See Mark 3:21 and Wolters, Proverbs: A Commentary, 270.

[35] Jäger, Observationes, 225. Vocem ἀνήρ ingestam puto male sedula librariorum sapientia ad iuvandum lectionem vitiosam χρονίζῃ,…quod peregrinatio maritum potius deceret quam uxorem."

[36] Paul de Lagarde, Anmerkungen zur Griechischen Übersetzung der Proverbien (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1863), 92.

or the alternative χιονίζῃ. Fox thinks G desired to make the husband the one who need not worry and scrubbed the reference to snow because it would have been of little relevance to Alexandrian Jews.[37] This requires confidence in the provenance of G Proverbs and it also rushes to cultural explanations for the transformation. Nevertheless, we are at a loss for solid evidence to posit any real variants here with the data we have. It remains to be answered just how "whenever he (or perhaps she if ἀνὴρ is an interpolation) spends time somewhere," occurred to the translator. However, I want to explore a possible text-based phenomenon that could have produced G's rendering ὅταν που χρονίζῃ.

31:21: לא־תירא לביתה מִשֶּׁלֶג כי כל־ביתה לבש שנים
משלג

She will not fear for her house whenever he lodges (elsewhere).

I can think of two possible explanations for G's reading. First, this reading could have been produced by the recognized *gimel/nun* letter confusion in the archaic script.[38] In light of the evidence for similar confusion in chapter 30,[39] It is possible that the translator, as Fox suggests, felt the reference to snow was irrelevant to his audience, so he employed some creative exegesis to come up with something like "whenever he lodges" (from לין "to lodge/stay overnight") justified by the graphic similarity of *gimel* and *nun*.[40] Admittedly, χρονίζω often translates the *piel* of אחר (delay/be slow/be late), but it can also translate בוש-II (to delay/tarry), but more on this below. Since this construal with its masculine participle form referred to the man's lodging

[37] Fox, Proverbs: An Eclectic Edition, 395.

[38] See Tov, Textual Criticism, 228.

[39] See my MA thesis referenced above. With reference to G Prov 30:30 I write, "In the final analysis, it seems our translator was uncertain whether or not his *Vorlage* read מפני כל ("before no one") or מג מכל ("cowering from no one"), so he includes both in the translation. Justiss, My Words/The Words of Agur?, 24.

[40] In the ancient *square* script, like that used at Qumran, the *gimel* and *nun* are quite distinct. See plate 32 line 6 in Tov, Textual Criticism, 415. Ergo, it is not likely that such a confusion occurred in the square script.

overnight, G transformed the main clause into a statement about *the husband* not worrying about the welfare of the household.

The second possibility seems more likely to me. We can posit a real variant whereby G's *Vorlage* read something like the following:

29:21: לא־תירא לביתה מִבּוֹשׁ אִישָׁהּ כי כל־ביתה לבֻשׁ שנים
She will not fear for her house when her husband delays,
For her whole household is clothed in scarlet.

We can imagine such a reading because it would explain G having nothing to do with the threat of snowy cold, and the paronomasia at the end of the a- and b-lines is striking. Indeed, the entire Hebrew line has a rhythm and rhyme.[41] Furthermore, G might have signaled this Hebrew phenomenon by mimicking the Hebrew paronomasia in his own work.

29:21: οὐ φροντίζει τῶν ἐν οἴκῳ ὁ ἀνὴρ αὐτῆς, ὅταν που χρονίζῃ·
πάντες γὰρ οἱ παῤ αὐτῆς ἐνδιδύσκονται.

For these reasons it is very tempting to posit a real variant here. I stop short because of the radical nature of the difference between G and M which cannot be explained by a mechanical scribal error and the lack of external support in another ancient version or in a Greek recension. If G's reading does represent a variant form of this verse, the reading could have been conceived in Hebrew as a subtle inner-textual allusion to Prov 7:19 where the forbidden woman promises her would be paramour that her husband has gone a long journey (הָלַךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ מֵרָחוֹק). Rather than being up to no good while her husband is gone for a long time, the אֵשֶׁת־חַיִל occupies herself with providing for the welfare of her home. However, the wording is quite different here and in chapter 7.

[41] Perhaps the following would be better: She is not afraid for her house by her husband's delaying (לָבוֹשׁ אִישָׁהּ). This would produce a near exact paronomasia at ending of the a- and b-lines.

In 31:22, it is impossible to know if G had a masculine singular לוֹ or simply read לה as if לָהּ (to him). It is possible that he read the prepositional phrase this way so as to have the wife make something for the husband in the a-line and something for herself in the b-line, creating the balance we have saw in 31:11. Thus, no variant is likely present here.

There is, however, a point to be made in v. 22 about G's construal of שָׁנִים from v. 21 as שְׁנַיִם and rendered as (δισσὰς, "two") with v.22, the *mem* line of the acrostic. Perhaps G had the form שָׁנִי in his source as BHS points out is indeed the reading of a few Medieval mss. This could have caused G to read it as a construct form of שְׁנַיִם, encouraging the construal with מַרְבַדִּים (שְׁנֵי מַרְבַדִּים). However, as Wolters points out, it does indeed seem that G is unaware of the acrostic nature of the poem because the acrostic discourages such a construal and instead encourages the reader to process the syntax with מַרְבַדִּים heading the *mem*-line.[42] If at least one of the motivations for bringing 29:22-27 and 31:10-31 together was the alphabetic nature of the two texts, then this works against a theory that sees the translator bringing together these texts given his apparent ignorance of this phenomenon here.

In 31:23b, G has a plus of *ἐν συνεδρίῳ* , a bit of interpretive commentary that specifies in what sense he "sits" in the gates namely, "not for leisure but for service in the city assembly."[43] I would add that G seems to include, rather unnecessarily here, the two main senses of ישב ("to sit") with *καθίσῃ*, referring to the husband and *κατοίκων* ("to dwell"), referring to the elders. The superfluous nature of *γερόντων κατοίκων* was felt by correctors of B and S. They corrected the two words to the single *πρεσβυτέρων* which is closer to the Hebrew. We should posit no real variants in this verse.

[42] Wolters, Proverbs: A Commentary, 271.

[43] Fox, Proverbs: An Eclectic Edition, 396.

Verse 25 is notable because it shows that G had a source text which preserved the older alphabetic sequence *peh-ayin.*[44] G's v. 25 corresponds to M's v. 26. G offers interpretive commentary on what it means to open one's mouth "in wisdom" (בְּחָכְמָה) with προσεχόντως καὶ ἐννόμως (attentively and lawfully). Why reject the more mimetic ἐν σοφίᾳ or σοφῶς? G Proverbs has a known "tendency to avoid literal translation of body parts and other concrete symbols, either by leaving them untranslated or by replacing them with more abstract terms."[45] It is hard to do so in this poem without working against much of its imagery. In order to compromise, perhaps G attempts here to avoid associating such noble concepts like wisdom and Torah with body parts. For this reason, it seems likely that 31:25a offers no real variants.

The precise meaning of 31:25b is harder to pin down because of the bewilderingly large range of meanings for στέλλω. Wolters makes a case that its basic meaning is "to establish" and that the dative phrase should be understood as a dative of instrument, yielding his tentative interpretation as "and establishes order with [instrumental dative] her tongue." This is in keeping with the picture of the woman as an effective manager of a large estate.[46] How did G arrive at such a reading? If he understood חֶסֶד as "loyalty" and this loyalty as that which is given to proper authority, it is not hard to see G's reasoning. We need not posit real variants here.

In 31:27 we encounter another difficulty in G's choice of στεγναὶ (waterproof, covered)[47] whereas M reads צוֹפִיָּה (she watches). BHQ rightly points out that G could have arrived at such a rendering by construing the word as from צפה-II (to overlay/cover). We should posit no variants here.

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[44] See Shmuel Ahituv, Echoes from the Past: Hebrew and Cognate Inscriptions from the Biblical Period, trans. Anson F. Rainey (Jerusalem: Carta, 2008), 251, for his treatment of our oldest abecedary discovered at ʿIzbet Ṣarṭah which dates from the end of the 11th century. It preserves the *peh-ayin* sequence as do Lam 2-4.

[45] Fox, Proverbs: An Eclectic Edition, 48.

[46] Wolters, Proverbs: A Commentary, 271-72.

[47] See LSJ s.v. στεγνός.

Verse 28 is a text-critical mess. The issue comes down to whether or not G had a source text with the odd repetition of part of 31:26a or if the repetition arose in Greek transmission. I suspect that G had a *Vorlage* that included the repetition of 31:26a [31:25 in G] since it is not an exact repetition of G's rendering. Furthermore, we know that G likes to explore two different senses of a word in a Hebrew by translating the word twice to include one sense in each rendering. We saw this in 31:23b, and 31:29 includes two senses of חיל and an emphatic double translation of עלה.[48] While it is tempting to propose a variant *Vorlage* here, I think it is best to see 31:28a and b as the translator's taking the opportunity to offer another sense of חֶסֶד, namely ἐλεημοσύνη, which is a common equivalent of חֶסֶד throughout Proverbs. In this way, the translator draws out the result of the חֶסֶד which is on her tongue. It leads to her children's prosperity by construing אשר (piel "to call blessed") as if it were עשר (to be rich) and ignoring the object pronoun. I am not certain of this reconstruction, but I trust it shows that the matter is complex enough to give one pause in proposing variants here.

In 31:30, G's συνετὴ needs an explanation. Alexander Rofé has argued that the poem's secular portrayal of the woman and its focus on her material success while saying nothing of pious activities like "faith, confidence in the Lord, prayer to him, [and] observance of His precepts," makes a statement about her fearing YHWH out of context in the poem.[49] He rejects the oft proposed reading of נבונה (understanding) as equally out of place in the poem since it focuses on her industry and hard work and not her intellect. He proposes that G had a Hebrew parent text that conflated two versions of this line, one like M referencing fearing YHWH and one with the following phrase:

[48] Fox, Proverbs: An Eclectic Edition, 398.

[49] Alexander Rofé, "The Valiant Woman, γυνὴ συνετή, and the Redaction of the Book of Proverbs," in Vergegenwärtigung des Alten Testaments: Festschrift für Rudolf Smend zum 70 Geburtstag (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002), 148.

31:30: אִשָּׁה מַשְׂכֶּלֶת הִיא תִתְהַלָּל
A successful woman, she will be praised.

He points to several instances that show that G does not understand the sense of the verb שׂכל in the *hifil* and translates with some form of *συνίημι*.[50] He views this reading as original and thinks the fearing YHWH reference was added later to give the woman a pious quality. Fox is skeptical because G seems to handle the exact Hebrew phrase that Rofé proposes quite differently in 19:14. I submit that the simplest solution is to view G's translation as a creative double translation of יראת יהוה rather than proposing a double reading present in G's source—one original and the other a later pious addition.

31:30: אִשָּׁה יִרְאַת־יְהוָה הִיא תִתְהַלָּל
γυνὴ γὰρ συνετὴ εὐλογεῖται,

אִשָּׁה יִרְאַת־יְהוָה הִיא תִתְהַלָּל
φόβον δὲ κυρίου αὕτη αἰνείτω.

In the first rendering, the translator could have simply taken advantage of the graphic similarity between *dalet* and *resh* in either an archaic *or* square script and the phonological similarity of the gutturals *ayin* and *alef* to produce the feminine singular participle. This would make a good example of a pseudo-variant, existing only in the translator's mind.[51] I would add that the translator also presents in each line a double translation of תִתְהַלָּל. In the first instance, he translates תִתְהַלָּל with a passive sense, and in the second translation he takes יראת־יהוה as the object of the non-passive sense of the *hitpael* of הלל (to boast in something), yielding "let this

[50] Ibid., "The Valiant Woman", 150.

[51] For the concept of pseudo-variant see Tov, The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint, 178.

one praise the fear of the Lord." In Hebrew the sense as G understood it would be something like, "A woman, she should praise the fear of the Lord."

The final oddity to deal with concerns why G reads χειλέων ("lips" contra Rahlfs who accepts the hexaplaric χειρῶν "hands") instead of M's יָדֶיהָ (her hands) in 31:31a, and why G says that ὁ ἀνὴρ αὐτῆς (her husband) should be praised (αἰνείσθω) in 31:31b. M says her works (מַעֲשֶׂיהָ) should praise the woman. M's reading make good sense as a culminating word about "her works" since the whole poem has focused on just that. G's attempt to highlight the husband here is best explained as a bit of contextual exegesis as the mention of "gates" in the b-line recalls v. 23 as the place her husband is known.[52] The variant referring to lips in the a-line might indeed be a real variant (שְׂפָתֶיהָ?) as d'Hamonville points out that several other proverbs mention the "fruit of the mouth/lips" (e.g. 18:20b where G reads καρπῶν χειλέων).[53] However, I hesitate because Fox points out that G's construal could be motivated by contextual exegesis from his immediately preceding reference to the woman's praising the "fear of the Lord." As G's logic goes, "The woman praises God and should be rewarded for this verbal virtue."[54]

To summarize, the only real variant I propose for the two passages is the word variant in 29:22 reading יִכְרֶה (digs) for M's יִגְרֶה (stirs/provokes).

Topic Identification in G's Arrangement

I now turn my attention to examine the discourse topic(s) of 29:22-27 compared to the discourse topic(s) of 31:10-31. A discourse topic is "a clustering of concepts expressed through lexical items, and those concepts which are most frequently reiterated in the stretch of discourse…"[55] I will analyze each section (29:22-27 and 31:10-31) and look for concepts by

[52] So Fox, Proverbs 10-31, 1068.

[53] David-Marc d'Hamonville, Les Proverbes: Traduction du Text Grec de la Septante, La Bible d'Alexandrie 17 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2000), 342.

[54] Fox, Proverbs 10-31, 1068.

[55] Richard Watson Todd, Discourse Topics (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2016), 13.

focusing mainly on nouns or noun phrases because "nouns are most likely to be considered concepts."[56]

Reiterated Nouns and Noun Phrases in 29:22-27

"Repetition of a lexical item is a clear and unambiguous way to create links between sentences."[57] However, since it is the clustering of concepts and not just words, repetition of a concept includes "repetitions of surface forms…, morphological variants of the surface forms…, pronominalisations…, direct synonyms…, [and] other classical relations (antonyms, meronyms, superordinates, [and] hyponyms [etc.]…"[58] In addition, various types of collocation based on the concept that "somehow related words' occur in each other's neighborhood in discourse, as the concepts are somehow related in the 'real world,'" can serve to reiterate concepts in the discourse.[59]

In 29:22-27 several nouns are reiterated in this short section. The nouns repeated at least once are אִישׁ (3x), אָדָם (2x), יְהוָה (2x), and תּוֹעֵבָה (2x). If we focus on the noun phrases where אִישׁ and אָדָם are either explicitly used on the surface or repeated by some other means, we begin to get a sense of the concepts that get clustered and emerge as topic in these verses.

The word אִישׁ occurs as the head of the following construct phrases:

29:22: אִישׁ־אַף (vice)

29:22: בַּעַל חֵמָה (vice, repetition by synonym)

29:23: שְׁפַל־רוּחַ [אָדָם/אִישׁ] (a virtue, repetition by antonym)

29:24: חוֹלֵק עִם־גַּנָּב [אָדָם/אִישׁ] (vice, repetition by ellipsis)

29:25: בּוֹטֵחַ בַּיהוָה (virtue, repetition by ellipsis)

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[56] Ibid., 125.

[57] Renkema, The Texture of Discourse, 29.

[58] Todd, Discourse Topics, 58.

[59] Renkema, The Texture of Discourse, 30.

29:27: אִישׁ עָוֶל (vice, repetition by superordinate)[60]

29:27: יְשַׁר־דָּרֶךְ [אָדָם/אִישׁ] (virtue, repetition by antonymous superordinate)[61]

When viewed this way, the notion of viewing these verses as only loosely unified seems less likely, and a picture of the discourse topic comes into focus. The scale is slightly titled toward a focus on vice with 4 references to certain kinds of evil behavior compared with 3 references to virtuous living. We might express the topic as "The Virtues and Vices of Man." It is also worth noting that by means of noun phrases even very common words like אָדָם/אִישׁ can be summoned to serve as a discourse topic as they cluster certain concepts (e.g. human vice and/or virtue).

Reiterated Nouns and Noun Phrases in 31:10-31

The acrostic to the Woman of Valor is unique in terms of reiterations because nearly every clause in the poem either explicitly references her by synonyms, has her as the third person feminine subject of the verb and thus reiterated by pronominalization, or refers to her by pronominal suffixes. Thus, she is the indisputable main topic of the discourse. What are the other nouns and noun phrases that get reiterated?

The nouns that are reiterated at least once include: בַּיִת (4x), כַּף (4x), בַּעַל (3x), יָד (3x), כֹּל (3x), אִשָּׁה (2x), חַיִל (2x), יוֹם (2x), לְבוּשׁ (2x), לֶחֶם (2x), לַיְלָה (2x), עֹז (2x), פְּרִי (2x), and שַׁעַר (2x).

With just these numbers we can start to get a picture about the concepts clustered in this one poem. However, we can refine this analysis when we consider that the oft repeated בַּיִת actually functions in the poem as a hypernym for her family i.e., the concept of household. Thus, the term is reiterated by means of words that refer to the members of the household:

[60] The phrase is a generic phrase for wicked people in general as opposed to the other terms that describe specific vices.

[61] The antonym to the "man of wickedness" but also a generic phrase for an upright person.

בֵּיתָהּ (4x, vv. **15**, 21, **27**)
נַעֲרֹתֶיהָ (1x, v. **15**)
בַּעְלָהּ (3x, vv. 11, 23, **28**)
בָּנֶיהָ (1x, v. **28**)

This yields a total of *9 references* to the concept of "household". Note the clustering in v. 15 and vv. 27-28). We can also analyze the oft reiterated lexemes כַּף and יָד as reiterations of the concept "body parts of the woman".

כַּפָּהּ (4x, vv. 13, **16**, **19, 20**)
זְרֹעוֹתֶיהָ (1x, v. **17**)
מָתְנֶיהָ (1x, v. **17**)
יָדֶיהָ (3x, vv. **19, 20**, 31)
לְשׁוֹנָהּ (1x, v. **26**)
פִּיהָ (1x, v. **26**)

The body parts mentioned tend to be the parts associated with strength and industry and also speaking. Note the clustering in vv. 16-17 and 19-20 on handiwork, and v. 26 on speaking. This yields a total of *11 reiterations* of terms for body parts focusing on the concept "body parts used for work".

The last major repetition of a concept concerns items of clothing and material for clothing. The data looks like the following:

לְבוּשָׁהּ (2x, vv. 22 and 25)
פִּשְׁתִּים (1x. v. 13)
צֶמֶר (1x, v. 13)
שָׁנִים (1x, v. 21)
שֵׁשׁ (1x, v. 22)
מַרְבַדִּים (1x, v. 22)
אַרְגָּמָן (1x, v. 22)

סָדִין (1x, v. 24)
חֲגוֹר (1x, v. 24)
עֹז (1x, v. 25)
הָדָר (1x, v. 25)

We can consider the last two as metaphorical clothing for the woman. The other terms are either specifics items of clothing or material used for making clothes united under the superordinate term "clothing" (לְבוּשׁ). The concept clothing gets clustered mainly in the second half of the poem. In all, the concept of "clothing" is reiterated a remarkable *12 times*.

The concept related to "valuable items/spoil" is reiterated 4 times with the lexemes פְּנִינִים (jewels/rubies? v. 10), מֶכֶר (value/merchandise, v. 10), שָׁלָל (spoil, v. 11), סַחַר (merchandise, v. 18). Note how these terms get clustered in vv. 10-11. In terms of frequency, we have clothing items (12x), the woman's body parts (11x), and the woman's household (9x). If we look at the verbal concepts that are most oft repeated, we see that עָשָׂה appears 4 times describing what the woman does. In v. 29, it comes in a phrase that means "to succeed" (עָשָׂה חַיִל).[62] There are also 3 references to the praise-worthiness of the woman by means of הלל in vv. 28, 30, and 31—the poem's climatic final word. With this data, we can formulate the topic of this poem as something like the following: "The praise-inspiring (הלל) household-sustaining (בֵּיתָהּ) valuables (עָשָׂה, לְבוּשָׁהּ, מֶכֶר) of the Successful Woman (אֵשֶׁת־חַיִל)." In a Hebrew word, the topic of the poem is encapsulated well by its final word—מַעֲשֶׂיהָ.

The Literary Effects of G's Arrangement

We can now turn our attention to consider the interpretive effects of G's arrangement and explore the evidence that the arrangement to which G witnesses was either recensional or translational. There are some literary features concentrated near the transition leading up to 31:10 that display sophisticated literary work.

[62] See Num 24:18 and 1 Sam 14:48. See also Rofé, "The Valiant Woman", 147.

Alphabetic Editing

I have already shown how the end of chapter 29 has been edited alphabetically. Hurowitz has shown that another major section 24:1-22 was set as the conclusion to the Words of the Wise (22:17-24:22). More precisely, it should be noted that in G, the Words of Agur (30:1-14) follows immediately on 24:1-22, and the Words of Agur also displays alphabetic consciousness as discussed in a previous chapter. This is exactly the pattern we see here at the end of the composition as a whole according to G's arrangement i.e., the end of a major section (25-29) is edited to serve as a transition to a concluding word which also displays alphabetic consciousness (31:10-31). Why go to the trouble to edit the verses in this way? The best explanation as far as I can discern is that the alphabetic nature of 29:22-27 primes the reader to tune into the alphabetic pattern and suggests cohesion and unity of message between 29:22-27 and 31:10-31. This emphasis on alphabet invites comparison of the subjects that feature in the two.

Paronomasia

How exactly is the reader invited to make such a comparison? We have already seen that the topics of the two sections are "The Virtues and Vices of Man" and "The Praise-Inspiring, Household-Sustaining Valuables of the Successful Woman" respectively. The last verse of ch. 29 and the first verse of the acrostic evidence a case of paronomasia that is undoubtedly intentional.

29:27: תּוֹעֲבַת צַדִּיקִים אִישׁ עָוֶל וְתוֹעֲבַת רָשָׁע יִשַׁר־דָּרֶךְ׃

31:10: אֵשֶׁת־חַיִל מִי יִמְצָא וְרָחֹק מִפְּנִינִים מִכְרָהּ׃

These two phrases resonate one another in two ways. First, the head nouns of the construct phrases are semantic antonyms and phonetically similar. Second, the second terms are almost phonetically identical. Both are segolate. Both *ayin* and *het* are articulated in the same place (one voiced, one unvoiced). Both end in *yod-lamed*. This paronomasia invites comparison between the two entities and unites the two passages through rich cohesion.

Polysemy

I also want to suggest that the textual variant in 29:22 did not come about by accident, but was designed to create a sophisticated polysemy between 29:22 and 31:10 when the two texts are juxtaposed. Proverbs 16:27 is a near identical saying which also uses כרה to speak of a worthless man who digs up evil (כֹּרֶה רָעָה). There are other proverbs like 29:22 which are alternate proverbs e.g., 15:18. Thus, in G and M 29:22 we have alternate proverbs which can alternate verbs and communicate either "digging" or "provoking".[63] With that said, the presence of כרה in 29:22 creates an interesting image that has implications for 31:10-31.

29:22: אִישׁ־אַף יְכֶרֶה מָדוֹן וּבַעַל חֵמָה רַב־פָּשַׁע

31:10: אֵשֶׁת־חַיִל מִי יִמְצָא וְרָחֹק מִפְּנִינִים מִכְרָהּ

In 29:22 we are introduced to an angry man who "digs out" strife and lots of transgression. In other words, his labor is devoted to bringing forth, or producing negative things i.e., various vices. In v. 25, we learn of an attitude that will produce a snare or trap. Then in 31:10 we are introduced to a woman who produces nothing but positive and beneficial things for her family and society. In v. 10 her "merchandise"[64] is said to be valuable beyond precious stones (פְּנִינִים), things one would mine, or dig up from the ground. The word for "her merchandise" is also graphically identical to the word "mine" (מִכְרָהּ).[65] In this way, by means of polysemy, 29:22 and 31:10 are drawn together in a way that contrasts the harmful products of a wicked man's labor compared with the valuable products of the successful woman's labors.

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[63] For the concept of "alternate" and "variant proverbs" see Fox, Proverbs: An Eclectic, 58–61.

[64] I choose the gloss "merchandise" because מֶכֶר seems to mean this in texts like Neh 13:16 and the poem is all about the valuable things she makes and sells i.e., her goods/merchandise.

[65] See Zeph 2:9.

Editorial Logic of G's Arrangement

Interpretive Effect of Juxtaposition

We now come to the question of how our editor participates in a type of "inner-biblical interpretation…through the juxtaposition of two units: the placement of two texts one after the other, one or both of which is meant to affect our reading of the other."[66] Our first step is to ascertain whether or not the two passages share a "common referential object" which, as Gilmour points out for narrative, is usually a common character or theme.[67] I have shown above that the common character is the אִישׁ עָוֶל as opposed through antonymic reiteration with the אֵשֶׁת־חַיִל. Next, we ask what kind of interpretive effect the juxtaposition might have. Do the two passages dialogue through contradiction? This relationship seems inappropriate in our passages because nothing said of the man in 29:22-27 seems to dispute anything said of the woman in 31:10-31. Do the two passages dialogue through corroboration wherein the two passages arrive at agreement about some topic but from different points of view? I believe they do. By bringing together reflections on these two people, our editor uses different means to illustrate the principle that certain kinds of people produce certain kinds of "fruit". In 29:22-27 this is conceived metaphorically as digging up various conflicts and animosities while in 31:10-31 the author uses literally uses the word "fruit" (2x) to describe the good and beneficial products of a certain kind of God-fearing person. In this way, the two passages corroborate one another by illustrating the same point by different means.

There is however another possible effect of the juxtaposition. I propose that the juxtaposition invites us to re-read 29:22-27 not simply as a reference to evil men in general but,

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[66] Yair Zakovitch, "Juxtaposition in the Abraham Cycle," in Pomegranates and Golden Bells: Studies in Biblical, Jewish, and Near Eastern Ritual Law, and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom (Winona Lakes, IN: Eisenbrains, 1995), 510.

[67] Rachelle Gilmour, Juxtaposition in the Elisha Cycle (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014), 33.

perhaps as a double meaning, to evil *husbands*. The word אִישׁ and בַּעַל can of course refer to husbands. In isolation, one would likely not think to ponder these verses as a reference to a certain jerk of a husband, but in juxtaposition with the 22-verse alphabetic ode to a jewel of a wife, one just might. For example, in 29:22 one might read the verse, not as a reference to a "master of anger", but as a reference to a temperamental husband (בַּעַל חֵמָה) who stirs up, not just strife in general, but relational quarrelling (מָדוֹן) in the homestead.

Literary Priority of Juxtaposition

Although it is impossible to be certain, especially before analyzing the literary elements of M's juxtaposition of 31:1-9 and 31:10-31, I can offer some thoughts on which order was likely primary.

Hurowitz has attempted to make the case that M's pairing of 31:1-9 with 31:10-31 displays a kind of literary unity and sophistication whereby vv. 1-9 and 31:10-31 have been "adapted to each other, forging them into a coherent, meaningful whole."[68] After conceding that there is great difference between the literary form, themes, and language of the two passages, he nevertheless makes a case for their unity based on "certain literary and rhetorical devices."[69] His main argument concerns key vocabulary in vv. 10-19 which is repeated in reverse order in vv.20-31 forming a kind of chiasm. Additionally, he contends that there is a repetition of key vocabulary in vv. 1-9 that gets repeated, but in reverse order forming a chiasm, in vv. 20-31 (the second half of the acrostic). This forms a "partially interlocking and partially overlapping pair of chiastic word chains"[70] like the following:

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[68] Victor A. Hurowitz, "The Seventh Pillar: Reconsidering the Literary Structure and Unity of Proverbs 31," ZAW 113, no. 2 (February 2008): 211.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid., 215.

VV. 1-9//20-31

10-19//20-31

While Hurowitz does make some good points about the way the two sections of chapter 31 interact literarily, I agree with Fox who maintains concerning Hurowitz's arguments, "the pattern is too intricate to be absorbed by the reader and to be rhetorically effective. The intricacies of the overlapping and clashing designs as well as the severe imbalances in a supposedly symmetrical structure (section A, with one verse, is matched by A', with 22 verses) obscure whatever rhetorical impact the design might have."[71]

The evidence of literary unity between vv. 29:22-27 and 31:10-31 that I have pointed to in this chapter provides more compelling evidence for the kind of compositional intentionality and awareness that Hurowitz tries to demonstrate for 31:1-9 and 31:1-31. Furthermore, the alphabetic *form* of each passage, the corresponding *themes* and main characters, and the sophisticated nature of the paronomastic and polysemous *language* running across the seam of the passages, call for serious attention when seeking to know if the passages were edited to be a unit. These three elements are the ones Hurowitz admits are lacking between 31:1-9 and 10-31. More on this below.

Cook has tried to ascribe the thematic unity of G's arrangement and the juxtaposition of the text-blocks to G's translator. He points to the attempt to contrast the ἀνὴρ ἄδικος and the γυναῖκα ἀνδρείαν and charges the translator with the attempt to contrast the two by bringing them together in the translation. Thus, the "translator deliberately adapted the parent text."[72] Cook's analysis was on the right track. He was right to look for interpretive motivations for the

[71] Fox, Proverbs 10-31, 883.

[72] Johann Cook, "The Greek of Proverbs: Evidence of a Recensionally Deviating Hebrew Text?," in Emanuel: Studies in Hebrew Bible, Septuagint, and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov (Boston: Brill, 2003), 611.

juxtaposition. However, if he would have looked at how the two text-blocks interact *in Hebrew* in the ways explored above, he might have seen the evidence for the Hebrew/*Vorlage*-based juxtaposition. Indeed, G seems unaware of the alphabetic nature of his source text as mentioned above. This works against seeing the translator as the mastermind behind bringing two alphabetic texts together.

Finally, and tentatively until we explore M's arrangement in detail in the next chapter, I suggest that G's arrangement represents to original closing of the book of Proverbs for three reasons based on the categories raised by Hurowitz (form, theme, and language). To answer the question of which came first, the micro alphabetic editing of the end of chapter 29 or the large-scale rearrangement of text blocks, "one needs to find cumulative evidence for the direction of the change."[73]

My first reason concerns the *form* of the text. Since both G and M agree that the acrostic should be the end of the composition, and since both G and M preserve the alphabetic micro-editing formal details at the end of 29, this strongly suggests that M represents an intentional dislocation of 31:10-31from 29 at a time subsequent to 29 having undergone the alphabetic editing in anticipation of making its literary home next to 31:10-31.

Secondly, regarding *theme*, the acrostic to the woman is a fitting conclusion to the book as a whole as it "summarizes…all the virtues which were highlighted in the first five sections in Proverbs (chapters 1-29)."[74] I would add that, coupled with the discourse on an evil man which mentions specifically a thief and one who partners with him to gain wealth (29:24), the ending according to G's arrangement creates a more precise *inclusio* framing the book than is typically

[73] Ville Makipelto, Timo Tekoniemi, and Miika Tucker, "Large-Scale Transposition as an Editorial Technique in the Textual History of the Hebrew Bible," TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism 22 (2017): 14.

[74] Nili Shupak, Mishley, Olam Ha-Tanakh (Tel Aviv: Revivim, 1996), 211. והמסכם...את כל הסגולות שהועלו על נס בחמשת הקבצים הראשונים בספר משלי (קרקים א-כט).

mentioned. Instead of a vague contrast between the various woman of vice in chapters 1-9 and the Successful Woman of 31, we have an *inclusio* of the first and last wisdom instruction in the book. Proverbs 1:10-19 treats the temptation of the student to fall in with thieves (1:11) so that, as verse 13 says, they might find "valuable wealth" and fill their "houses" with "spoil" (כָּל־הׇון יָקָר נִמְצָא נְמַלֵּא בָּתֵּינוּ שָׁלָל). Similarly, 29:25 warns of dividing spoil with thieves, and then 31:10-11 talks of another means of securing spoil and filling one's house with wealth namely, partnering—not with a thief—but with a successful, industrious woman. Then the poem goes on to detail the wealth piled up in the husband's house because of his industrious wife.

Thirdly, related to *language*, we have seen the rich, non-trivial word-play between the two passages in G's arrangement. When discerning the direction of change for large-scale transpositions "[s]ometimes even minor hints in the textual evidence might help in illuminating what has happened to the text."[75] Sophisticated word play is a crucial piece of evidence, a "minor" but monumental hint, when considering compositional unity as seen also in the previous chapter on chapter 30's position in G Proverbs. This is because the odds of this kind of word play arising accidentally are too high. It is much more likely that the word play we see which traverses what are normally seen as textual boundaries, or seams, indicates original compositional unity for the two passages.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have explored G's translation of Prov 29:22-27 and 31:10-31 to ascertain as well as is possible the nature of G's Hebrew source text. I then tried to identify the topic of each passage by looking for clusterings of concepts in each and comparing the topic of each for similarities. We saw the both passages focus on the virtues and vices of two types of people and the fruit each bears through their lifestyles. Next, we explored the literary phenomena that

[75] Makipelto, Timo Tekoniemi, and Miika Tucker, "Large-Scale Transposition", 16.

operate across the boundary of the two passages and found both paronomasia and polysemy serving to highlight the contrast of subjects (evil man/husband? vs. virtuous wife) and the image of "digging" and bringing forth certain "fruits" of one's labor. Finally, we explored how the form (alphabetic), themes (contrast of two means of securing wealth), and language (literary devices based on word play) suggest strongly that these texts cohere in Hebrew precisely because they were edited to do so in concert with one another. Thus, G's arrangement is likely recensional and not translational since these formal, thematic, and linguistic realities are operative *in Hebrew* and G seems to be unaware of the major structuring device of the acrostic in 31:10-31. In the next chapter, we turn our attention to consider the interpretive effects and editorial motivations for M's juxtaposing the Prov 30:1-31:9 text-block to the closing acrostic.

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Exploring the Interpretive Effects and Editorial Motivations for G's Juxtaposition of Proverbs 29:22-27 and 31:10-31

In this chapter, I explore G's translation of Prov 29:22-27 and 31:10-31 to ascertain as well as is possible the nature of G's Hebrew source text and to explore the possibility that G was operating from a different Hebrew recension of Proverbs. I describe the alphabetic nature of both passages. Proverbs 29:22-27 is a partial alphabetic acrostic framed by a double iteration of *alef* (29:22) and *tav* (29:27) and sprinkled throughout with other letters in alphabetic order by telestic (at the end of lines) and by acrostic (at the head of lines).

I spend several pages combing though the verses in G and trying to ascertain whether or not G evidences a real variant in his source. I found several possible variants, but I decided ultimately that only the word variant in Prov 22:27 where G evidences the verb "to dig" (כרה) for M's "to provoke" (גרה) is a real variant in G's source. In addition, I argue that many of the odd features in G can be explained by various creative ways in which G has interpreted the consonants of his source with a couple of possible places in which G seems to have a source text written in an archaic Hebrew script.

In the second major section, I search each passage for the most often repeated noun and noun phrases to ascertain the "topic" of each section. I define topic as a "clustering of concepts." By analyzing the reiterated nouns and noun phrase in Prov 29:22-27 I argue that the topic of the passage is "The Virtues and Vices of Man." I do the same for the acrostic to the אשׁת חיל and label the topic as "The Praise-Inspiring, Household-Sustaining Valuables of the Successful Woman." This allows us to compare the topic of each to explore what level of unity might exist between the passages.

In the next section, I explore a sophisticated instance of paronomasia (aural word play) and polysemy (visual word play) that operates across the seam of the two juxtaposed texts. These features suggests that the passages were crafted/edited to be read together as a unit. I argue that the paronomasia concerns the phonological resonance of איׁש עול and אשׁת חיל and the polysemy concerns יכרה in 29:22 and מכרה in 31:10. I argue that these phenomena invite hermeneutical association of the two passages and the two main characters of each.

I also explore the type of intepretive effect of the juxtaposition and argue that each passage corroborates the other as each illustrates the notion of certain types of people bearing certain types of "fruit". Each does so through different means. I also suggest that 31:10-31, with its focus on a certain kind of wife, invites the re-interpretation of 29:22-27 as a discourse on a certain kind of

husband, not simply a man.

Finally, I argue for viewing G's arrangement as the original ending of the book of Proverbs on formal, thematic, and linguistic grounds. With reference to form, I highlight the shared alphabetic structure and G's apparent ignorance of it. This suggests G did not rearrange the material. Instead the arangement was present in his *Vorlage*. With reference to theme, I highlight the shared focus on the fruit of a certain kind of husband and wife. I also appeal to a possible *inclusio* for the entire book of Proverbs which includes 1:10-19 (focus on acquiring wealth by theft and violence) and Prov 29:24 and 31:10-31 (focus on acquiring wealth by righteous means).

My PhD project is a study of G and M Proverbs. I focus specifically on the variant juxtaposition of text-blocks in each version of the Book (30:1-14 and 30:15-31:31). I want to know how the different orders affect interpretation of text-blocks and who (G's translator or his source text?) is responsible for the variant orders. I want to uncover editorial motivations for the variant arrangements.

To reach conclusions concerning editorial motivations I rely on text-critical analysis and textlinguistics in an attempt to reconstruct G's *Vorlage* and look for hermeneutical motivations for juxtaposition. If we can find literary evidence (cohesions and coherence) *in Hebrew* that suggests reasons for juxtapositing text-blocks we can make conclusions as to why the text were juxtaposed and who was responsible for the juxtaposition. Morevover, if we can show that at times G's translator seems unaware of the Hebrew-based cohesive elements that attract text-blocks to one another, this would suggests that G was not the one responsible for the juxtaposition.

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Military Masculinity in Neo-Assyria and in the world of the Hebrew Bible: Kings, Gods, Warriors and Eunuchs

This paper is part of my dissertation project with the working title "'May they make you like a woman before your enemy' – gendered trash-talk in the HB and the ANE." My project revolves around the metaphor where women are compared to men in order to shame them, and I want to compare extra Biblical material, like Neo-Assyrian and Hittite, material to corresponding texts in the Hebrew Bible (especially Isa 3:12, 19:16, Jer 50:37, 51:30, Nah 3:13 and 2 Sam 3:29). As part of this I am looking at the ideas of how masculinity was perceived. I will take a look at the hegemonic masculinities, which is what men was supposed to or aim to be according to standards at the time, some interesting exceptions from it, and its counterpart –femininity or the absence of masculinity both in men and women.

I will take a look at a certain type of masculinity in Neo-Assyria and I will compare it to relevant Biblical texts to see in what way the ideas of different masculinities differ and correspond.

Lund, July 2021:

This paper is an attempt at an overview on masculinity in the Hebrew Bible and Neo-Assyria. It is part of my dissertation project where I look at men who call other men women, meant as an insult. There are a few verses in the Hebrew Bible who use this shaming trope, mostly found in the prophetic books[1] while the phenomenon frequently appears in Neo-Assyrian and Hittite treaty curses. The following text is written for the purpose to be presented at the OTSEM-conference 2021 and will in another form probably be part of the groundwork of my dissertation. I am one year into my Phd-project at the time of writing this paper. I am grateful for feedback in general and would also especially appreciate some concerning the *military masculinity* and how/if it helps the discussion on hegemonic masculinity.

I have found that what is most important in this metaphor, or *trash-talk,* is not what it means to be called a woman, it is to be called "not a man." The absence of masculinity is the crucial point rather than the presence of femininity, in general at least. That is why my interest has turned from femininity to masculinity for the purpose of this paper, entitled:

Military Masculinity in Neo-Assyria and in the world of the Hebrew Bible: Kings, Gods, Warriors and Eunuchs

In this paper I will begin with examining the hegemonic masculinity of Neo-Assyria and the Hebrew Bible. I will then continue with a short overview of eunuchism in both contexts. Lastly I will present a modern theoretical framework regarding military masculinity and then compare the recent to the ancient. This is not meant to be an all encompassing overview of masculinity in the HB and ANE, rather, I take a look at two very specific sets of masculinities which I find especially interesting for the purpose of my study – but they exist within a plethora of others. I also am aware of the potential problem with taking a contemporary phenomena and applying it to the ancient world, however, I hope you will agree that there are interesting meeting points between the two.

Hegemonic and relative Masculinities

[1] In my project I mainly look at the following verses in the HB: Isa 3:12, 19:16, Jer 50:37, 51:30, Nah 3:13 and 2 Sam 3:29.

To begin with I will discuss the terminology within the realm of masculinity-studies and how it is used withing Biblical studies and Assyriology.

The Neo-Assyrian material is very rich in its information about masculinity, and many have written about this already. For the purpose of this study, I will compare the Neo-Assyrian material to the Biblical. The Hebrew Bible (henceforth HB) and the view on masculinity is a field that has received a lot more attention in later years, and the research on this will be helpful in the comparison between the ANE-material and the HB.

For some time, the idea that ancient Mesopotamia was a "sexual wonderland" was reproduced both in Assyriology[2] and Biblical studies; the interpretation of cultic prostitution led to ideas of free love.[3] It was often set up as a contrast against the (allegedly) more pious world of the Hebrew Bible. To be understood, perhaps, as a lingering of the idea of primitive versus civilized religion. However, the paradigm has changed, in the 21st century the idea of free love has slowly but surely become more nuanced and the areas which was previously almost unexplored has received scholarly attention. For example, the research on masculinity and eunuchs which will be presented below, as well as the aforementioned cultic prostitution.

When trying to determine how people looked at men and masculinity at a certain time and place one quickly become aware of the problem of speaking about *a* view on masculinity, in fact it is better to speak of multiple masculinities which existed side by side. However, we can still speak of a hegemonic masculinity, i.e., the prevailing masculinity that was also in a way official. We speak here about idealized masculinity and not necessarily the life of the everyday man. The concept of "hegemony" derives from Gramsci's theory on class relations and aims to describe power relations between different groups of people, in this case gender relations and men's domination over women. Connell writes: "At any given time, one form of masculinity is culturally exalted."[4] The exalted masculinity is the hegemonic masculinity.

[2] An overview is presented in: Simo Parpola, "Introduction" in *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the 47th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Helsinki, July 2-6, 2001, Volym 1* (eds. Simo Parpola and R.M. Whiting: Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2002), xiii-xv. Esp. xiii.
[3] On Ishtars cult functionaries Assante writes: "It is scholarship, not Ishtar, who has emasculated them, turning them into passive 'homosexuals,' prostitutes, transvestites, eunuchs, hermaphrodites and self-lacerating masochists, circulating like minor moons around a celestial fetish." From her article Julia Assante, "Bad Girls and Kinky Boys? The Modern Prostituting of Ishtar, Her Clergy, and Her Cults" in *Tempelprostitution im Altertum: Fakten und Fiktionen,* (ed. T.S. Scheer. Oikumene 6. Berlin: Verlag Antike) 23-54. Esp. p. 24.
[4] R.W Connell, *Masculinities: Second edition,* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), 77.

When speaking about the other masculinities, not part of the hegemonic masculinity, we can speak of relative masculinities.[5] They, as we shall see, exist in relation to the hegemonic masculinity. Either they are subordinate, marginalized, or complicit[6] to the hegemonic masculinity or they are challenging it. The complicit, marginalized and subordinate masculinities help to uphold the hegemonic masculinity, because even though most men fail to live up to the hegemonic ideal they do support the system.[7] The problem is when a masculinity challenges the hegemonic ideal, then the ideal either changes or the challenging masculinity is fought.

As Brettler also points out, the hegemonic masculinity of the strong warrior man was not only in the interest of men. In the ancient context the system was upheld by women who needed strong men to win wars (so they were not taken away as spoils) and protect them, they also needed a strong warrior god to protect the people and the nation.[8]

First let us take a look at the hegemonic masculinity of Neo-Assyria at the time when the military was a crucial part of the country's success as an empire.

Neo-Assyrian Military Masculinity

The hegemonic masculinity in the ANE was measured both by successes on the battlefield, as well as the ability to have children (preferably male children). The symbols of masculinity correlate with the realms where masculinity is important: the weapons and tools of the battlefield and military exploits are often used to symbolize a fertile and sexually capable man.[9] The same is true of symbols connected to women and fertility; they are often gathered from the domestic sphere.[10] These symbols could be used in rituals and as charms; there are for example

[5] Used by Martti Nissinen in his article "Relative Masculinities in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament" in *Being a Man: Negotiating Ancient Constructs of Masculinity,* (ed. Ilona Zsolnay: London: Routledge, 2017), 221-247.
[6] Connell makes this distinction in: Connell, *Masculinities,* 80.
[7] Stephen M. Wilson, "Biblical Masculinity Studies and Multiple Masculinities Theory: Past, Present, and future" in *Hebrew Masculinities Anew* (ed. Ovidiu Creangă, Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2019), 19-40, esp. pp. 20-21.
[8] Marc Brettler "Happy is the man who fills his quiver with them (Ps. 127:5): Constructions of masculinities in the Psalms" in *Being a Man: Negotiating Ancient Constructs of Masculinity,* (ed. Ilona Zsolnay: London: Routledge, 2017), 198-220, esp. p. 204.
[9] The bow and arrows are well known symbols for masculinity in the ANE. It is also attested in the HB, for example 2 Sam 1:22, 22:35, 2 Kings 13:15 ff, Hos 1:5, Ps 127:4-5. Harry A. Hoffner Jr., "Symbols for Masculinity and Femininity: Their Use in Ancient Near Eastern Sympathetic Magic Rituals" *JBL* 85:3 (1966): 326-334. Esp p. 329: note 12.
[10] Hoffner, "Symbols," 327.

rituals designed to help men become more masculine by withdrawing femininity with the help of ritualistic objects.[11]

At the rise of the Neo-Assyrian kingdom, as a consequence of the success in conquering land, people of different ethnicity and cultures were (often forcibly) brought to Assyria. The mixing of people lead to a need to reform the class system which had up until now had a strong middle class (*awīlu*) consisting of "pure" Assyrians and which was based on land ownership. A new military class arose, alongside the growing need for a professional military, which allowed people of different backgrounds to advance. The military class was as hierarchical as the military, as well as homosocial, and with it came ideas of ideal masculinity. And perhaps surprisingly also eunuchism.[12] Parallel with the masculine ideals, eunuchs could also advance in the military and represented a relative masculinity. Grayson believes that about 10 percent, or more, of the high-ranking officers in the Neo-Assyrian military where eunuchs.[13] The idea of a eunuch seems almost juxtaposed the masculinity we think of as the strong military leader, the absence of masculinity – at least physically. However, it is probably no chance that a relative masculinity finds its place in the military at the same time as the hegemonic masculinity is characterized by phallic aggression. The narrower and hard to reach hegemonic masculinity; the more the need for relative masculinities.

The desirable attributes of a male in the military class were manifested by the ultimate male, the king, who was a personification of the god Aššur. At the rise of the Neo-Assyrian Empire beginning in ninth century BCE the gendered language of warfare became an important part of describing both one's own and the enemy army.[14] The victor and the one making the statement was described as masculine and the losing army was feminine. Assyrian kings always added an

[11] In an older Hittite ritual, called the ritual of *Anniwiyani,* different colored strings are tied to the patient in order to cure womanliness. The strings are used to draw out the feminine energy from the man and in the other end there are weapons. In quite the elaborate way a virgin calls the feminine energy out of the patient and with the energy hovering in midair the assembly walks out to the wilderness and lures the energy to stay there while they return to the town. Then the man bathes and make offerings to invite the masculine energy into his body. Kathleen McCafferty, "Gendering for Fortune and Misfortune: Ritual Gender Assignment in the Ancient Near East" In: *Fortune and misfortune in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the 60th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale at Warsaw, 21–25 July 2014* (ed. By Drewnowska and Sandowicz Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2017) 75-96 esp. p. 82. Hoffner suggest that the ritual of adjusting someone's gender like the example above is the same as might be the case in 2 Sam 3:29 only instead of a ritual where one gives masculinity to a man, the family is cursed with femininity. Hoffner, "Symbols," 327: note 6.

[12] Julia Assante, "Men looking at men: The homoerotics of power in the state arts of Assyria" in *Being a man: Negotiating Ancient Constructs of Masculinity,* (ed. Ilona Zsolnay: London: Routledge, 2017), 42-82, esp. p. 42.

[13] A. Kirk Grayson "Eunuchs in Power. Their Role in Assyrian Bureaucracy" in *Vom Alten Orient zum Alten Testament: Festschrift für Wolfram Freiherrn von Soden zum 85. Geburtstag am 19. Juni 1993* (ed. Manfried Dietrich and Oswald Loretz: Neukirchen Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1995), 85-98, esp. p. 93.

[14] Cynthia R. Chapman, *The Gendered Language of Warfare in the Israelite-Assyrian Encounter* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2004), 1.

epithet of masculinity to their name.[15] In the (hypothetical) contest appointing the most masculine manly man the Assyrian king made sure he would win. He wrote the story of his own superior masculinity by describing his success in battle and depicting himself as a heroic, courageous, strong man. The enemy and defeated soldiers were described like women and their kings often like prostitutes. It is the contrast between the mighty king and the conquerable body that reinforces the imperialistic narrative.[16] The traits connected to the masculinity of the king is god given as shown in the following text from Aššurbanipal's annals:

> The great gods in their assembly determined a favorable destiny as [my] l[ot] (and) they granted me a broad mind (and) allowed my mind to learn all of the scribal arts. They glorified my name in the assembly of princes (lit. "stags") (and) power, virility, (and) outstanding strength; and they placed the lands that had not bowed down to me into my hands (and) allowed me to achieve my heart's desire.[17]

During the Neo-Assyrian time perhaps a slight shift from an earlier subordination to the divine to a more independent role as a political leader can be spotted.[18]

The king was the conqueror, the dominant one, the penetrator, and according to Assante, he was de-eroticized when depicted in the art so as not to awaken the onlooker's desire.[19] The kings are depicted as fully clothed in floor-length gowns, full beards and often with some kind of headgear which makes them taller than the others in the picture.[20] He was not objectifiable as being desired seen as a weakness, he was however the desirer.[21] He was hypermasculinity personified. The other person in the picture is often feminized (without necessarily being a woman), a conquered king signaling submission or a beardless eunuch attending the king. The

[15] Aššurnaṣirpal II, Šalmaneser III, Tiglath-pileser III, and Sargon II all refer to themselves as *zikaru dannu* = the manly one/the strong one. Aššurnaṣirpal II, Sennacherib, Esarhaddon, and Aššurbanipal refers to themselves as *zikaru qardu* = the manly one/the heroic one and Aššurnaṣirpal II and Tiglath-pileser III, also refers to themselves as *eṭlu qardu* also meaning the manly one/the heroic one. Sennacherib has the innovative *eṭlum gitmālum* = a perfect man/a perfect specimen of masculinity. Chapman, *The Gendered Language*, 23-24.
[16] Assante, "Men looking at men," 64.
[17] Ashurbanipal 3 (Prism B) lines 6-13. In *The Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period Volume 5/1*. (ed. Jamie Novotny and Joshua Jeffers, University Park: Eisenbrauns, 2018).
[18] Omar N'Shea "Empire of the Surveilling Gaze: The Masculinity of King Sennacherib" in *Studying Gender in the Ancient Near East* (Ed. Saana Svärd and Agnès Garcia-Ventura, University Park: Eisenbrauns, 2018) 315-335 esp. p. 318-19.
[19] Assante "Men looking at men," 53.
[20] For instance, palace reliefs of Aššurbanipal II, Tiglat-Pileser III or Shalmaneser III typically display these features.
[21] In the Hebrew Bible beauty could also be a weakness and vulnerability, as in the story of Joseph. Wilson "Biblical Masculinity Studies and Multiple Masculinities Theory," 26.

beard was part of the hegemonic masculinity, and shaving a beard was a punishment for illicit behavior or a way to mark a man as slave.

We shall now enter the realm of the HB and I will begin with discussing philology and gender, however, we shall soon have reason to return to the question of beard or no beard.

The *Gibbor* and Military Masculinity

As in the world and history in general its hard to speak about a general masculinity in the HB, the texts are written over a long period of time and reflect a society in change. In post-exilic Yehud, for example, a new scribal masculinity arose as a relative masculinity.[22] In the prophetic literature the hegemonic masculinity has many parallels to the military masculinity of Neo-Assyria, with Yahweh as the ultimate male.

There are a few different words used when talking about men in the HB[23]; most common is the word *ʾîš*. However, when talking about hegemonic masculinity one term is especially important, the *gibbor.* The noun *geber* is translated as a young, strong man.[24] The *geber* has a relative in *gibbor* from the same root: *gbr* meaning "strong man" or "military hero," and *gibbor* is the most common word for a man in the metaphor where men are compared to women in order to insult them.[25] *Gibbor* is an intensive form of *geber* so is also its meaning, often translated with "hero"[26] and it seems that what is intensified is also the degree of masculinity. Most appearances

[22] See: Brian Charles DiPalma, "Scribal Masculinity and the Court Tales of Daniel" in *Hebrew Masculinities Anew* (ed. Ovidiu Creangă, Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2019), 229-248.

[23] Marc Brettler argues that although the authors and people of the HB do not have the same view on gender and sex that we have, they do have the lexical difference between the two. In Hebrew *zākār* and *nĕqēbāh*[23] is used of male and female and refer to biological sex, in the same way that you don't tell someone to become more *male* (rather you would use the term *man*, since it refers to gender and not sex.) you don't use *zākār* when you tell a man to be more manly. Consequently, *ʾîš* and *ʾîššāh* are used as an equivalent of man and woman (gender). Although *ʾîš* can also be used as a neutral, i.e. man as in person or people in general (for example in a group with both men and women, even if women are in majority, the masculine plural *ʾănāšîm* would still be used), the context determines how to understand grammatical sex and gender. There are however, as Brettler points out, a few exceptions where an *ʾîš* rather than a *zākār* is circumcised (Gen 34:14) and the *ʾîššāh niddah* of Ezek. 18:6 refers to a menstruating woman, i.e., biological sex and not gender. Brettler "Happy is the man who fills his quiver with them," 200. See also Phyllis A. Bird *Missing Persons and Mistaken Identities: Woman and Gender in Ancient Israel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997).

[24] In Judg 5 *geber* is used opposite *raḥam* lit. uterus/womb, which Brettler refers to sex and not gender, however I believe the juxtaposition of the strong man and the uterus to be linguistic rather than concerned with gender. The *raḥam* is an insult, a pejorative word for girl as if to say an item you use and then throw away. Here it is used to depersonalize the women that the *geber* will divide among each other just like the rest of the spoil. Brettler, "Happy is the man who fills his quiver with them," 200.

[25] *Gibbor* is used most frequently in 1 Chron (30 times), 2 Sam (16 times), Jer (16 times), Ps (11 times), and Isa (9 times). It is used of the Nephilim in Gen 6:4 but most frequently in connection to David and his mighty warriors in 1-2 Sam and in 1 Chron.

[26] Both words derive from the root *gbr* which in another form *gĕbûrāh* is used of Yahwe's might and power in for example Jer 16:21. Later also used in rabbinic literature as a substitute for the word Yahwe. Kosmala, "גָּבַר gābhar", *TDOT* I:367-382, esp. p. 370.

have close connections to military activities, so a *gibbor* is not only a strong man but a military man.[27] According to Kosmala Yahweh is the *gibbor* par excellence[28], and it is used in regarding him in for example Zeph 3:17, Ps 24:8, Ps 78:65, Isa 10:21 (cf. also Isa 42:13).
Instead of a hypermasculine king, the prophets often make YHWH into the superior masculinity. The man above all men. The hegemonic masculinity of course did change over time, as we have seen in the overview of Neo-Assyria, but the preoccupation with masculinity remains intact through the centuries.

Brettler uses 1 Kings 2:2 as an example, where David tells his son Solomon to "be strong" and "be a man" or even "become a man" (*wĕḥāzaqtā wĕhāyîtā lĕʾîš*). What David is asking of Solomon is to perform the role of hegemonic masculinity that is expected of a man, and even more so of a crown prince.
Earlier I promised a further discussion on beards: In the HB we see how men can be shamed by removing masculine attributes like a beard, for example 1 Chron 19:1-5, or the same story in Sam 10:1-5 where its half a beard. Also in the story the men's garments are shortened and they reveal their buttocks. The shame led king David to let them delay their return until their beards had grown out. This is also the case in Isa 7:20 where the Assyrians are spoken of as YHWH's tool who will shave the head, genitals and beards of either Israel or Judah.[29] Cutting one's own beard can be part of a mourning ritual as a way of humbling oneself, however, having the beard forcibly removed is considered deeply shameful.[30] In quite the opposite way, Mesopotamian queens were sometimes depicted with a beard as a way to stress their right to the throne (the goddess Ishtar is also often depicted with a beard).[31] Eunuchs are of course naturally unable to grow a beard. And while on the subject of beardless males, let us take a closer look at eunuchism in Neo-Assyria and the HB. Part of the relative, subordinate masculinities, as opposed to the hegemonic one.

Eunuchs in Neo-Assyria

[27] King David has a group of *gibborîm* who serve as bodyguards in his court. They probably lived in a house called *bêt hagibborîm* "house of the heroes" (Neh 3:16).
[28] Kosmala, *TDOT* I: 376.
[29] NRSV has "feet" although it is probably euphemistic use of *regālim* as genitals. See Hilary Lipka "Shaved beards and bare buttocks: Shame and the undermining of masculine performance in Biblical texts" in *Being a Man: Negotiating Ancient Masculinity,* (ed. Ilona Zsolnay, London: Routledge, 2019), 176-197, esp. p. 183.
[30] Jer 41:5, 48:37, Isa 15:2.
[31] Assante "Men looking at men," 66.

In Assyrian the word for courtier is or *mazzāz pani* or or *manzāz pani* which means "one who stands before" in regard to the king. A eunuch is often called *ša rēši*[32] meaning "(he) of the head" a variant of this is *šūt rēši.* A fourth variant to hold in mind is the *ša-ziqni* "bearded one," a group which seem to be differentiated from the courtiers, and definitely differentiated from the eunuchs who often identified as "beardless ones" both in art and writing.

The different ways to interpret the terminology has been thoroughly discussed by scholars. Some say that only a few of the *ša rēši* are eunuchs, others – and they are at majority today I would say, mean that the *ša rēši* are to be understood as castrated courtiers, or eunuchs. I agree with those who say that *ša rēši* is synonymous with eunuch.[33]

The *ša rēši* of the Neo-Assyrian empire were quite a heterogenous group. They were used as court officials to a great extent because they had no heirs and thus no one to claim their position after their death. Also, without a family to provide for they were known as trustworthy and loyal.[34] This was also a way to end the dynasties of foreign and potentially threatening kings,

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[32] Dalley puts forward an etymological overview of the cognate term *ša rēšēn* and how its meaning "man with two heads" relates to a primeval, bisexual, being. The winged man with two heads frequently appears in Neo-Assyrian and Hittite art, they adorn the entrance of Neo-Assyrian palaces. Dalley claims that they sometimes seemed to be both male and female. Now, Dalley speaks of them as bi-sexual, but I would suggest that androgynous or intersexed is a better term today, since she does not speak of their sexual preferences, rather how they are portrayed. She quotes Berossus who writes of the primeval era when everything was darkness and water and: "men were born with two wings, and two faces, these had one body and two heads, and they were both masculine and feminine, and they had two sexual organs, male and female…". Dalley's theory is that the eunuch's fluid gender status together with translating from a language which does not divide nouns into gender categories to a language that does (from Sumerian to Akkadian, Sumerian divides between animate and inanimate objects) made the semantic change from "the man with two heads" into a eunuch, possible. However, Hawkins finds Dalley's etymological explanation implausible and suggest an explanation following the evolution of the Greek term ευνουχος which originally might have meant "chamberlain" and not specifically a castrate. Soon the office was so closely connected with the castrates that the word came to mean a castrated chamberlain/courtier. Stephanie Dalley "Evolution and Gender in Mesopotamian Mythology and Iconography with a Possible Explanation of *ša rēšēn* 'the man with two heads'" in *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the 47th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Helsinki, July 2-6, 2001, Volym 1* (eds. Simo Parpola and R.M. Whiting: Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2002), 117-122. J.D. Hawkins "Eunuchs among the Hittites" *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the 47th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Helsinki, July 2-6, 2001, Volym 1* (eds. Simo Parpola and R.M. Whiting: Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2002), 217-233 esp. p. 218 and 220.

[33] For an overview of the discussion, see Hayim Tadmor "The Role of the Chief Eunuchs in the Assyrian Empire" *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the 47th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Helsinki, July 2-6, 2001, Volym 2* (eds. Simo Parpola and R.M. Whiting: Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2002), 603-611 esp. pp. 603-607, Martti Nissinen "Relative Masculinities in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament," 230-234, and A.K Grayson "Eunuchs in Power", 93.

[34] They were forced to sever their ties to their families as they entered into the service in the king's court. Grayson quotes Xenophon quoting Cyrus saying: "He [Cyrus] looked around him to see who were the most faithful men that he could have around him at such times; and he held that no man was ever faithful who loved any one else better than the one who needed his protection. Those, who had children or congenial wives or sweethearts, such he believed were by nature constrained to love them best. But as he observed that eunuchs was not susceptible to any such affections, he thought that they would esteem most highly those who were in the best position to make them rich and to stand by them, if they were wronged, and to place them in offices of honour." Xenophon, Cyropaedia vii 59-60. Not seen found in Grayson, A.K. "Eunuchs in Power," 95-96. Jacob L. Wright and Michael J. Chan "King and Eunuch: Isaiah 56:1-6 in Light of Honorific Royal Burial Practices" *JBL* 131:1, (2012), 99-119, esp. p. 108.

taking their sons and raising them in the palace as eunuchs. As the empire became bigger and more organized, it was feared that high ranking court officials and their dynasties could become powerful and a threat to the king. Some eunuchs did indeed become very powerful and were closely connected to the king, as already stated they held high ranking military positions. Eunuchs were also often associated with the royal women, serving the queen and her staff. They were regularly examined to make sure that they really were eunuchs because they were allowed in with the women and children.[35] Because of their lack of genitals, and supposedly lust, they were allowed in the women's quarters in ways that other men were not. There are however some reports on eunuchs who were allowed to get married and adopt children.[36]

Eunuchs are often depicted on the palace reliefs; you can recognize them by their lack of facial hair and that they are often of a chunkier build than the king and his soldiers. One eunuch from Aššurbanipal's court, Bêl-Harrân-bêl-uṣur, named a town after himself and raised a stele in the town's temple. Ordinary citizens of Assyria could also have a eunuch working for them, although they were quite expensive (according to Assante, the high price was due to the high death rate following castration) and having a eunuch in one's home was a sign of wealth.[37] Castration was also a punishment for a man of the citizen class sleeping with another man's wife or having sex with a man.[38] However, the eunuchs preferred by the royal court were those who had been castrated before puberty.[39] There were also eunuchs who held more ordinary professions, such as musicians or scribes. Some were free and some were slaves.[40]

Many have fallen into the trap of disregarding eunuchs as effeminate or marginalized in a way to make the masculinity-puzzle seem more coherent and fit into our presuppositions. But what we have seen is that they held high positions in the king's court and even in the otherwise hyper masculine milieu of the military.[41] Some eunuchs were archers and wielded a bow and arrows

[35] Although the source is a bit ambiguous and not clear on the physiology. Assante, "Men looking at men," 71.
[36] For example if Potiphar is understood as a eunuch he was clearly married. There are more texts suggesting this.
[37] Assante, "Men looking at men," 69.
[38] Noteworthy is that the punishment appears to be exclusive to the one "fornicated upon," and not the penetrator, this view of male penetration coheres with the ancient Greek and Roman view on homosexual encounters. Assante, "Men looking at men," 48.
[39] Being castrated before puberty was also a safer procedure than with adults. Assante, "Men looking at men," 71. Grayson, "Eunuchs in Power," 95.
[40] Grayson "Eunuchs in Power," 95.
[41] The same was true in China where eunuchs were successful and held power in different important areas, such as: economy, administration, the legal system, the military and religion. Becoming a eunuch was a legitimate career choice for a young boy and from which parents hoped to benefit. The same is true for Byzantium and Achaemenid Persia. Also, in Imperial Rome eunuchs held influential positions in both the military and the court. Grayson "Eunuchs in Power," 86 and 88.

in war. Since it was unthinkable for a woman to yield a bow and arrows – this shows that they were ultimately seen as men since this would not have been a possibility for a woman.[42]
The relative masculinity was of the eunuchs were a compliment to the hegemonic masculinity, especially in the hypermasculine milieu of the military and the royal court. They were perhaps less so than other relative masculinities seen as a threat to the prevailing system.
We shall now take a look at the presence of eunuchs in the HB.

Eunuchs in the HB

Eunuchs are mentioned in the HB and perhaps most notably in Isa 56:3, where YHWH promise them a future where their name shall live on. A lot of the other occurrences are referring to the court of a foreign king (Assyria, Babylonia, Egypt or Persia) where eunuchs where more common (or more frequently mentioned in the literature). When the texts are put together it becomes complicated by the Hebrew word *sārîs* (eunuch) which has been argued can be used to describe a court official in general, and not necessarily one that has been castrated (likewise, a castrate is not necessarily referred to as a *sārîs*). However, the translation may fool us to believe that there were no or very few eunuchs in ancient Palestine, considering the other, and more general translation "court official" which is often used. Given its etymological connection to the Akkadian term *ša rēši* which as I argued earlier means "eunuch" one could assume that "eunuch" is a more fitting choice. Nissinen points out that when "eunuch" is chosen it is often when it refers to something foreign, other, and queer (or when the context suggest a castrated man, as in Isa 56), and not when a *sārîs* holds a respectable position in the king's court.[43] Lemos also finds it peculiar that scholarship has found it so hard to believe that a *sārîs* can be both a eunuch and a court official, as is the case in the ANE generally.[44]

[42] Tracy M. Lemos "'Like the Eunuch who does not Beget': Gender, Mutilation and Negotiated Status in the Ancient Near East" in *Disability Studies and Biblical Literature* (ed. Candida R. Moss and Jeremy Schipper, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 47-66, esp. p. 53.
[43] Nissinen "Relative masculinities," 232.
In the Joseph-story of Gen 37-40 Potiphar is called a *sārîs* as well as others in Pharaoh's court. In 2 Kings 20:18 Isaiah prophesizes that Hezekiah's own sons will be taken away to the palace in Babylon as eunuchs (*sārîs*, see also Isa 39:7). Jehoiachin's *sārîs* came with him to Babylonia in 2 Kings 24:12 and 15. The *sārîs* also figures in 1 Sam 8:15 (in YHWH's warnings of a future kings ways), 1 Kings 22:9, 2 Kings 8:6, 2 Kings 9:32 (three *sārîs* collaborate with Jehu in the killing of Jezebel), 2 Kings 18:17 (the chief *sārîs* is called the *rab-sārîs*, sent from the Assyrian court), 2 Kings 23:11 (king Josiah removes horse statues near the entrance to the chamber of the *sārîs* Nathan-melech), 2 Kings 25:19 (a *sārîs* who had been in command of the soldiers), Jer 29:2, 34:19, 38:7 (an Ethiopian *sārîs,* Ebed-melech, works in the palace of Zedekiah), 39:3 (the *rab- sārîs* sat together with the king of Babylon in the gate when the deported people of Jerusalem arrived), 39:13, 41:16, 52:25, 1 Chr. 28:1 (the *sārîs* in David's court), 2 Chr. 18:8, and the *sārîs* also figures in the Babylonian court in Daniel and in the Persian court in the Book of Esther.
[44] Lemos "Like the eunuch who does not beget," 47.

There is a prohibition in the Pentateuch against people with damaged testicles or those who have had their penis cut off from being admitted into the assembly (Lev 21:20 and Deut 32:1). It has been suggested that Isa 56:3 cancels the Pentateuchal laws on this matter. However, as Wright and Chan rightly point out *sārîs* is not used in the Pentateuch, other than in the Joseph story. They interpret Isa 56 as an assurance to the *sārîs* who have no heirs to succeed them, that they will be remembered in the glorious future of Zion with a monument and an everlasting name (cf. 2 Sam 18:18).[45] The self-designation "dry tree" of 56:3 is with all probability a reference to a eunuch's inability to procreate. Isa 56:1-8 is noteworthy because it presupposes that the audience of the prophet contains eunuchs. Also, their lack of children is affecting their masculinity and consequently their social status in the hierarchical society. This is mended by YHWH's promise that their names shall live on despite their lack of children.[46] A comparison can also be made with a Neo-Assyrian curse "Like the *šūt rēši* who does not beget, may your semen dry up!"[47] In Wisdom 3:13-14 the eunuch (ευνουχος) is mentioned alongside the barren woman, she is undefiled and he is faithful, because of their inability to sire children they are perceived as pure.[48] Tillberg argues that the *sārîs* of the HB exists in three different fields, the political field, the cultic field, and the domestic field. In the first two the *sārîs* is perceived as a dominant agent, whereas in the domestic field he is dominated because of his inability to sire children.[49] This shows how multifaceted the perception of gender is and was.

Later during the heyday of the Persian empire, it has been suggested that Nehemiah was a eunuch, he is not explicitly said to be a *sārîs* but he is a court official of the Persian court and he mentions family but no wife or children.[50] Although, the general view on eunuchs in literature from Persian time is not positive; they are depicted as dodgy and untrustworthy (cf. the book of Esther). This was perhaps also due to reports on them working together and conspiring against the king.[51] Because of the negative views on eunuchs Wright and Chan suggests that Isaiah 56 could be concerned with nuancing the stereotypical view.[52]

I have now discussed eunuchs in the different settings of Neo-Assyria and the HB and found that in the biblical world scholarship has had a hard time believing in the presence of eunuchs other than when being perceived as foreign and queer. However, when looking at Isa 56 we

[45] Wright and Chan "King and Eunuch," 102.
[46] Nissinen "Relative Masculinities," 230.
[47] Not seen, found in Lemos "Like the eunuch who does not beget," 49.
[48] Notably the eunuch is also given "a pleasant place in the temple of the Lord."
[49] Karin Tillberg *The Outsider in Our Midst: A study of Language and Norms Concerning the "Outsider" in Persian Period Yehud* (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet 2020), 86.
[50] Wright and Chan "King and Eunuch," 110.
[51] Grayson "Eunuchs in Power," 96.
[52] Wright and Chan "King and Eunuch," 116.

found that the prophet who spoke those words had an audience which contained eunuchs. Perhaps they were even a normal part of the city's demography. Tillberg argued the complexities of how eunuchs were perceived, in some fields they were dominant and in others dominated.

A shared masculinity?

Both the Neo-Assyrian and the world of the HB gives a similar view of one type of masculinity. One which I have called *military masculinity*, in many ways the archetype of a male soldier which we can still see today. Therefore, let us now take a look at the study of military masculinity in recent years.

The military is and was a strictly hierarchical organization and for a long time it's been an exclusive male environment. The military wants to create men (and nowadays sometimes women) who are prepared to kill and die for a cause, a country or state. It can also be seen as a rite of passage, a way for men to prove their "manhood," especially prominent in societies which are centered around war and militarism.[53] Even though the perception of masculinity is very culture-specific and I wish to avoid anachronisms I will now take a leap in time to quite recently and take a look at the perception on modern military masculinity, hoping that it will give food for thought.

Whitworth writes of UN peacekeeping and gender[54] and the transformation which is needed when any man or any woman becomes a soldier. The process is well choreographed and designed to break down the individuality of a person and to produce a loyal and committed soldier incorporated in the military community with its own norms and values.[55] The transformation also often involves humiliation by higher ranked colleagues. She writes:

> Here the new recruit is not only reminded constantly of his or her incompetence, but faces a variety of gendered and raced insults crafted to play on her or his specific feminine or masculine anxieties, including

[53] Sandra Whitworth, *Men, Militarism and UN Peacekeeping: A Gendered Analysis* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2004), 159.
[54] Whitworth's perspective is North American, and the book is written in 2004, soon 20 years old. Some changes have inevitably been introduced to the military. However, her research illuminates the mechanisms which have been reinforced or subdued in order achieve an effective military unit.
[55] Whitworth *Men, Militarism & UN Peacekeeping,* 155.

> "whore," "faggot," "sissies," "cunt," "ladies," "abortion," "pussies," "n***er," "Indian," and sometimes simply "you woman."[56]

After being broken down, they are gradually being built up again and the abusive words are occasionally switched for praise. They learn that they are strong when they act together. Their instructors take on the role as parents whom the child wants to please. In many ways the military becomes a new family for the soldiers, or as Whitworth puts it: "a warrior brotherhood, which is very distinct from the larger world around them."[57]

The military masculinity promotes a specific set of characteristics important in order to become a good soldier, many of these are appliable to the ancient world as well: courage and endurance physical and psychological strength, rationality, toughness, obedience, discipline, patriotism, lack of squeamishness, avoidance of certain emotions such as fear, sadness, uncertainty, guilt, remorse, and grief, and heterosexual competency. In other words, the soldiers learn to deny all that is considered feminine and soft inside them.[58]

The hypermasculine militarized masculinity is fragile and does not permit even traces of what is perceived as femininity. When a soldier feels guilt, pain, fear, or anxiety the immediate response is to not make it show. If it shows the soldier risks being outcasts or dismissed as fakers. The soldier himself can also when faced with these feelings react with anger or violence, some attempt suicide, and only quite recently PTSD has been acknowledged in the military.[59] A few years ago papers reported that Danish veterans avoid civilization and move out into the woods in order to cope with their PTSD.

How, then, is this relevant when looking at ancient texts? We have seen that the Neo-Assyrian military environment was a strictly homosocial one and that at the same time as the military became more important so did the military masculinity. The feminization of the enemy becomes very popular during the Middle Assyrian times and when we reach the Neo-Assyrian period the metaphor has often escalated to the enemy becoming a *ḫarimtu,* a single woman who is sexually vulnerable – without social status and patriarchal protection.[60] The antithesis of the hegemonic masculinity.[61] The prophetic books of the HB are in many ways centered around warfare and

[56] She also notes that female soldiers receive the same kind of degrading language, including "you goddamn female." Whitworth, *Men, Militarism and UN Peacekeeping,* 156 and note 35.
[57] Whitworth, *Men, Militarism and UN Peacekeeping,* 158.
[58] Whitworth, *Men, Militarism and UN Peacekeeping,* 160-161.
[59] Whitworth, *Men, Militarism and UN Peacekeeping,* 167.
[60] Has often been translated as "prostitute," although this has also been questioned by research in recent years. See Assante "Bad Girls and Kinky Boys?" 32.
[61] Assante "Men looking at men" in *Being a man* p. 45.

military exploits, and military masculinity is especially visible here, even though it can be found throughout the HB. YHWH is the hypermasculine warrior god, and men should aspire to, but will never fully live up to his standards. Notably, the prophetic books are also where we find the feminization of the enemy.

Eunuchism grew strong in about the same time, perhaps it was seen by some as an alternative if one had difficulty settling in the hegemonic masculinity. Though, it was often not by choice, but it was sons of conquered kings who were taken young and raised in the court of the Neo-Assyrian king and eventually becoming a eunuch. This relative masculinity was hardly a threat towards the hegemonic one, and that is probably why they could hold prominent positions both in the military and in the king's court. The were the ultimate other, and complement, to the narrow military masculinity.

I have now explored two different sets of masculinities which existed side by side in ANE and ancient Palestine. My aim has not been to map out or exhaust the subject of masculinity in the Hebrew Bible and Neo-Assyria but to look at two important pieces of the puzzle that is the perception of a certain gender at a certain time and place. I have found that there is a common theme in the military masculinity which was part of the hegemonic masculinity when the society was centered around war and militarism. It is in this hypermasculine context where the shaming trope where the others are compared to women is the most effective.

OTSEM 2021 Summary: SARA JÄRLEMYR, Lund University

Military Masculinity in Neo-Assyria and in the world of the Hebrew Bible: Kings, Gods, Warriors and Eunuchs

This paper is part of my Phd-project which is centered around a shaming trope where men are compared to women in order to shame them, present both in Neo-Assyrian and Hittite treaty texts and in the prophetic books of the Hebrew Bible.[1] In this paper I begin with examining the hegemonic masculinity of Neo-Assyria and the Hebrew Bible. I then continue with a short overview of eunuchism in both contexts. Lastly, I present a modern theoretical framework regarding military masculinity and then compare the recent to the ancient.

During the time when Neo-Assyria grew into an empire a reform of the class system led to a military class arising as a new middle class. With it came ideas of military masculinity with the king as the ultimate male. These ideal traits of a man were mediated through both art and texts and the king was depicted as a tall, bearded, conquering man, where the other was shorter, sometimes beardless (either shaved or a eunuch), and the conquerable body (sometimes in posture, sometimes literally pierced with a spear).

Moving to the prophetic books of the Hebrew Bible a masculinity with close ties to the military man is also present. The *gibbor* is a military hero who is frequently mentioned in the prophetic books and Yahweh is presented as the ultimate g*ibbor.*

As a contrast to the military masculinity in Neo-Assyria at the same time eunuchs became an important part both of the royal court and administration and also the military. With eunuchism came a relative masculinity which is subordinate and not perceived as a threat to the hegemonic masculinity. Eunuchs were trusted both in the queen's court but also as high-ranking officers in the military. In the Hebrew Bible, the *sārîs* has often been translated with "court official" and only with eunuch when regarding something foreign or queer. However, in Isa 56:3 the prophet speaks directly to eunuchs with a comforting message: their names shall be remembered even though they don't have heirs. Interestingly, this suggests that there

[1] In my project I mainly look at the following verses in the HB: Isa 3:12, 19:16, Jer 50:37, 51:30, Nah 3:13 and 2 Sam 3:29, I also look at Neo-Assyrian and Hittite treaty-curses where this shaming trope is common.

were eunuchs listening to the prophet's speech and perhaps they were more present in ancient Palestine than previously suggested.

Lastly, I have looked at research regarding modern *military masculinity* and how the military, or more precisely UN peacekeeping units, use a certain type of masculinity when they shape new recruits into military men. Which characteristics are encouraged, and which are suppressed? In the process of becoming a military man all femininity is suppressed. That is also why in this context of hypermasculinity the metaphor where men are compared to women in order to shame them is so effective, also found in the material both from Neo-Assyria and the Hebrew Bible.

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"To totter" or not "to totter"?

The Hebrew verb מוט in biblical and parabiblical texts

Abstract:

What is the meaning and the semantic field of the verb מוט in the context of the Hebrew Bible? How is it used in parabiblical texts? Do we have a proper translation in our modern languages which covers all the facets included in מוט? These are the questions that break the first ground of my dissertation project on the Hebrew verb מוט and its 40 occurrences in biblical and 21 occurrences in parabiblical texts. In my present paper, I will focus primarily on the biblical texts and provide a brief outlook on the parabiblical usage. After a survey of the biblical occurrences, I will elaborate on their distribution within the Hebrew stem system and its implications. Furthermore, I will address the role of negation of מוט to show some special characteristics of the root. This will allow for a first approximation to the semantic field of מוט.

As I will argue in my paper, מוט describes a cosmological, individual or collective endangerment, also with regard to one's relationship to YHWH. This endangerment is expressed as a limbo between YHWH's assistance and his abandonment as well as between stability and instability or even life and death. In contrast, the standard interpretation and translation of מוט as "to totter" is far too limited. In my view, מוט expresses a fundamental destruction, an inward and outward instability and a limbo facing great dangers. Some occurrences address the experience of מוט and the plea to YHWH for protection against it. This shows that מוט expresses a threat to the very relationship with YHWH. Hence, I assume that a revision of the translation variants of מוט should be taken into consideration.

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‘To totter’ or not ‘to totter’?

The Hebrew verb מוט in biblical and parabiblical texts

Focal points of discussion:

1. Are the semantic implications of מוט’s distribution to the Hebrew stem system intepreted correctly? In how far is the interpretation of the Niphal fitting?
2. How can the relation between the functioning of the stem system in Biblical Hebrew and the parabiblical Hebrew texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira be described? Does the importance and meaning of the Niphal and Hitpolel stem change in parabiblical texts? Are there any differences or transformations that affect the understanding of מוט?
3. Is it significant that in parabiblical texts מוט does not occur in the Suffix-conjugation but tends to appear more often as a participle? Is this a normal shift in the development of the Hebrew language? Or is this a special characteristic of מוט?
4. The importance of the negation particle בל for מוט – can the combination of both lexemes be seen as a set phrase?
5. In how far do my translation proposals fit to the observations made on the distribution of מוט to the Hebrew stem system and the specifics of its negation?
6. Prospecitve point of discussion: What is the benefit and output of this first syntactical analysis regarding the semantical and exegetical analysis of מוט and its usage in the biblical and parabiblical texts? Do these observations have a first impact on the theological understanding of מוט?

1 Introduction

When reading in the Book of Psalms during my studies, I stumbled over the Hebrew verb מוט which is almost always translated with "to totter", "to stagger" or "to waver".[1] An overview of the translation proposals of מוט in the different dictionaries shows that the common understanding of מוט is "to totter" without any nuances of meaning regarding the different Hebrew stems. This already raises the question if מוט is translated correctly. I argue that this translation does not cover the whole scope of meaning that מוט inherits as I do not read מוט as a verb of movement describing tottering, but as an expression of being in a position of fundamental threat.

This lack of a differentiated translation for the Hebrew verb מוט has been noticed before. Brongers notes a "clichéd use" of wavering as a translation for מוט.[2] He concludes that מוט is one of the verbs that describe instability in the Hebrew Bible.[3] However, his study does not go beyond this finding and does not provide a less clichéd translation alternative. Moreover, Jenni mentiones that the allocation of מוט to particular conjugations and stems is really striking but he does not address a meaning for these differences.[4] A suitable translation considering this allocation is especially of great importance, however, in order to understand the theology that underlies the texts containing מוט.

As a starting point of providing a thorough analysis of מוט, I will give a complete survey of its occurrences in the Hebrew Bible. Furthermore, a focused look at מוט in its stems will be given. The distribution of meaning according to the stems will be one of my semantic methods to create a picture of the usage of מוט. Moreover, I will accentuate my analysis by giving a brief outlook on the usage of מוט in parabiblical texts in order to show a possible development of מוט

[1] Looking at the different entries in the most known dictionaries shows that the suggested translations do not differentiate between מוט's usage in different stems and various semantic contexts. Cf. Brown, F. et al., *The Brown, Driver, Briggs Hebrew And English Lexicon: with an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic. Coded with the Numbering System from Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1996, 556f. (henceforth referred to as *BDB*); Clines, D.J.A., *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993, 171f. (jenceforth referred to as *DCH*); Koehler, L., Baumgartner, W. et al., *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Leiden: Brill, 2000, 555.

[2] Cf. Brongers, H.A., "Darum, wer fest zu stehen meint, der sehe zu, dass er nicht Falle (1 Kor X 12): Eine Untersuchung der Verben mūṭ, kāšal und sinnverwandter Zeitwörter im Alten Testament". In: *Symbolae Biblicae et Mesopotamicae Francisco Mario Theo doro de Liagre Böhl dedicatae* (edited by M.A. Beek et al., Leiden: Brill, 1973), 56-70, 58.

[3] Cf. ibid, 56.

[4] Cf. Jenni, E., "«Wollen» und «Nicht-Wollen» im Hebräischen". In: *Hommages à André Dupont-Sommer* (edited by A. Dupont-Sommer and J. Amusin, Paris: Librairie D'Amerique Et D'Orient Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1971), 201–207, 201f.

and its characteristics of usage beyond the Hebrew Bible. As the topic of this paper is the evidence of מוט in the Hebrew Bible, this overview cannot offer any deep and thorough analysis, but will touch upon some specific nuances of מוט in parabiblical Hebrew. The syntactical analysis will create a sensitivity for possible translation alternatives that will be presented as a conclusion.

2 The Verb מוט in the Hebrew Bible – a Survey

Biblical Book	Occurrences
Leviticus	1
Deuteronomy	1
Isaiah	6
Psalms	26
Job	1
Proverbs	4
1 Chronicles	1

The verb מוט occurs 40 times in the Hebrew Bible.[5] Strikingly, only one occurrence, namely Leviticus 25:35, is in a narrative context, all other occurrences are found in poetic texts, mostly in the Book of Psalms with 26 occurrences. The evidence is found in positive statements and negations in equal measure, though when comparing the conjugated verb forms, this picture changes. Concerning the conjugated verb forms, there is a total of 21 negations compared to an evidence of 12 positive occurrences. The negative evidence will be of specific interest. Regarding the allocation of מוט according to its forms, there is an overwhelming domination of the Prefix-conjugation with 26 occurrences compared to six in the Suffix-conjugation, six infinitives and two participles.

		Qal					Niphal		Hiphil	Hitpolel
		SC	PC	Infinitive Cstr.	Abs.	Participle	SC	PC	PC	SC
		4	3	5	1	2		2	2	1
Neg.	לא		1					7		
	בל						1	12		

Apart from two occurrences of מוט in the Prefix-conjugation (PC) in the Hiphil (Ps 55:4 and 140:11) and one in the Suffix-conjugation (SC) in Hitpolel (Isa 24:29), the verb מוט occurs

[5] Cf. Wigram, G.V., *The Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee concordance of the Old Testament: numerically coded to Strong's exhaustive concordance*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980, 670.

in the Qal and Niphal stem. The occurrences in Qal are found as SC, PC, infinitives and as participles. However, the examples in Qal are – except for one occurrence in Isa 54:10 – always found in a positive statement. Strikingly, most evidence is found in the Niphal stem (22 occurrences). Even more noticeable is the fact that the evidence in Niphal occurs almost entirely in the PC (21 of 22 occurrences) and as a negation (19 negated occurrences in the PC and one negated occurrence in the SC). This observation led Jenni to the assumption that there might be a difference in meaning regarding the usage of מוט either in the Qal or in the Niphal stem.[6] However, as he is not concentrating on the verb מוט but rather on the verb אבה, he notices a difference of meaning according to the usage in Niphal or Qal without following this observation and proposing a distinction of the meaning – in my view, this is a desideratum that needs to be worked on. According to my and Jenni's observations, I argue for a distinction in the meaning of מוט depending on whether it occurs in the Qal or Niphal stem. The translations proposed in the dictionaries do not present the complexity and multifaceted nature of מוט as they do not distinguish its interpretation dependent on the different stems. My assumption is that the usage of מוט in the Qal stem might describe the condition of an instability whereas in contrast the evidence in the Niphal stem describes the way into that instability, the transition between stability and instability. This proposal needs to be verified or falsified in the following. The division between the stems of the verb מוט is one semantic method to clarify its meaning besides the method to find associative fields for the occurrences of מוט.

3 The Verb מוט and Its Stems

The fact that most of the occurrences of מוט are either found in the Qal or in the Niphal stem is of special relevance for understanding the meaning of this verb. The different actions of מוט that are either expressed in the Qal, Niphal, Hitpolel or Hiphil stem shall be described in the following to approach a better understanding of the meaning of מוט.

[6] Cf. Jenni, "«Wollen» und «Nicht-Wollen»", 271f.

3.1 The Qal Stem of מוט

The verb מוט shows a variety of appearances as a verb form in the Qal stem compared to its very restricted occurrences in the Prefix-conjugation in the Niphal stem. It is found four times as a Suffix-conjugation (Lev 25:35; Ps 46:7, 60:4, 94:18), twice as a positive Prefix-conjugation (Deut 32:35; Isa 54:10), once as a negated Prefix-conjugation (Isa 54:10), six times as an infinitive (Ps 38:17, 46:3, 55:23, 66:9, 121:3 and Isa 24:19 as and infinitive absolute) and twice as participle (Prov 24:11, 25:26). The Qal stem is called the "Grundstamm" or the basic stem in most Hebrew Grammars.[7] It is used to express an action or a state, notions of causations are absent.[8]

Regarding the conjugated verb forms, the Qal does not have any tendency to prefer a specific conjugation. However, the variety of verb forms is very striking. מוט as an infinitive and as a participle only occurs in the Qal stem. This is an indication for the fact that the Qal stem describes the status of מוט whereas the other stems express different nuances of it. When being used in the Suffix-conjugation, מוט in the Qal stem gives background information to the following or preceding actions of the verse. Hence, it is found once at the end of the verse, introduced by the conjunction כי (Ps 60:4), and three times at the beginning of the verse (Lev 25:35; Ps 46:7 and 94:18). As such, the function of the Qal Suffix-conjugation of מוט is describing the condition of מוט as the setting for the other actions. The usage of the participle in Prov 25:26 has a similar nuance of describing the actual action of מוט as a certain condition.[9]

לי נקם ושלם **לעת תמוט רגלם** כי קרוב יום אידם וחש עתדת למו (Deut 32:35)

כי ההרים ימושו והגבעות תמוטנה וחסדי מאתך לא־ימוש וברית שלומי לא תמוט אמר מרחמך יהוה (Isa 54:10)

The Prefix-conjugation, on the other hand, has not that factual background information nuance, but describes a prospective view on the action of מוט. This is still a description of the factual action of מוט, in difference to the Prefix-conjugation in the Niphal stem which describes the prospective possibility and fear of coming in the condition of מוט. The Prefix-conjugation

[7] Cf. e.g. Waltke, B.K., O'Connor, M.P., *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Winona Lake, Ind: Eisenbrauns, 1990, 362.

[8] Cf. Waltke/O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 362f.

[9] I read the occurrence in Prov 25:26 rather as a participle than as a Suffix-conjugation as the verse clearly hints towards the usage of a participle because of its simile and the preceding participles. Moreover, מוט in the participle has the nuance of timelessness and hence it implies the message of a permanent condition which fits to the context of the verse.

in the Qal stem describes a condition of a prospective situation in the sense of "as soon as מוט is in motion, other things will happen". In Deut 32:35 it is the day of revenge whereas Isa 54:10 describes the circumstances and characteristics of the stability of YHWH's ברית שׁלום compared to the stability of הרים and גבעות.

The usage of the infinitive of מוט in the Qal stem has the nuance of a final outcome of an action, namely being in the position of danger. This state that is expressed through the infinitive has a separating aspect. Hence, Clines' suggestion of translating it as "Quagmire" as an expression for the underworld is indeed already very interpretative but hints towards the meaning of being separated from a secure and stable life.[10] It shows a threatening and dangerous aspect of מוט.

כי־אמרתי פן־ישמחו־לי במוט רגלי עלי הגדילו:	(Ps 38:17)
על־כן לא־נירא בהמיר ארץ ובמוט הרים בלב ימים:	(Ps 46:3)
השלך על־יהוה יהבך והוא יכלכלך לא־יתן לעולם מוט לצדיק:	(Ps 55:23)
השם נפשנו בחיים ולא־נתן למוט רגלנו:	(Ps 66:9)
אל־יתן למוט רגלך אל־ינום שמרך:	(Ps 121:3)

Looking at the usage of the infinitive, the evidence of the infinitive construct is used when expressing the very special condition of מוט.[11] The infinitive construct of מוט is preceded twice by the preposition ב (Ps 38:17 and 46:3) and it is part of the introducing verbal construction of לא and נתן three times (Ps 55:23, 66:9, 121:3). When being preceded by the preposition ב, the infinitive construct of מוט describes a state of danger that lasts for an indefinite period of time. There is hardly any difference to the usage of מוט in the Suffix-conjugation of the Qal stem, besides the fact that the nuance of being subject to the condition of מוט is absent in the infinitive. It focusses more on the existence of the condition than on the consequences. The examples being introduced by לא and נתן have a different grammatical function. Here, the infinitive construct is used as the localisation of the object of נתן. The infinitive construct describes the position in which the object shall not be given in these cases, namely the position of מוט. מוט can be understood here as the end result of a process. It is a condition that needs to be avoided. If the infinitive construct of מוט can be understood as a description of the

[10] Cf. *DHC*, 172.

[11] The function of the usage of the infinitive absolute in Isa 24:19 is different and will be discussed when analysing the Hitpolel stem.

underworld or of being in limbo between stability and instability (or perhaps even life and death) in these cases should be left open for further analysis at this stage.

3.2 The Niphal Stem of מוט

Hebrew grammars define the Niphal stem as medio-passive or reflexive. When compared to the Qal stem, it is said to be the middle or passive counterpart in meaning according to Waltke and O'Connor.[12] Joüon-Muraoka state that the Niphal is reflexive to the Qal, except for a frequent usage in a completely passive sense.[13] Gesenius argues in the same direction but also admits that a reciprocal or active meaning is also possible. He only sees the Niphal stem as the passive stem of Qal „in consequence of a looseness of thought at an early period of time"[14]. Hence, the reflexive and/or middle voice meaning of the Niphal is well attested in scholarship and recent analyses of this particular stem argue in a similar direction of reflexiveness and middle voice.[15]

Unless an agent for an action in a passive meaning doing something to the subject cannot be found in the Hebrew sentence, I argue for reading the Niphal in a middle voice. The verb then describes an action that the subject does in a way that concerns itself. This middle voice action focuses on the fact in how far the action concerns the subject, whereas the reflexive concentrates more on the action that is done to or upon the subject.[16] Verbs like שׁבע that almost solely occur in the Niphal stem still show this middle meaning though their translation is in an active sense, e.g. „to swear to oneself" instead of only „to swear". Hence, the strikingly strong

[12] Cf. Waltke/O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 379ff.

[13] Cf. Joüon, P., Muraoka T., *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew. Fourth Reprint of the Second Edition*. Roma: Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2006, 150 and 159.

[14] Cf. Gesenius, F.H.W., Kautzsch, E. and Cowley, A.E., *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar as Edited and Enlarged by E Kautzsch; 2nd English Edition Revised in Accordance with the 28th German Edition by A E Cowley*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982, 138.

[15] Cf. Baden, J.S., "Hithpael and Niphal in Biblical Hebrew: Semantic and Morphological Overlap". *Vetus Testamentum* 60(1) (2010), 33-44; Benton, R., "Verbal and Contextual Information. The Problem of Overlapping Meanings in the Niphal and Hitpael". *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 124.3 (2012), 385-399*;* Lee, C.-C., "Once Again: The Niphal and the Hithpael of ברך in the Abrahamic Blessing for the Nations". *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 36(3) (2012), 279–296*;* Noonan, B.J., "Abraham, Blessing, and the Nations: A Reexamination of the Niphal and Hitpael of ברך in the Patriarchal Narratives". *Hebrew Studies* 51 (2010), 73-93; Staps, C., "A Case Study of Reciprocal Middles in Biblical Hebrew: the Niphal of לחם". *Orientalia* 87 (2018), 159-183; van Wolde, E., "The Niphal as middle voice and its consequence for meaning". *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 43.3 (2019), 453-478.

[16] Cf. Lee, "Once Again", 284.

occurrence of מוט in the Niphal stem has to be analysed by focussing on a possible middle voice meaning of the verb. I read מוט in the Niphal stem as the process of action that results in the state of מוט in the Qal stem as shall be shown in the following.

Strikingly, almost all occurrences of מוט in the Niphal stem are found in the Prefix-conjugation (except for Ps 17:5). This observation fits to my assumption that מוט in the Niphal describes the process of an unfinished action, as the aspect of the Prefix-conjugation is to describe an action in process that has not been finished yet.[17] Hence, this aspect is also often called *imperfect* as it has not reached the state of perfection, meaning of conclusion and completion. In contrast, the Suffix-conjugation covers the aspect of conclusion and completion and hence is also called *perfect*. The characteristics of this aspect are not only the completion of an action and hence meaning that the action is not in process anymore but finished, it describes also the result of an action, the final state of an action. Assuming that מוט in the Qal stem describes the condition of great instability of either the cosmos or an individual, the Niphal stem expresses the way and process of how to get into that condition of instability, the transfer from stability into instability. Hence, the usage of the Prefix-conjugation that has an unfinished aspect of an action being still in progress underlines this meaning of מוט in the Niphal stem. Moreover, the prospective aspect of the Prefix-conjugation becomes very clear in the usage of מוט, as the examples in the Suffix-conjugation of the Niphal stem are often negated to express the wish of being protected from מוט in the future.

Furthermore, the Niphal is used to express מוט in the verbal aspectual classification of an accomplishment.[18] This means that the Niphal describes a teleological action that is durative and somehow has a climax with a result. This result is described in the Qal stem as the activity of מוט. Hence, this is a further argument that the Niphal describes the way into the motion of מוט expressed in the Qal stem. מוט in the Niphal binyan is a transforming and changing expression for a period that leads into damage, danger an death. As the use of the Qal infinitive with the negated verb form of נתן shows, the limbo of מוט is an expression of a threatening action. Beginning from a state of stability and security, the action of מוט in the Niphal is traversed with the climax of being in the damaging state of מוט in the Qal. In this context, the negation of מוט in the Niphal Prefix-conjugation has become a set phrase comparable to an

[17] Cf. Waltke/O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 504.

[18] Cf. Jenni, E., "Nif'al und Hitpa'el im Biblisch-Hebräischen". In: *Studien zur Sprachwelt des Alten Testaments III* (edited by H. Jenni, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2012), 131–303, 138f.

incantation or adjuratory formula with the aim of being prevented and protected from the danger of מוט.

3.3 The Hitpolel Stem of מוט

The only occurrence of מוט in the Hitpolel stem in the Hebrew Bible is in Isa 24:19:

רעה התרעעה הארץ פור התפוררה ארץ מוט התמוטטה ארץ׃

The meaning in this context is the change and coming into effect of a new condition.[19] The meaning of the Hitpael – and here the Hitpolel is used as a substitute stem as מוט is a middle-weak verb – is similar to those of the Niphal. Comparable to my assumptions about the Niphal stem, I argue against a passive meaning of the Hitpolel of מוט and read it in a middle voice.[20] Agreeing with Joüon-Muraoka, I assume that the Hitpael has a passive meaning only in very few examples and should be read similar to "the diverse meanings of the Niphal".[21] Or in the words of Siebesma: "The hitp. may be translated as active, reflexive or reciprocal, but rarely as passive".[22] The Hitpael is usually related to the meaning of the verb in the Piel stem. As מוט does not exist in the Polel stem, the occurrence in the Hitpolel in Isa 24:19 must be considered according to rhetorical devices.

Isa 24:19 is put into parallelism with verbs of damage. It is a synthetic and perhaps also climactic tricolon parallelism, always with the infinitive absolute of a verb in the Qal stem followed by the same verb in the third person feminine singular Suffix-conjugation in the Hitpolel and ארץ as the subject. This combination of infinitive absolute and a conjugated verb form is used as a figura etymologica to emphasise the statement.[23] The other verbs besides מוט are רעע and פרר, both verbs that describe destruction and damage. Assuming that מוט in the Qal stem describes the state of מוט, and the Niphal and Hitpolel stems describe the way into that state, the combination of the absolute infinitive in the Qal stem and the conjugated verb form

[19] Cf. Jenni, "Nif'al und Hitpa'el", 272f.

[20] Cf. Baden, "Hitpael and Niphal", 34f.; Noonan, "Abraham, Blessing", 75-77. *BDB* translates the Hitpolel of מוט in a passive voice. This translation does not reflect the original intention and meaning of the usage of מוט in the Hitpolel in this verse.

[21] Joüon-Muraoka, *Grammar*, 150.

[22] Siebesma, P.A., *The Function of the Niph'al in Biblical Hebrew. In Relationship to Other Passive-reflexive Verbal Stems and to the Pu'al and Hoph'al in Particular*. Assen: Van Gorcum, 1991, 168.

[23] Cf. Gesenius et al., *Grammar*, 342; Waltke/O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 587f.

in the Hitpolel stem express the way into the result of instability. The reason why מוט is used in the Hitpolel here is to show the heaviness and vehemence of damage and destruction. The meaning of verbs in the D-stems (Piel, Pual, Hitpael) and their substitutes is factitive, meaning that it concentrates on the result, or pluralitive, meaning that its action is repeated.[24] As מוט does not occur in any other D-Stem in the Hebrew Bible, the use of the Hitpolel has to be understood as an intensifying stylistic device to reinforce the meaning of מוט in the Niphal. The use of מוט in the Hitpolel in Isa 24:19 has to be understood rhetorically: the writer expresses the seriousness of the damaging condition of the earth by not only using the figura etymologica, but also choosing the Hitpolel verb forms in order to underline the message of destruction of v. 19 in a pluralitive and factitive way. Hence, the focus is laid on the result of the damage of the earth to show the scope of the catastrophe.

3.4 The Hiphil Stem of מוט

מקול אויב מפני עקת רשע כי־ימיטו עלי און ובאף ישטמוני׃ (Ps 55:4)

ימיטו עליהם גחלים באש יפלם במהמרות בל־יקומו׃ (Ps 140:11)

I argue for reading the example of מוט in Ps 140:11 as a Hiphil stem as written in the Ketibh rather than changing it into the Niphal as proposed in the Qere and in some manuscripts according to the apparatus. In my opinion, there is no need for changing it into a Niphal or even an emendation as they suggest. I mount my argument on the observation that Ps 55:4 and 140:11 use the verb מוט in a similar way in the Hiphil stem. Both occurrences are discussed as quite problematic regarding their meaning and possible translation in commentaries. By describing the grammatical characteristics of both occurrences and their similarities, I try to show a possible way of understanding מוט in the Hiphil stem when used in a certain grammatical paradigm.

Both occurrences are built in the same way: the conjugated verb form of מוט as a third person masculine plural Prefix-conjugation in the Hiphil stem is followed by the preposition על with a pronominal suffix (in Ps 55:4 it is the first person singular suffix, in Ps 140:11 it is the third person masculine plural suffix) and a dative object. In my view, this is the typical usage of מוט in the Hiphil stem and it does not need any emendation but a better proposal of translation

[24] Cf. Noonan, "Abraham, Blessing", 76.

of מוט in the Hiphil stem. *BDB* suggests to translate the Hiphil of מוט as "dislodge, let fall, drop".[25] I agree with *BDB* that the motion of מוט in the Hiphil stem is something that is done upon somebody. This is indicated by the preposition על. As mentioned previously, I understand the Niphal stem of מוט as a verb in the middle voice. Verbs in the middle voice cannot have a preposition with a pronominal suffix functioning as the accusative object as they are intransitive and refer to themselves. However, מוט in Ps 140:11 and 55:4 both has an accusative and dative object which argues for its use in the Hiphil stem. Looking at its objects, it is און in Ps 55:4 and גחלים באשׁ in 140:11. Against the suggestion of the apparatus to change גחלים באשׁ into a bound construction in Ps 140:11, I would suggest to read גחלים as the dative object and באשׁ as the local adverb in that verse. With און and גחלים, there are two quite semantically different substantives as objects prima facie. However, both substantives are meant to be put upon the person in a damaging and harmful way. Both occurrences express a situation of uncertainty and instability. I argue for reading מוט in the Hiphil stem as an expression of causing an instability to somebody. Perhaps, the translation "to overwhelm sb wit sth" fits most likely as it mirrors the use of the objects and preposition quite well.

3.5 The Distribution of מוט to the Hebrew stem system in the Dead Sea Scrolls

	Qal	Niphal	Hiphil	Polel	Hitpolel	
	Inf. cstr.	PC	Participle	Participle	PC	Participle
	1	1	1	2*	3	1
Neg. בל		4			1	

מוט occurs 14 times in the parabiblical texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls.[26] Five occurrences are found in the Niphal Prefix-conjugation, four occurrences as a PC and one participle in the Hitpolel stem, one is a Qal infinitive construct, two Polel participles and one is a participle in the Hiphil stem.[27] Four occurrences in the Niphal Prefix-conjugation and one occurrence in the Hitpolel Prefix-conjugation are negated with the particle בל. מוט is accompanied by terms and associative terms that also occur together with the verb in the Hebrew Bible, such as חסד and ישועה (1QS 11:12), דרך (1QH[a] 14:21; 4Q429 4i:10),

[25] Cf. *BDB*, 557.

[26] However, one occurrence in 11Q6 4_5:5 is reconstructed in parallel with 11Q5 19:2. Thus, there is only one evidence of a polel participle in the texts, cf. *DHC*, 172. Moreover, the verbal form in 4Q579 1:4 is unclear but I count it as participle in the Hiphil stem: ה<<יט>>{{ש}}מ.

[27] Cf. Abegg, M. et al., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Concordance*. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2003, 430, however without the counting of 11Q6 4_5:5.

גבעות, הרים and מוש (4Q176 8-11,12), עולם (4Q405 23i:4) and רגל (11Q5 19:2).[28] In addition, one occurrence, 4Q525 14ii:7, is in a bound construction with עת, comparable to the occurrence in Deut 32:35.

בעת מוטך תמצא מ֯[שען --] (4Q525 14ii:7)

לי נקם ושלם **לעת תמוט רגלם** כי קרוב יום אידם וחש עתדת למו (Deut 32:35)

It is striking that most occurrences of מוט can be found in the middle voice stems Niphal and Hitpolel with a total of 10 occurrences compared to 4 in the other stems. The conjugated verb forms of מוט only occur in these stems. In comparison to the Masoretic Text of the Hebrew Bible, the distribution of the conjugated verb forms to both medio-passive stems is poised. Hence, the intensified meaning of מוט expressed by the Hitpolel stem ist of more importance in the Dead Sea Scrolls than it is in the Masoretic Text.[29] It might be a lack of evidence; however, the other occurrences are hard to analyze as the participle in Hiphil is unclear and one of the two Polel participles is reconstructed. The occurrence of the infinitive construct of מוט in the Qal stem in 4Q525 14ii:7 is interesting as it is used as a nominalized infinitive comparable to the usage of the infinitive construct as an expression of a condition of instability in the Masoretic Text.

According to the terms related to מוט in the Qumran texts, most of these examples occur in the context of righteousness. The semantic context of the cosmos is absent except for 4Q579 1,4 in which תהום is the subject of מוט. Hence together with the observation fo a shift to the medio-passive and self-reflexive stems, a development towards a solely usage of the term in its associative field of (self-)righteousness can be observed. This might hint towards an ethicalization of מוט.

[28] Cf. ibid.

[29] The only occurrence of מוט in the Hitpolel stem in the Hebrew Bible is Isa 24:19. There might be a possibility that the middle voice is more important in Qumran Hebrew than in Biblical Hebrew, however, this salience is striking and should be analyzed more thoroughly in my dissertation.

3.6 The Distribution of מוט to the Hebrew stem system in Ben Sira

Ben Sira	Qal		Niphal		Hitpolel
	Infinitive Cstr.	Participle	PC	Participle	Participle
	1	1		3	1
Neg. לא			2		

The text of Ben Sira counts 8 occurrences of מוט,[30] one as a Qal infinitive construct, one as a Qal participle masculine singular, two as a 3. masculine singular Prefix-conjugation in the Niphal stem, three as a Niphal masculine singular participle and one as a masculine singular participle in the Hitpolel stem.[31] It is striking that the only conjugated verb forms of מוט can be found in the PC of the Niphal stem in Ben Sira. This fits to the observation of a strong tendency to Niphal PC in the Masoretic Text as well as a salience of conjugated verb forms in the PC of the middle voice stems Niphal an Hitpolel in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Hence, מוט seems to tend towards a usage of middle voice stems and the Prefix-conjugation. Nevertheless, a strong salience of a participle usage is specific for the occurrence of מוט in the text of Ben Sira.

מוט is accompanied by terms known or in relation to vocabulary that occurs already with the examples in the Hebrew Bible, such as דל (13:21), חסד (40:17), בטח (15:4) and עולם (40:17). Moreover, all conjugated verb forms in the Niphal stem are negated (with לא). In addition, one occurrence is in a bound construction with עת (3:31), comparable to the occurrence in Deut 32:35 and 4Q525:

פועל טוב יקראנו בדרכיו ובעת מוֹטו ימצא משען: (Sir 3:31)

This salience hints even more towards an established wording for the combination of these two words to describe an exceptional point of time. The absolute lack of vocabulary related to the cosmos and the usage of words belonging to the fields of trust and loyalty shows that in Ben Sira – as well as in the Dead Sea Scrolls – מוט is used as an antonymous expression in the context of righteousness.

[30] An absolute frequency of 11 occurrences can be counted in all manuscripts of the Hebrew Ben Sira. However, I did not count the same citation of מוט in various manuscripts several times, hence I count a relative frequency of 8 different occurrences.

[31] Cf Ben-Ḥayyîm, Z., *Sefer ben Sira: text, concordance and an analysis of the vocabulary = The book of Ben Sira*. Jerusalem: Acad. of the Hebrew Language and the Shrine of the Book, 1973, 193f.

4 The Role of Negation

Except for one occurrence in the Qal stem (Isa 54:10), all the other 20 negations of מוט in the Hebrew Bible are found in the Niphal stem. The one Qal occurrence is negated with לא, whereas two-thirds of the Niphal evidence are negated with בל (a total of 13 occurrences in Ps 10:6, 16:8, 17:5 (in Suffix-conjugation), 21:8, 30:7, 46:6, 93:1, 96:10, 104:5; Prov 10:30, 12:3; Job 41:15; 1 Chr 16:30). The combination of the negation בל and the verb מוט in the Niphal stem is very striking. As mentioned previously, the occurrence of מוט in the Prefix-conjugation of the Niphal stem has an implication of transfer and development of a person from a condition of stability into instability. Hence, it appears as the negation of מוט is a set phrase to prevent the condition of instability. I argue for a formulaic use to ask for shelter and security. However, the meaning and the development of this phrase has not yet been thoroughly analysed. Though the use of לא and בל is interchangeable in their function as negating particles, the usage of בל in the poetic texts is of special interest for an understanding of מוט.

4.1 The Characteristics of the Negation בל

בל occurs 69 times in the Old Testament and in 65 occurrences it precedes a finite verb.[32] Strikingly, most occurrences of בל can be found in the Book of Psalms, namely 31 occurrences (followed by 24 in Isaiah and 10 in Proverbs besides single occurrences in other Old Testament books).[33] בל has the tendency to occur in poetic books only,[34] thus it is often described as the poetic equivalent to לא.[35] It is not an accident that the mutual findings of מוט and בל in a statistically comparable significance occur in the same biblical books. The following chart shortly demonstrates the occurrence of בל in the Hebrew Bible:

	Occurrences of בל	Occurrences of בל together with מוט
Isaiah	24	
Hosea	2	

[32] Cf. Sjörs, A., "Biblical Hebrew *Bal* and Privative Negation". *Journal of Semitic Studies* 63(2) (2018), 297–322, 297.

[33] Cf. Sjörs, "Privative Negation", 307.

[34] Cf. Tromp, N.J., "The Hebrew Particle בל". In: *Remembering All the Way: A Collection of Old Testament Studies Published on the Occasion of the Fortieth Anniversary of Oudtestamentisch Werkgezelschap in Nederland. [Oudtestamentische Studien 21]* (edited by A.S. Van Der Woude, Leiden: Brill, 1981), 277-287, 283.

[35] Cf. *BDB*, 115; Sjörs, "Privative Negation", 298.

Psalms	31	9	→	10:6; 16:8; 17:5; 21:8; 30:7; 46:6; 93:1; 96:10; 104:5
Job	1	1	→	41:15
Proverbs	10	2	→	10:30; 12:3
1-2 Chr	1	1	→	1 Chr 16:30

As the chart shows, there is a significant co-existence of the two very rare Hebrew words that need to be analysed after understanding the characteristics of the particle בל. It is striking that both occur almost solely in poetic material and not in narrative prose (except for מוט in Lev 25:35).

Though there has been much diverse research on the grammatical function of בל and its meaning in the Old Testament texts,[36] I assume that in most occurrences of בל when preceding a conjugated verb form, it is used as a negating particle. As such, it is followed both by verbs in the Suffix- as well as in the Prefix-conjugation. According to Tromp, "bal cum perfecto is the affirmative negation; bal cum imperfecto may be either the affirmative or the prohibitive negation"[37]. The affirmative function of בל is not the focus of my analysis, though it should be mentioned in the context. More relevant is the prohibitive negating function of בל when occurring with a Prefix-conjugation as it is mostly the case together with מוט in the Niphal stem (except for Ps 17:5 where it is followed by מוט in the Suffix-conjugation). In addition, this prohibitive negating meaning is supported by the fact, that מוט is also negated with the particle לא. לא has an exclusively prohibitive meaning as a negation.[38] Moreover, Tromp talks about the rhetorical use of בל but links it to its archaic character in a rhetorical question.[39] I argue that בל and מוט are not used in any context of a rhetorical question but it is true that the usage of בל as the negating particle of מוט is a stylistic device that underlines its character of a set phrase as will be discussed in a further step.

[36] Cf. Tromp, N.J., "The Hebrew Particle בל"; Sjörs, "Privative Negation"; Whitley, C.F., "The Positive Force of the Hebrew Particle בל". *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 84.2 (2009), 213-219.

[37] Tromp, "The Hebrew Particle בל", 285.

[38] Cf. *BDB*, 518-520.

[39] Cf. Tromp, "The Hebrew Particle בל", 286.

בל is a negation that is found in Ugaritic, Punic and Phoenician texts.[40] It is the only negation particle in the Phoenician language.[41] According to its findings in these Semitic languages, the lack of בל in Aramaic and the fact that it is rarely used in Old Testament texts – and if it is, only in poetry – scholars argue for בל being an archaic form of negation.[42] I agree that בל might have its origin in ancient North-West Semitic languages; however, its usage in late poetic literature of the Hebrew Bible and the fact that it is used in a standardised formula hint towards a more recent and poetic-formulaic usage. This argument gains even more plausibility when considering the usage of בל together with מוט.

4.2 The Combination of בל and מוט – a Set Phrase?

The combination of בל and מוט is often seen as a fixed phrase in scholarship.[43] The co-occurrence of these rare verbs in poetic texts is indeed striking. As the chart above shows, the only occurrence of מוט and בל in Job and Chronicles is the combination of both, which hints towards its characteristics of an established wording. Sjörs argues that this phrase expresses "the privation of movement from something firmly established in the preceding clause" in the examples of Job 41:15, 1 Chr 16:30 and Ps 16:8, 17:5, 21:8, 46:6, 93:1, 96:10, 104:5.[44] For the occurrences in Prov 10:30 and 12:3, he assumes the usage of "a fixed phrase used for the expression of a lack of movement" and for the examples in Ps 10:6 and 30:7 the combination of בל and מוט "does not express a situation lacking from another situation expressed in the preceding clause, but the lack of a situation that must be associated with the context".[45] Though Sjörs concentrates his analysis on the privative aspect of בל, his analysis of the co-occurrences of בל and מוט shows that this combination is an expression of a lack of instability, i.e. an expression of stability. Moreover, he observes a dependency between the phrase and its context. This observation is very helpful for understanding the semantic and literary contextualisation of the usage of מוט.

[40] Cf. ibid., 280f.

[41] Cf. ibid., 281.

[42] Cf. ibid., 283.

[43] Cf. Sjörs, "Privative Negation", 298.

[44] Ibid., 310.

[45] Ibid., 315.

According to Tromp, the formula of בל and מוט has "in four cases, all of them found in Psalms, […] a cosmogonic meaning, which is applied to human existence in seven or eight other occurrences".[46] The occurrences in Ps 93:1, 96:10 and 1 Chr 16:30 obviously appear as a set phrase. Though the context of the preceding statements is slightly different in each verse, מוט occurs always in the fixed phrase אף־תכון תבל בל־תמוט. This phrase seems to be a fixed expression.[47] What Tromp defines as a cosmogonic meaning, I argue for an expression of safety and stability opposed to a fundamental position of instability and danger as the parallelism shows.

4.3 The negation of מוט in the parabiblical texts

As the tables of chapter 3 have shown, there are five negated occurrences of מוט in the Dead Sea Scrolls (four in the Niphal Prefix-conjugation and one in the Hitpolel Prefix-conjugation) and two negated occurrences of the Niphal Prefix-conjugation in the Hebrew text of Ben Sira. All negated occurrences in the Dead Sea Scrolls are found with the negation particle בל, whereas both negated occurrences in Ben Sira carry the particle לא.

The nagtion particle בל occurs 38 times in the parabiblical texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls (in comparison: לא occurs 2051 times).[48] Hence, this particle is a rare negation marker in Qumran, too. It is striking that all negated occurrences in the parabiblical texts of Qumran of מוט are linked to בל. Thus, the connection between both words marking a set phrase or even expressing a certain wish of protection against danger can also be found in the Dead Sea Scrolls. This shows that the combination of both lexemes might be of special meaning.

In comparison, both negated occurrences of מוט in Ben Sira are linked to the particle לא.[49] The negation particle בל can only be found twice in Ben Sira:

רבים נדכאים ישבו על כסא **ובל** על לב עטו צניף: (Sir 11:5)

במקום היין אל תשפך שיח ובלא מזמר מה תשפך שיח **ובל** עת מה תתחכם: (Sir 32:4)

[46] Tromp, "The Hebrew Particle בל", 278.

[47] Ibid., 283.

[48] The proportion of both negation paricles in the Masoretic texts is 66:5192.

[49] The particle לא occurs with an absolute frequency of 262 in the Hebrew text of Ben Sira.

In both occurrences of בל the particle does not negate a verbal form, but the preposition על and the noun עת. Hence, בל is not used as a negation particle for verbs in the Hebrew of Ben Sira and moreover, it is a very rare lexem. Thus, it is not very confusing that both negated forms of מוט occur with the particle לא in Ben Sira, as this is the standard negation in this parabiblical text.

5 Conclusion

The analysis of the distribution to the Hebrew stems has shown some characteristics of מוט. Whereas the Qal stem describes the actual condition of מוט, namely being in a position of fundamental danger, the Niphal stem describes the process of coming into that condition. Hence, the examples in the Qal stem occur mostly not negated, in contrast almost all Niphal examples are negated as a wish and plead for not entering the process that results in the state of מוט. The Hiphil stem as causing somebody to מוט and the Hitpolel stem used as a rhetoric device have completed the analysis.

As the analysis has shown, מוט in the Niphal stem means being in limbo between stability and instability. מוט results in destruction and oblivion (expressed by the Qal stem) but it describes the transitional phase of decay. Therefore, it also describes being in limbo between life and death. This limbo is an endangerment to the existence of the cosmos and the individual. It is in a strong opposition to YHWH's sovereignty and power. Hence, the use of the negation of מוט in the Niphal stem is an established wording of praying for protection and prevention. It is YHWH's חסד that protects against and prevents מוט. YHWH has the power to retrieve his cosmos and human beings of this endangerment and re-establish their integrity. Moreover, the distribution between righteous and wicked and the need of a righteous conduct of life are connected to מוט, which becomes even more clear when looking at the parabiblical texts. The look at the parabiblical evidence has underlined that – particularly in poetic contexts – the negation of מוט is used as a set phrase. Furthermore, there is a shift towards מוט occurring with terms of righteousness and a deprivation of its connection to the cosmos.[50]

[50] A thorough analysis of development is still a desideratum which, unfortunately, cannot be covered in this paper, but will be covered in my dissertation.

One question still remains: How can מוט be translated according to these first findings? Though such a concept as being in limbo between stability and instability, being in a position of fundamental danger is hard to translate in one word alone, a first proposal for a new understanding of מוט shall be made on the basis of the syntactical observations. First of all, a description of the verb will help to narrow down the proper terminology. As mentioned previously, the different stems describe different aspects of מוט. מוט in the Qal stem expresses the actual being in limbo and danger. Hence, I would propose translating it as "to be on the verge of fundamental destruction". This destruction can be applied to cosmological damage as well as individual suffering such as death or socio-economic menace. According to this, the Niphal stem describes the process of entering into that phase of being on the verge of fundamental destruction, hence a translation such as "to come in limbo of destruction". As the Hitpolel is used to intensify the meaning of the Niphal and is used more often in the Dead Sea Scrolls, the examples in the Hitpolel stem should be translated as "to burst in limbo of destruction". The Hiphil stem expresses the action of causing somebody entering this position of danger described by the Qal stem. Adherent to my previous suggestion of "to overwhelm sb with sth", I propose translating the Hiphil occurrences as "to overwhelm sb destructively with sth".

The impact of a new translation on the exegesis of the biblical texts containing מוט still needs further research. However, a first and crucial step towards a new understanding has been made by looking at the distribution of the verbal root on the Hebrew stem system and at the special charactersitics of its negation. The analysis has clearly shown that מוט is not a verb of physical motion describing the movement of tottering but expresses a limbo of danger. As such, it is opposed to the integrity of YHWH's cosmos and the individual as well as to YHWH's sovereignty. מוט is connected to wickedness as the opposition of righteousness and thus has also an ethical connotation. Its negated usage in poetical texts and prayers shows the need of a repeated plead for an avoidance of מוט. It is a set phrase used in specific contexts. Hence, מוט is a crucial term for understanding the theology of the relevant biblical texts.

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"To totter" or not "to totter"?

The Hebrew verb מוט in biblical and parabiblical texts

What is the meaning of the verb מוט in the context of the Hebrew Bible and in parabiblical texts? This question breaks the first ground of my dissertation project on the Hebrew verb מוט and its 40 occurrences in biblical and 21 occurrences in parabiblical texts. My first impression is that מוט describes a cosmological, an individual as well as a collective endangerment, also with regard to one's relationship to YHWH. This endangerment is expressed as a limbo between YHWH's assistance and his abandonment as well as between stability and instability or even life and death. In contrast, the standard interpretation and translation of מוט as "to totter" – which can be found in almost all Hebrew dictionaries and theological dictionaries of the biblical and parabiblical texts – is far too limited. In my view, מוט can express a fundamental destruction, an inward and outward instability or even a limbo facing great dangers. Hence, I assume that a revision of the translation variants of מוט should be taken into consideration.

A thorough analysis of the syntax, the semantics, the exegetical specifics and theological implications of מוט will allow new suggestions for understanding and translating the verb in a more appropriate way, noting all its semantic fields. Therefore, in my dissertation I will analyse all occurrences of מוט in the Masoretic Text and the parabiblical texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira, regarding the distribution of מוט to the Hebrew stem system, the negation of the verb, its subjects and related words, associative fields, antonyms and synonyms of מוט as well as providing a thorough exegesis of crucial texts to show the theological implications and meaning of the lexeme. מוט is used both, as a creational-cosmological and as an ethical-individual term describing a certain condition of the relationship to YHWH. I assume that a development of theological concepts can be seen in this differing usage in the various texts as מוט is increasingly used as an ethical-individual term in the later biblical and parabiblical texts. Thus, it has to be examined if מוט shows a shift of ethicization from a more cosmological to a more individual concept of God.

My paper concentrates on one aspect of my forthcoming analysis in my dissertation, namely on some semantical and syntactical aspects of מוט: its distribution to the Hebrew stem system and

its connection to negation particles in the Masoretic text and the parabiblical texts of Qumran and Ben Sira. Hence, the paper is structured into three main parts of analysis: a survey of מוט and its occurrences in the Hebrew Bible (section 2), its distribution to the Hebrew stem system with an outlook to the distribution of מוט to the Hebrew stem system in the parabiblical texts (section 3) and the role of negation for the understanding of מוט (section 4).

The analysis of the distribution to the Hebrew stems shows some characteristics of מוט. Whereas the Qal stem describes the actual condition of מוט, namely being in a position of fundamental danger, the Niphal stem describes the process of coming into that condition. Hence, the examples in the Qal stem occur mostly not negated, while in contrast almost all Niphal examples are negated as a wish and plead for not entering the process that results in the state of מוט. The Hiphil stem as causing somebody to מוט and the Hitpolel stem used as a rhetoric device complete the analysis. מוט in the Niphal stem means being in limbo between stability and instability. It is in a strong opposition to YHWH's sovereignty and power. Hence, the use of the negation of מוט in the Niphal stem is an established expression of praying for protection and prevention. YHWH has the power to retrieve his cosmos and human beings of this endangerment and re-establish their integrity. Moreover, the distribution between righteous and wicked and the need of a righteous conduct of life are connected to מוט, which becomes even more clear when looking at the parabiblical texts. The look at the parabiblical evidence underlines that – particularly in poetic contexts – the negation of מוט is used as a set phrase. Furthermore, there is a shift towards מוט occurring with terms of righteousness and a deprivation of its connection to the cosmos. As a conclusion of these observations, I provide some suggestions for translating מוט noting the specifics of its distribution to the Hebrew stem system (section 5).

Abstract

Truth and Falsehood in Ancient Near Eastern Historical Texts

(Mathis Kreitzscheck, University of Göttingen)

While it is part of the everyday work of historians to inquire about the veracity of their sources, they seldomly get glimpses into the disposition of ancient writers towards what is true. This paper will focus on aspects of truth and falsehood in ancient near Eastern historical texts. After a short, exemplary demonstration that truth and falsehood are valid moral categories in the Ancient Near East as well, the paper will offer roughly 25 remarkably similar passages in otherwise unrelated inscriptions in Old Akkadian, Babylonian, Assyrian, Old Persian, and Egyptian, which swear that the account given is true. The paper will compare such passages and look for possible links to other oaths, e. g. in legal texts and law literature. The findings will be put into a broader horizon of writing history in the Old Testament and the Ancient Near East.

Truth and falsehood in the Ancient Near Eastern inscriptions

(Mathis Kreitzscheck, University of Göttingen)

1. Introduction: The context and goal of this paper

In my doctoral dissertation, I examine metatextual notes in the narrative books of the Old Testament that deal with the veracity of the stories told, such as locating physical remnants of the past in the present (e. g. Jos 4:9), citing source documents (e. g. 2 Sam 1:18), or establishing a local and linguistic link between story world and narrator world (e. g. Jos 15:8). To contextualize the findings, I searched the historical literature of the Ancient Near East for comparable elements, and here I want to present a particular type of metatextual note found almost exclusively in Akkadian and Egyptian inscriptions that explicitly deals with the truth of the accounts narrated.

I will first grant the necessary examples that show that truth and falsehood are indeed valid moral categories in the ancient Near Eastern text (2), then I'll offer the examples of explicit truth claims in inscriptions, to then provide some insights into their context and function (3). Some thoughts on how these findings may elucidate the genesis of the Old Testament or Old Greek historical literature will conclude the essay (4-5).

2. Truthful kings and lying foes: Speaking the truth as a moral category

It is safe to assume that telling untruths was considered wrong in the Ancient Near East as it is in any culture, and the narratives we want to probe for their disposition towards their own veracity luckily also provide us with helpful images of truth and untruths in more general terms:

> *Tablet inscription of Erišum I, found at Kaneš (Old Assyrian; RIMA[1] 0.33.1, 46-50):*
>
> 46 *ša a-na* 47 *ši*$_2$*-bu-u[t s]a*$_2$*-ra-tim e-le-u*$_2$ 48 [7 *da*]*-a-a-nu*$_3$ *ša di*$_2$*-na-am i-na* 49 [*mušlā-l*]*e i-di*$_2$*-nu di*$_2$*-i*[*n sa*$_2$*-r*]*a-*[*t*]*im* 50 [*lidīnūšum*]
>
> Who stands up for testimony of falsehood (*sarrātu*): The seven judges who pass judgement in the step gate give a decision of falsehood (*sarrātu*) for him.

> *From the so-called political testament of Ḫattušili I (15th c. BC.; CTH 6 ii,53-55):*
>
> 53 [*le-e ku-i*]*š-ki te-ez-zi* LUGAL-*ša du-ud-du-mi-li kar-di-ia-aš-ša-aš* 54 [*i-e-ez-zi n*]*a-at par*$_2$*-ku-nu-mi tak*$_2$*-ku-wa-at e-eš-zi tak*$_2$*-ku-wa-at* NU.ĜAL$_2$ 55 [*a-pe*$_2$*-e-a k*]*u-uš-du-wa-a-ta le-e le-e ḫa-an-da-a-an-pat*$_2$ *e-eš-du*
>
> Nobody must say: "The king always secretly does that of his heart (saying): 'I will justify it whether it is or is not.'" Such malevolence must never ever be right.

> *From a cylinder inscription of Nebuchadnezzar II (7th c. BC; GMTR 4 C31 i,1-6.16.21-27):*
>
> 1 ^{d}na$_3$*-du-dur*$_2$*-ru-u*$_2$*-ṣur* 2 lugal *mi-ša-ri-im* 3 *a*$_3$*-aš-ru ša-aḫ-tu* 4 ⌜*ša*⌝ *pa-la-aḫ i*$_3$*-li*$_2$ *mu-du-u*$_2$ 5 *ra-aʾ-im ki-it-ti* 6 *u*$_3$ *mi-ša-ri-im* 16 lugal ka$_2$-diĝir-ra^{ki} *a-na-ku* 21 *a-na* ^{d}utu *be-li*$_2$ 22 *da-a-a-nu ṣi-i-ru-um* 23 *ša ša-me*$_8$*-e u*$_3$ *er-ṣe-tim* 24 *qar-ra-du ra-bi*$_2$*-u*$_3$ 25 *eṭ-lu ka-ab-tu* 26 *be-li*$_2$ *mu-uš-te-ši-ir* 27 *pu-ru-us-se-e ki-it-ti*
>
> Nebuchadnezzar, king of justice (*mīšaru*), humble and reverent one, who knows fear of the gods, who loves truth (*kittu*) and justice (*mīšaru*) (…), king of Babylon am I. (…) To Šamaš, my lord,

[1] Bibliographical abbreviations follow the Reallexikon der Assyriologie (RlA). Abbreviations not given there are given in the respective footnotes.

exalted judge of heavens and earth, great warrior, glorious hero, lord who sets straight (*ešēru*) the decisions of truth (*kittu*).

From the stele of Nabonidus from Harran (AOAT 256 3.1 i,19-22):

[19] *par-ṣi-šu$_2$-nu im-šu-ʾi-ma i-dab-bu-bu sur-ra-a-tu$_2$* [20] *u la ki-na-a-tu$_2$ ki-ma* ur-gi$_7$ *it-ta-nak-ka-lu* [21] *a-ḫa-miš$_2$*

They [sc. the people and priests of Babylonia] forgot their rites and spoke lies (*surrātu*) and not truth (*kināt*u). They were eating each other like dogs.

Limestone stela from the grave of Merer, Butler of Edfu (Middle Kingdom; (translation M. Lichtheim in (Lichtheim 1975, 87)):

Never did I hand a person over to a potentate, so that my name might be good with all men. I never lied against any person – an abomination to Anubis.

Tomb-stela of the vizier Prahotep (19th dynasty; translation K. A. Kitchen in RI III, 54:1):

"I am one reliable and true-hearted, my abomination is lies, (I) am one who live(s) daily by doing right."

From a statue inscription of Harwa, high steward of the divine consort of Amun (translation M. Lichtheim in(Lichtheim 2006, 25–28), left side 7-8):

Every mission on which their majesties sent me, I accomplished it correctly, and never told a lie about it.

In these examples, truth is associated with other positively connotated terms such as justice (*mīšaru*) or goodness (*damqātu*). The god Šamaš, the god of justice, is associated with the term, too. Conversely, lies are associated with cultic misbehavior, with undue personal advantages, slander, civil upheaval, or enemies breaking treaties. Anubis, who plays a role in the judgment over the dead, is specifically said to detest lies. Thus, in these examples, the dichotomy between true and false or truth and lie does not manifest itself abstractly but in concrete interpersonal situations, real or imagined. This is helpful, as we will see, for our further examination, because the texts draw a picture of truth and falsehood not as an academic adiaphoron – if such a thing exists – but as having consequences on a personal, material, political, social, and cultic level.
Establishing why and how truth and falsehood are considered valid categories within narrative texts is, however, different from discussing whether a narrative is true or not. From the more general examples above one may surmise that narrating about yourself and your exploits without due diligence is considered bad, and thus a biographical or historical inscription, annals, or a chronicle could fall under the same demand for scrutiny.

3. I swear its true: Explicit affirmation of veracity

In the several thousand annals, chronicles, and royal inscriptions read for this investigation I found roughly 30 instances in which the author of the inscription explicitly claims that his accounts are true and not false.[2] Twelve or maybe thirteen examples come from cuneiform literature, mainly from Akkadian texts. Four examples come from the Old Akkadian period, one

[2] Most of them are presented here, a few more Egyptian examples I have yet to check, but these examples will more than suffice.

from the Neo-Assyrian period, six from the Neo-Babylonian period, and one from the Achaemenid period.[3] The other half is found in Egyptian literature,[4] the earliest from the first intermediate period, two from the Middle Kingdom, seven from the New Kingdom, more precisely the 18th and 19th dynasties, two from the late period (25th and 26th dynasty) and one from the Ptolemaic period. The fact that Egyptian inscriptions in translation have been edited a lot less comprehensively than cuneiform and alphabetic inscriptions may mean that there are yet more Egyptian examples to be found. I have been unable to find an Elamite, Luwian, Urartaen, Sumerian, or any West Semitic example.[5]

3.1 The examples from Cuneiform Literature

Most of our cuneiform examples are Akkadian:

> **1:** *From an inscription of Rīmuš from Old Babylonian Sammeltafeln (23rd c. BC; RIME 2.1.2.6, 78-83):*
>
> 78 dutu 79 *u3* 80 *il3-a-ba4* 81 *u2-ma2* 82 *la su2-ra-tum8* 83 *lu ki2-ni-iš2-ma*
>
> I swear by Šamaš and Ilaba: (These are) No lies (*surrātum*) – it is actually true (*kinīš*).[6]

> **2:** *From a statue and stela inscription of Maništušu (23rd c. BC; RIME 2.1.3.1, 47-52):*
>
> 47 dutu 48 *u3* 49 *il3-a-ba4* 50 *u2-ma2* 51 *la su2-ra-tum8* 52 *lu ki2-ni-iš2-ma*
>
> I swear by Šamaš and Ilaba: (These are) No lies (*surrātum*) – it is actually true (*kinīš*).

> **3:** *From an inscription of Narām-Sîn from Old Babylonian Sammeltafeln (23rd c. BC; RIME 2.1.4.2 vii,28-viii,1.viii,4-15):*
>
> 28 dr en ˀ-[x] 29 [*u2-ma*] 30 [*la su2-ra-tum8*] viii 1 *lu ki2-ni-iš2-ma*
>
> 4 dinanna- 5 *-an-nu-ni-tum* 6 *u3* 7 rd en-r x ˀ 8 *na-<ra-am>-<*den-zu*>* 9 *da-num2* 10 *in* šita 11 *il3-a-ba4* 12 *be-li2-šu* 13 *lu i-ik-mi-šu2-nu-ma* 14 *lu u-ša2-ri2-bu-šu4*
>
> [I swear by DN: (These are) No lies – (These are) No lies (*surrātum*) – it is actually true (*kinīš*).[7] (…)
>
> By Inanna-Annunitum and DN…: The strong Narām-Sîn has truly captured them with the weapon of Ilaba, his lord, and truly brought them in.

> **4:** *From Sennacherib's canal inscription at Bavian/Ḫinnis (7th c. BC; RINAP 3/2.223, 23-26):*
>
> 23 r nun *ar-ku-u2* ˀ *i-na* lugalmeš*-ni* 24 dumumeš*-ia ša it-ti lib3-bi uš-tam-mu-ma a-na qa-a-pi la tur-ru* r *i* ˀ-[*tam-ma*?] *a-*r *ki*ˀ*-i* r *i*ˀ*-na* [ša3?] lu2-erenmeš *an-nu-ti e-ṣu-ti* 25 id2 *šu-a-tu u2-šaḫ-ri ni-iš* d*aš-šur* diĝir-

[3] The editions for the 3rd and second millennium are found in The royal inscriptions of Mesopotamia (Sweet (1987-)). For the first millennium see The royal inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian period (Frame (2011-)); The royal inscriptions of Babylonia online (http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/ribo/; last access July 26th, 2021) as well as Schaudig (2001), Da Riva (2013, 2008).

[4] S. Lichtheim (1975, 13–27.83-93.113-130, 1988, 21–134), Kloth (2018) for examples from the Old and Middle-Kingdom; the six volumes of Ramesside Inscriptions (Kitchen (1993-2014); = RI) for the 19th Dynasty, Sethe (1914); Helck and Sethe (1961); Blumenthal and Sethe (1984); Redford (2010) for the 18th dynasty, Lichtheim (2006, 13–103); Heise (2007); Context I-III; TUAT 1-2; and TUAT NF 2; 6 for examples from the late periods.

[5] The most important editions used here are König (1965); Malbran-Labat (1995) (Elamite); Hawkins (2000) (Luwian); The electronic corpus of Urartian inscriptions (=eCUT; editor in chief B. Christiansen; http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/ecut/index.html last access July 26th, 2021; Urartian); Donner and Röllig (2002) (Aramean and Canaanite).

[6] Identical notes are found in two more inscriptions of Rīmuš: RIME 2.1.2.7, 37-42 und RIME 2.1.2.8, 29-31.

[7] The phrase *lu ki2-ni-iš2-ma* bolsters the reconstruction done by RIME, though it is unclear whether it is Enlil or any other deity in the oath.

ia gal [*at-ta-ma-a*] *šum-ma ina* ša$_3$ lu$_2$-[eren]$^{\lceil meš \rceil}$ *an-nu-ti* id$_2$ *šu-a-tu la aḫ-ru-u* ^{26} *u$_3$ i-na* mu-an-na 3 iti *la u$_2$-qat-tu-u$_2$ ši-pir-ša$_2$* $^{\lceil}$*la*$^{\rceil}$ […] *ig-gam-ru-u$_2$ u$_2$-qat-tu-u$_2$ ḫi-ru-sa*

A future ruler among the kings, my children, who searches with his heart but cannot(?) turn it to believe it (*qiāpu*) and (says) by himself thusly: "With only that few men he (supposedly) dug this canal?" By Aššur, my great God I swear that I dug this canal with (only) these men and that I dug it in one year and three months and that … and that I finished it and completed its excavations."

5: *From a cylinder inscription of Nabopolassar, from Babylon* (7th c. BC; RIBo[8] 7.1.03 iii,11-15 (http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/ribo/babylon7/corpus/ last access July 15th, 2021)):

^{11} *ma-na-ma* lugal *aḫ-ra-a-tim* ^{12} *a-ma-tu-u$_2$-a na-as-qa$_2$-a-tim a-na la šu-us-su$_2$-ki* ^{13} *el qi-ba-a-ti-ia$_2$ a-mat a-na la šub-ši-i* ^{14} *ni-iš* ^{d}amar-utu *be-li-ia u$_3$* ^{d}utu diĝir-*ia az-kur* ^{15} *šum-ma i-nim-ma-a-a sur-ra-tu-ma la ka-a-a-an-tu-um-ma*

So that a future king does not cut out my choice words, so that he does not utter a word that surpasses my words I swore by Marduk, my lord, and Šamaš, my god, that my words are truth (*kayyāntu*) and no lies (*surrātu*).

6: *From a stela inscription of Šamaš-rēša-uṣur, governor of Suḫū, from Babylon* (RIMB 2 S.0.1001.1 v,3-6):

^{3} *man-nu ar$_2$-ku-u$_2$ ša$_2$* e$_{11}$-*ma* ^{4} *ši-bu-ut* kur-*šu$_2$ liš-al um-ma kit-tu-u$_2$ ša$_2$* ^{md}utu-saĝ-pab ^{5} ^{lu2}gar ^{kur}*su-ḫi ḫa-bu-be$_2$-e-ti ša$_2$* lal$_3$ *ina* ^{kur}*su-ḫi* ^{6} *u$_2$-še-la-a*[9]

Whoever in the future comes forth shall ask the elders of his land thusly: "Is it true (*kittu*) that Šamaš-rēša-uṣur, governor of Suḫu, established the bees of honey in the land of Suḫu?"

7: *From a tablet inscription of Ninurta-kudurrī-uṣur, governor of Suḫū, from Sūr Jar^{ʿ}ā* (RIMB 2 S.0.1002.1, 46-49):

^{46} *man-ni ar$_2$-ku-u$_2$ ša$_2$* e$_{11}$-*ma* ^{47} *ši-bu-ut* kur-*šu$_2$ u$_3$ ši-b*[*u*]-$^{\lceil}$*tu*$^{\rceil}$ *ša$_2$* ^{kur}*la-qe$_2$-e liš-al-ma um-ma kit-tu-u$_2$* ^{48} *ša$_2$* ^{md}maš-niĝ$_2$-du-pab ^{lu2}gar ^{kur}*su-ḫi u* ^{kur}*ma$_2$-ri$_2$ ina a-mat* ^{d}a-^{d}iškur en gal-*u$_2$* en-*šu$_2$* ^{49} [*dīktu*] *an-ni-ti i-du-ku a-ga-a ši-kin qa-ti ša$_2$* ^{d}a-^{d}iškur diĝir en-*ia*[10]

Whoever in the future comes forth shall ask the elders of his land and the elders of the land Laqû thusly: "Is it true (*kittu*) that Ninurta-kudurri-uṣur, governor of the land Suḫu and the land of Mari inflicted this defeat[11] on the command of Apla-Adad, the great lord, his lord?" – This was (indeed) the issue in the hand of Apla-Adad, the god, my lord.

8 *From the "cruciform monument of Maništušu" (Neo-Babylonian; IM 124625 vii,28-36*[12]*):*

^{28} *at-mi u$_4$-ma* ^{29} *u$_3$* ^{d}utu^{su} ^{30} ^{d}*iš-tar il$_3$-<a>-ba$_4$* ^{31} *u$_3$* ^{d}*a-nu-ni-tum* ^{32} ^{d}*šullat$_2$ u* ^{d}*ḫaniš$_2$* ^{33} *qu-ra-du* ^{34} *šum-ma* ^{35} *la sar-ra-tu-ma* ^{36} *lu ki-ni-iš-ma*

I swear: By the day and Šamaš, by Ištar, Ilaba, and Annunitu, by Šullat and Ḫaniš, the warriors, that (these) are no lies – it is actually true (*kīniš*).

In the inscription of Dareios at Behistun, we find an example in Old Persian, Elamite, and Akkadian:

9: *From Dareios' Behistun Inscription (translation H. C. Tolman in (Tolman 1908, 30–31); iv, §6-7):*

[8] The royal inscriptions of Babylonia online, s. the link in the main text.
[9] An almost identical but damaged note is found in RIMB S.0.1001.4, A 5-6. Remnants of a less specific but equally affirmative note are found in RIMB S.0.1001.2, rev. 1'-7' and S.01001.3, 7'-10'.
[10] A similar but damaged note is found in RIMB S.0.1002.8, obv. 15'-rev.4b
[11] lit. "killed this killing".
[12] Edition Al-Rawi and George (1994, 139–48).

[4.6] Says Darius the king: This (is) what I did; by the grace of Auramazda I did (it) in every way; O thou who shalt examine this inscription in the future, let it convince thee (as to) what (was) done by me; regard it not as lies.

[4.7] Says Darius the king: I appeal to Auramazda that this (is) true (and) not false (which) I did in every way.

We may also have one Hittite example in the extensive annals of Muršili II:

10: *From the extensive annals of Muršili II (13th c. BC; KUB 14.17 rev.iii, 22-24+KUB 26.79 rev.ii, 17-21):*[13]

22 *nu* IRI*u-ra-aš ku-iš* IRI-*an* [*ŠA* KUR] IRI*a-az-zi ḫa-an-te-ez-zi-iš a-u₂-ri-iš e-eš-ta na-aš-kan₂ na-ak-ki-i pe₂-e-di* 23 [*a-ša*]-*an-za nu ku-iš ke-e* DUP.PAHI.A [x x x]-*IA iš-ta-ma-aš-zi nu u-ia-ad-du* 24 *nu a-ši* IRI*u-ra-an* IRI-*an* [*a-uš-du ma-aḫ-ḫa-an-na-aš u₂*]-*e-da-an-za e-eš-ta*

And the city of Ura, which was the first border fortress of the land of Azzi, was in a difficult place to get to. Who will hear these tablets of my ….: He shall send (someone)! And the city Ura, the city in question [he shall see. How] it is built … [text followed by a lacuna].

The destroyed parts of the last example can only tentatively be restored, but the text definitely takes the time to step out of the narrative and address a future audience to send someone to the city in question. The end of the line again speaks about how the city – and in the light of the texts above this may very well be to convince themselves of the difficult terrain the city was built on to make sure Muršili is not exaggerating.[14]

3.2 Examples from Egyptian Literature

Due to the lack of a comprehensive Edition and Translation of Egyptian inscriptions comparable to RIM or RINAP, I can provide only selected examples, mainly from the New Kingdom, specifically the 18th and 19th dynasties, but also the first intermediate period, the Middle Kingdom as well as the late dynastic and Ptolemaic periods:

11: *From the tomb inscription of Ankhtifi in Moʿalla (9th dynasty; translation F. Breyer in TUAT NF 2 iv.1, Pfeiler V.g.1–V.g.3):*

Ich bin der Allervornehmste, ich bin Ha[pi, der Herr der Rinder], Se[ch]at-Heru, der Herr der Kühe, Neper, der Herr der »Schmal-Gerste«, der Herr der Kleidung, (so) [sagen wirklich] alle. Es ist kein Geflunker (lit. „Amt der Nekropole“ (*jȝwt (nt) ḥrt-nṯr*))![15]

12: *From a boundary Stele of Sesostris III from Semna (12th Dynasty; translation M. Lichtheim in (Lichtheim 1975, 119)):*

Since the Nubian listens to the word of mouth. To answer him is to make him retreat. Attack him, he will turn his back, retreat, he will start attacking. They are not people one respects, they are wretches, craven-hearted. My majesty has seen it, it is not an untruth. I have captured their women, I have carried off their dependents, gone to their wells, killed their cattle, cut down their grain, set fire to it. As my father lives for me, I speak the truth! It is no boast that comes from my mouth.

13: *From the coronation inscription of Hatshepsut (18th Dynasty; translation M. Müller; TUAT NF 2 iv.2, 207-208):*

[13] For the reconstructions s. Götze (1933, 98–99) and van den Hout (2020, 147 note 27).

[14] Mastering difficult terrain is a common topos in Assyrian annals as well, s. e. g. RIMA 0.78.18, 8.

[15] English: “I am the most noble, I am Hapi, lord of cattle, Sechat-Heru, lord of cows, Neper, lord of barley, lord of clothes – that’s what everyone says. It is no lie (lit. “office of the necropolis.”). The term “office of the necropolis” (*jȝwt ḥrt-nṯr*) is a term used for an office that someone never actually held but claims to have held in their tomb inscription. It seems to have become popular around the first intermediate period, as at least three more examples can be found in texts from Denderah and Athribis, , s. Vandier (1950, 245–46); Kloth (2018, 124).

Um es für die Nachwelt zu erklären, berichte ich all dies, dabei - um mich nicht seiner strafenden Kraft auszuliefern – untertreibend. Obschon es größer als dies Verborgene ist, ist es ohne Übertreibung oder Lüge. (…) Hütet euch zu sagen: Das stimmt nicht![16]

14: *From the memorial stone of the official Nebamun, from his tomb near Dra Abu el-Naga (18th Dynasty; translation K. Sethe in Urk. IV no.60, 151):*

Hört nun ihr, die ihr im Dasein seid, was ich gesagt habe, darin ist keine Lüge.[17]

15: *From the annals of Thutmosis III, sixth pylon of the Amun temple in Karnak (18th dynasty; translation D. Redford in (Redford 2010, 142–43):*

I have not spoken boastfully to elicit adulation for what I have done, saying: 'I did something fantastic! (*ḫn*)' when I really did not do it. I never acted for men, so that one might call it boasting. I did these things for my father [Amun … ½ col. …] the one that says something fantastic that was not done; because he knows heaven and he knows earth, and he (can) see the entire earth in a moment!

16: *From the Gebel Barka-Stela of Thutmosis III (18th dynasty; translation D. Redford in (Redford 2010, 108)):*

I say this without boasting or exaggeration in any of it; (for) I did it in accordance with what [Amun-re] ordained for me, he who directs My Majesty on the right road by his good councils.

17: *From the memorial inscription of ʾInni from his tomb in Schech abd el Gurna (18th dynasty; translation K. Sethe in Urk IV no.20, 65):*

Ich habe aber das, was ich gesagt habe, gesagt, damit es jedermann sehe; nicht sind Lügen darin, ich habe wahr geredet, nicht un[wahr].[18]

18: *From the Battle of Qadesh "Bulletin" Text (19th Dynasty; translation K. A. Kitchen in RI II, 123:2-124:1):*

As Re lives for me and loves me, and as my father Atum favours me, regarding everything which My Majesty has spoken, - I truly did them, in the presence of my troops and chariots.

19: *From an inscription of Ramses II about the siege for Dapur, from the Ramesseum (19th dynasty; translation K. A. Kitchen in RI II, 175:1):*

As for this manner of standing and attacking this Hittite town in which is the statue of Pharaoh, LPH, – His Majesty, LPH, really and actually did it in the presence of his troops and his chariotry, when His Majesty was leading ("at the head of") his troops and chariotry, attacking the town of the Hittite foeman ("fallen ones") which is in the region of the town of Tunip, in the land of Naharina.

20: *From the wall inscription of Mnṯw-m-ḥ³.t from Karnak (25th dynasty; translation J. Heise in OBO 226 i.19 B, 4-5):*

[16] English: "To tell it to the posterity I recorded all this, thereby understating lest I suffer his punishing force. Although it is greater than these hidden things it is without boasting or lie. Beware to say: This isn't true!"
[17] English: "Now listen, you who live, there is no lie in what I said."
[18] English: "I said what I said so that everyone may see it. There are no lies in it."

„Dies ist all das, was ich euch befohlen hatte. Nicht existiert Abscheuliches [dabei und keine Prahlerei]. […] die Unwahrheit (*jwmz*). Keine Lüge *(grg)* war in meinen Äußerungen."[19]

21: *From the stela of Jbj (26th dynasty; translation J. Heise in OBO II.2, 28):*

„Nicht gab es eine Prahlrede (*ꜥbꜥ*)."[20]

22: *From the "Famine Stela" on Sehel Island (Ptolemaic; translation M. Lichtheim in Context I, 134 (1.53)):*

Engrave this decree on a stela of the sanctuary in writing, for it happened as said, (and) on a tablet, so that the divine writings shall be on them in the temple twice. He who spits (on it) deceitfully shall be given over to punishment.

There are likely more examples to be found, especially in the Egyptian corpus, but these will suffice here. All these examples, although differing in time, place, and language have in common that they are metatextual notes. They cannot be understood as part of the respective narratives, but rather talk about the text as a text. There are numerous sorts of metatexts in Ancient Near Eastern historical literature, but metatextual notes that make explicit truth claims are rare. On the one hand, we can observe that from the end of the 3rd millennium BC until the late 1st millennium BC there have been kings and private people in different places and of different cultures in the Near East who felt the need to emphasize, even swear, that they tell the truth in their inscriptions. On the other hand, we can observe that in roughly 5000-10000 inscriptions in Akkadian, Aramaic, Egyptian, Elamite, Hebrew, Hittite, Luwian, Sumerian, Urartian and some smaller languages and dialects we find not even 30 explicit truth claims. This statistic should not be too surprising, since we can safely agree that the default conviction in an autobiographical or annalistic text is that what I tell is true, at least in the broadest sense of the term. And while there are biographical and historical inscriptions written in the third person, they usually implicitly take the perspective of the respective monarch. There are also literary works such as the standard Babylonian Gilgameš epic, the so-called Kutha-legend, or what is generally subsumed under the term "*narû*-literature", that imitate royal inscriptions or claim to be copies of inscriptions to bolster their authority.[21] There apparently existed a perception of such biographical and historical inscriptions as reliable documents.
So, why bother to assert the truth at all? Most kings seem to be content to just freely narrate their exploits. And if there is a culturally or academically borne positive attitude towards such documents, all the better. To answer this question, we will have to take a more detailed look at the context of the truth claims and the inscriptions as a whole.

3.3 Why bother? Reasons for truth claims in historical texts

3.3.1 External reasons: some observations on the inscriptions as a whole

Most of the examples above are or were originally written on statues, stone stelae, barrel cylinders, natural or artificial walls. The Famine Stela, the Behistun inscription, the Bavian inscription as well as several more Egyptian examples are still in situ. They all have in common that they are openly visible. They are not all freely accessible, but none of them was deliberately hidden, and they all imagine some later person to read them. While the Behistun inscription is

[19] English: „This is everything I commanded you. There is no abomination in it and no boasting (*ꜥb*). […] the untruth (*jwmz*). No lie (*grg*) was in my utterings."
[20] English: "There was no boasting (*ꜥbꜥ*) in there."
[21] S. Radner (2005, 156–57).

technically only readable for adventurous scribes or gods, we know that it was distributed as a text in the Achaemenid empire, and it directly addresses its reader.[22] (Egyptian) Tombs are usually closed spaces that are not frequented by everybody, but their texts often imagine tomb visitors.[23] The Old Akkadian examples seem to stem from statues that may have stood in temples or palaces, which may be true for the Neo-Babylonian Cylinders as well. The cruciform monument was found in the Ebabbar temple in Sippar.[24] Muršili's Annals were deposited in the temple of the sun goddess of Arinna.[25] The inscription of Sennacherib was visible to anybody who visited the canal or planned to do work on it, the Famine Stela is visible on Sehel Island.
This is important because their content, their physical location and their editorial arrangement betray that they are all addressed to some human audience.[26] Yet there are more than enough inscriptions which are addressed to a human audience and are clearly visible and don't bother with truth vows. So, this can count only as a criterion that makes explicit truth claims possible, but not necessary.
The same goes for the social status of the authors. We have three monarchs, whose legitimacy seems questionable. Hatshepsut reigned as queen instead of her son Thutmosis III, Nabopolassar called himself "son of a nobody" (dumu *la ma-am-ma-na-ma*)[27] and began a new dynasty, Darius I was likely a usurper, too. But Muršili was the legitimate successor of Šuppiluliuma and Sennacherib was a legitimate son of Sargon II and there is no reason for us to assume that the governors of Suḫu or the Egyptian officials had any urge to emphasize their dynastic legitimacy. We also would expect more such vows of truth in other inscriptions of the respective monarchs if they would link to claims of legitimacy. So, while this may be an additional motivation if you are in fact in need of additional trustworthiness, it is hardly a sufficient explanation, either.
Since there are no external features common to all inscriptions that would convincingly explain the oaths, we may have to work ourselves from the lucid to the less lucid in smaller steps. Two of our inscriptions have in common that they are pseudepigrapha, or, as I prefer, ancient forgeries: The Famine Stela and the Cruciform monument. Here, internal aspects may explain the assertions of truth.

3.3.2 Internal reasons: Acquiring benefits and winning your audience's trust

The cruciform monument of Maništušu was likely cut from an old *kudurru* in Neo-Babylonian times and inscribed with an "Old Akkadian" inscription, copies of which are found on several tablets.[28] It was deposited with other, authentic texts in the Ebabbar-temple in Sippar and claims that Maništušu installed material and sacrificial privileges to the cult and priesthood of Ebabbar (col. i-vii). The oath at the end (example **9** above) is very similar to the oaths we find in the actual Old Akkadian examples (**1-3**). The claims that the Ebabbar temple can make are a direct result of would king Maništušu supposedly did, and hence it is important that he actually did it.
The Famine Stela is several hundred years younger, but a similar text. It claims to be an edict of Pharao Djoser more than 2000 years after his death and to be a copy of an official temple document.[29] It tells how Djoser decrees to reconstruct the temple of Khnum at Elephantine and refurbish his cult, among other things by granting it land possession. For the respective temple

[22] iv, §58. An Aramaic version of the inscription was found at Elephantine.
[23] E. g. Lichtheim (2006, 45).
[24] S. Finkel and Fletcher (2016, 215–22).
[25] S. e. g. KBo 3.4 iv, 47-48.
[26] That does not exclude a divine audience, but for reasons of brevity, we will leave that question aside.
[27] RIBo 7.1.3 i, 8.
[28] S. Finkel and Fletcher (2016, 239–44).
[29] The similarities have been noticed already by Gelb (1949, 348 note 12).

and its personnel and associates, there is much to lose if this story should turn out to be false since their benefits are founded on the very story.

Not every pseudepigraph has such an affirmative metatextual note,[30] and many of the other texts are older. Yet there are clear parallels. The tomb inscriptions from which the examples, **11.14.20** come all either start with or contain a request for a sacrifice to a later visitor of the tomb and *reader* of the inscription.[31] These sacrifices are earned if the person has achieved great things in their life, for other people, or simply had an outstanding character worthy of worship. Lying about their own achievements and character would be a cheap way to surreptitiously obtain a sacrifice. Here, lying about one's achievements has destructive consequences. A reassertion or even vow of truth is a way to secure a positive attitude towards the deceased and thereby legitimizing the sacrifice – either by claiming a lie is true or by preemptively reacting to the accusation that one's own biographical account was untrue. That this is not just cynicism is shown by the term "office of the necropolis", which clearly shows that it was a known phenomenon in late 3rd millennium Egypt to make yourself greater than you were after death.

Now there are Egyptian tomb inscriptions that put less focus on sacrifices and rather emphasize the deceased's name and reputation (e. g. **21**). Some texts even claim to prefer the continuation of the deceased's name and reputation over sacrifices: to invoke a dead person's name is to bring them back to life.[32] Here, it is of utmost importance that the achievements of a person are not considered vanity or lies but true accounts. It is hence no surprise that an antonym to "truth" in Egyptian inscriptions is not only "lie" (*isft*) or "wrong" (*grg*),[33] but also "boasting" (*ʿbʿ*).

Such continuation of one's name and legacy is one of the key functions of Mesopotamian inscriptions as well.[34] The conviction that a later reader will look favorably on one's accounts and perform cultic actions is shared by Babylonian and Assyrian inscriptions, although they are not tomb inscriptions. In the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian inscriptions we not only regularly find the expectation that a later ruler will read them, but they also encourage them to respect, restore and anoint the inscriptions, even if they are usually hidden in a building foundation.[35] If and how the anointing process has sacrificial character is difficult to say, but in any case, the texts demand reverence for the predecessor's achievements – which sometimes apparently are so marvelous that a king felt the necessity to vow for the veracity of a particular feat, such as digging a canal in a short time with few workers or conquering formerly unconquered, faraway lands.

Both, the more material and sacrificial and the more commemorative claims rest on the outcome of the respective narratives, which in turn can be called etiological in the broad sense of the word. These etiologies can encompass the entire life of a person or a particularly spectacular event. Both are the reasons for specific claims to fame, cultic benefits, etc. and apparently, some people had a special awareness of the importance of evidence or divine sanction of their respective etiological stories. It is likely, that this awareness is also an awareness of the fact that boasting and downright fakes were not uncommon, which are especially reprehensible if they make someone give up time and resources or even perform cultic acts based on such a fake or boast. However, as with the external criteria above, to express such awareness in an oath or a

[30] Another, better-known example might be 2 Thess 3,17, a note that claims to be written by Paul himself.

[31] Those can be envisioned as a certain group, such as priests and/or scribes (e. g. OBO 226 i.13 H, 1-2) or simply "the living" (example **13** above).

[32] S. e. g. Lichtheim (2006, 46).

[33] S. Lichtheim (1992, 5).

[34] S. Radner (2005, 67–178).

[35] E. g. RINAP 3.1.16 viii, 64-7; RIBo 7.1.3 iii, 30-36.

reference to witnesses seems to be an individual choice rather than a widespread custom. Yet, since we find it in Old Akkadian, Neo Assyrian, Neo Babylonian, Old, Middle, and Late Egyptian, Ptolemaic Egypt, Old Persian, and possibly in Hittite we can clearly see that the awareness of and care for truth in historic texts are not linked to a particular culture or way of thinking of a specific ethnic group. Rather, we appear to have a very common way of expressing truth claims in historical texts and now I want to offer a hypothesis, where the roots of this thinking lie, and where to put the Old Testament in this framework.

4. Hypothesis: The root of truth claims in law and law literature

4.1 Conceptual links

We have seen that explicit truth claims are comparatively rare in the historic and autobiographical inscriptions of the Ancient Near East. Now if you go through the trouble to specifically assert the truth of your account even though there seems to be no demand for it by genre or culture, you also must use an agreed-upon language to do so. So, what to do if the genre your text belongs to has not developed its own set of formulae or phrases to fall back on when producing truth claims? In the examples provided above, we find three different ways, how people back up their claims.

The most common one is the oath. In the Old Akkadian examples, the root √ʾwʾ/ʾmʾ is used to swear by Šamaš, Ilaba, and other gods. Sennacherib uses an elliptic oath to swear by Aššur, Nabopolassar uses the construction *nīš* DN + √*zkr* to swear by Marduk and Šamaš. Darius I invokes Ahuramazda. In the Egyptian royal inscriptions, we find invocations of Amun. A variation of the oath is the claim to have acted on the deity's orders, which thus technically serves as witness just as it does in the oath: Ninurta-kudurrī-uṣūr claims to have acted on behalf of Apla-Adad, Thutmoses III on behalf of Amun.

Another way of securing truth is to point to witnesses. In the vision of Ninurta-kudurrī-uṣur of Šuḫu, the elders of his land will testify to the one who asks about his achievements (**7**). They were there when he established beekeeping. Ramses II eagerly points towards the presence of his troops when he affirms his version of the battle of Qadeš and how he temerariously refused to wear armor during the siege of Dapur (**18-19**). The nomarch Ankhtifi simply points to everybody as a witnesses of his great deeds and character (**11**).

Lastly, the role of the witness can be replaced by an object or a document. One can go and look at it to convince themselves of the truth. Muršili tells his audience to send someone and look at the steep location of the fortress he conquered, while the author of the Famine Stela claims that his text is a copy from a sanctuary stele and scroll. Also, Sesostris III claims that he himself saw the behavior and character of the Nubians, bevor he vows for the truth of his whole account. In these two examples we can see how a detail within a text can be used to imply the truthfulness of the entire text. These modes are not mutually exclusive, Ramses II not only points to the presence of his troops but at the same time calls upon the god Re as his witness.

If we try to contextualize these three ways of asserting the truth, we find that these are the exact three ways to provide proof in lawsuits, both in Mesopotamia and Egypt. From the Old Kingdom to the Ptolemaic era, we find legal and literary texts in Egypt that show how in a legal case witnesses, documents and oaths are the three ways of establishing the truth in a legal dispute.[36] Sometimes, people can be sent to visit a place and convince themselves of circumstances

[36] S. Lippert (2008, 12.30-31.34.40.53-54.185-186).

relevant to the case,[37] which mirrors the situation of our Hittite example (**10**), in which Muršili tells the audience to send someone to check.
It is noteworthy that oaths are found in legal texts as promissory oaths, e. g. in business partnership documents, and as assertory oaths – sometimes only as last resort, if one cannot produce a witness or a document and not in every case, anyway. This is striking, because, although we have only a small sample size, in the historical texts the oaths seem to be the preferred means of claiming truth. The reason for that is, I think, the dominating first-person perspective that narrates events the author himself witnessed and which happened in their lifetime, hence there is only a small temporal distance between text and events. Also, it would not make sense to point out as evidence a document containing the story of something you did in a document narrating a story of something you did. In fact, in first-person historical and biographical inscriptions, the reference to other documents rather seems to work as further self-aggrandizement: Not all your great deeds would fit onto one tablet, one stone wall, one stela, etc.[38]

4.2 Lexical links

The structural similarities between legal and historical texts when it comes to truth claims are joined by lexical similarities. The Old Akkadian examples as well as the Cruciform Monument use the root √*ʾwʾ/ʾmʾ*, which has the overall meaning "to speak, argue, discuss" and in Old Assyrian texts has the meaning "to argue in court" (e. g. TCL 4 18, 23). We already saw that the Akkadian examples (**1**-**8**) and the passages mentioned under 2. both contrast derivates of the root √*kwn*, "to be firm", usually *kittu* or the plural *kināt*u ("truth") with derivates of the root √*srr*, "to be false", usually *sarratu* or *surratu* ("lie"). This contrast is found in legal contexts, law literature, and literary renderings of legal situations. The adjective *sarru* can denote a tablet, *ṭuppu*, as a fraudulent document (e. g. BIN 6 160, 8 (Old Assyrian)). The substantive *sarratu* can be used as partitive genitive to denote false testimony (CH §3, 60; s. also p. above). The verb *sarāru* can be used in hendiadys to mark an action as fraudulent (e. g. marking sheep, CH §265, 66 (Old Babylonian)).
Many of the Egyptian examples are edited in translation and/or hieroglyph copies, but rarely accompanied by a transliteration, which makes a lexical investigation for a non-Egyptologist tedious work, if not altogether impossible. What we can see, however, is the contrast of words such as "wrong" or "lie" (*isft*, *grg*) as well as "boasting" (*ʿbʿ*) and the "fantastic" (*ḫn*) with *mꜣʿt*, *maat*, "truth" and its derivatives, such *mꜣʿ*, *n wn-mꜣʿ*, and *(n) mꜣʿt*, "true" or *bw-mꜣʿ*, "true thing." The term *maat* can be understood as an all-encompassing order of the cosmos, to which belongs the balance within society and it is no wonder then, that it is a key term in Egyptian law as well. Here, *mꜣʿt* can mean "justice", but justice is established by finding out which account of two parties is true (*mꜣʿ*) and hence the winner of a legal case is also marked as *mꜣʿ*.
In a legal case, a judge or jury has to evaluate two narratives and decide which one is true. Bound on the narrative are specific claims to things, rights, benefits, etc. In a historical or biographical inscription that claim can be equally concrete, such as material benefits for priests, but also less material such as reverence for the own name and legacy. The audience must be swayed in the defendant's favor and thus they provide witnesses or an oath, if necessary.

5. The Old Testament, conclusions, and prospects

If we look at the narrative texts of the Old Testament, we will find not a single oath of truth. That may be correlated to the fact that except for a few passages in the book of Nehemia, the

[37] S. Lippert (2008, 80).
[38] Muršili II in his annals (KBo 3.4 iv, 40-43.46-48), Tiglat-Pileser I in his annals (RIMA 0.87.1 vi, 49-54) and Dareios in his Behistun-inscription (iv, §58) and all claim that more of their deeds can be read elsewhere.

narrative books are written from a third-person perspective, and more, a third-person perspective from a notable temporal distance. But we do find roughly 60 instances in which objects, people or customs from the story are pointed out as still existing in the present (עד היום הזה; e. g. Jos 4:9; 1 Kgs 8:8) and about 50 references to source material (e. g. Jos 10:14; nd all the formulaic references in 1-2 Kgs and 1-2 Chr). These truth claims are less explicit, since they do not employ words such as "truth", "true", or "lie", but they use the same system of archaeological and documentary evidence as the historical inscriptions. In comparison to the Ancient Near Eastern material, the density of such metatextual elements to point out evidence in the Old Testament is considerably higher. We found roughly 30 instances in 5000-10000 inscriptions in more than ten languages from three millennia, and we find more than a hundred in the Enneateuch, the Chronistic History, and Esther alone. Apparently, there were some authors or redactors, that felt a special necessity to verify certain stories. Since the texts are neither legal documents nor tomb inscriptions, the reason cannot be to get a legal or cultic advantage. But many of the texts from Genesis to 2 Kings as well as Esther make very specific geopolitical and theological claims, that are tied to the fact that particular events supposedly happened at particular places. If someone insists that the carrying poles of the ark of the covenant are visible in the temple "to this day", there exists a physical witness to the special role of the Jerusalem temple as opposed to other sacred places. One may think that such a way of asserting the truth of a narrative was only necessary if there were people challenging the theological claims resting on the narratives and their respective outcomes – real or imagined by the authors. The perspective of the Hebrew narrative differs from the Near Eastern texts. If we keep up the legal fiction, we could understand them as advocates for their clients: the texts. Thus, the Old Testament examples are located somewhere between the Ancient Near Eastern inscriptions and Greek historiography such as Herodotus, who paints himself as judge of his sources and uses similar notes (e. g. *Hdt 4.12*).

To conclude: Truth and falsehood in Ancient Near Eastern inscriptions manifest themselves in self-representation on the one hand, and in explicit truth claims on the other hand. In Akkadian and Egyptian inscriptions of almost all periods, we find metatextual notes that claim that the narrative is true, either by oath, by referring to witnesses or documents.

My hypothesis is, that they have their roots in legal processes and language since all the narratives lead to specific claims of material or ideological nature and the metatextual notes use vocabulary found in legal texts. The Old Testament narratives have a lot more such notes that emphasize the truth of the account by pointing to physical remnants or documents, and who seem to be halfway to Greek historiography.

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Project working title: *Source citations and other metatexts: Observations on biblical and Ancient Near Eastern historiography and historical thought*

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The broad context of the project is the scholarly discussion about historiography in the Old Testament and Ancient Near Eastern texts. The main question of interest is if and how narrative texts about the past can give hints towards a historical way of thinking of the people responsible for their production and transmission. Historical thinking is understood as a conviction that there is a connection between the perceived veracity of a report about the past and the interpretations that rest on it. In this understanding, historiography is the written organization of *knowledge* in the broadest sense, and the question of historical accuracy is not an adiaphoron when it comes to deciding whether a text is "true" or not.

The project takes an approach via textual pragmatics and focuses on metatextual phrases which signal how the text is to be understood. This approach borrows ideas from cognitive and textual linguistics, specifically the concepts of the function of deixis and metatextual elements in literature.

So far, the project has produced three chapters, one on glosses, one on the phrase "until this day" and one on source citation in the Old Testament. Within the first three chapters, the Ancient Near Eastern texts have only been dealt with occasionally, and the last bigger chapter tries to give a very broad overview of the metatextual means used in the historical literature of the Ancient Near East, mainly in inscriptions. So far, between 5000 and 10000 texts have been searched for metatextual notes comparable to the ones in the Old Testament. The yield relative to the number of texts is meager, but there are about 30 explicit reassertions of truth to be found, mainly in Akkadian and Egyptian texts. The paper for the 2021 OTSEM conference will present most of these and try to pinpoint their function in context and offer a hypothesis on their conceptual and linguistical background. Thereby I hope to get a better understanding of the role metatextual notes play in the narrative texts of the Old Testament, as well as the development of historiographic genres and historical thinking in general.

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Abstract:
Wisdom and Hubris in the Oracles against the Nations

Though the Hebrew Bible in general considers human wisdom as a positive and beneficial quality, it also includes passages depicting ambivalent, negative, and fatal aspects of wisdom. Several of these passages are found among the Oracles against the Nations. My paper treats three larger compositions dealing with the connection between wisdom and hubris regarding foreign political or economical superpowers: Isa 10:5-15 (against Assyria), Ezek 28:1-10, 11-19 (against the king of Tyre), and Isa 47 (against Babylon). In these passages, wisdom either causes hubris, or the boast of being wise is an expression of hubris, or hubris causes the loss of wisdom. By comparing these texts, I examine the following questions: what does wisdom mean exactly? How does hubris manifest itself? How are wisdom and hubris related? What makes wisdom ambivalent or problematic? On the one hand, wisdom is the driving force for the success and the superiority of the foreign political entities; but on the other hand, wisdom indirectly also causes their downfall. The aim of the paper is to understand more fully this ambivalence of human wisdom as conceived of in the three passages. The main results are: (1) The texts have different conceptions of wisdom (strategical skills, economical skills, divinatory and magical knowledge). (2) All three texts somehow relate wisdom to hubris and fall, though in different ways. (3) Regarding the rhetoric and stylistic form, several passages use forms of lament and dirge to intensify the mockery. Boastful monologues serve to express and to illustrate the arrogance of the protagonists. (4) Wisdom is not considered reprehensible per se, but the negative assessment results above all from the connection with hubris. The criticism of wisdom is motivated mainly by theological reasons, namely, by the aim to emphasize the sovereignty of Yhwh against the tendencies of foreign empires to self-deification.

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Wisdom and Hubris in the Oracles against the Nations

Preliminary remarks:

This paper is an abridged version of three chapters of my postdoctoral thesis that cover in total more than hundred pages. Therefore, a lot of exegetical details and argumentations had to be shortened or omitted. Rather than providing a detailed exegesis, this is a first attempt to synthetize the results of the three chapters.

The focal points of discussion shall be the different conceptions of wisdom in the three texts and their comparison, especially regarding the question: what is wrong about wisdom? Furthermore: does it make sense to compare these texts, and are the conclusions sound?

The word "wisdom" in an Old Testament context is usually associated literarily with the so-called wisdom literature, represented by writings like the Book of Proverbs, Job, Qohelet, Ben Sira, etc., and conceptually with a positive quality that is worth striving for. The Book of Proverbs promotes wisdom as beneficial for life management and as promising a favorable impact on one's well-being. An illustrative example is the macarism in Prov 3:13–18:

13 Happy are those who find wisdom, and those who get understanding,
14 for her income is better than silver, and her revenue better than gold.
15 She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her.
16 Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor.
17 Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.
18 She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her; those who hold her fast are called happy (NRSV).

At the same time, the Book of Proverbs also knows about the ambivalence of wisdom. Several times, it deals negatively with those who consider themselves to be wise (Prov 26:12; 28:11) or warns not to do so (Prov 3:7). Claiming to be wise can be an expression of pride and hubris, and pride is repeatedly assessed very negatively. Well-known is the saying "pride comes before a fall" from Prov 16:18, which has made it into the treasury of English and German proverbs even until this day. This makes wisdom a somewhat paradoxical quality: on the one hand, wisdom warns about hubris and hates it (so says Lady Wisdom in Prov 8:13), but on the other hand, it can also lead to hubris and thus to a fall.

Ancient Near Eastern and Old Testament literature provides several examples for the fine line and the close connection that exists between wisdom and hubris. Possessors of wisdom (or those claiming to be wise) are not always congratulated as in Prov 3:13 but are occasionally criticized or even mocked. Several of these passages are found among the oracles against the nations. The present paper treats three larger compositions dealing with the connection between wisdom and hubris regarding foreign political or economical superpowers: Isa 10:5–15 (against Assyria), Ezek 28:1–10, 11–19 (against the king of Tyre), and Isa 47 (against Babylon). The aim is to elaborate their conceptions and evaluations of wisdom and to under-

stand more deeply what makes wisdom an ambivalent and potentially dangerous issue. In simple terms: what is wrong about wisdom?

*1. Isaiah 10:5–15**

The literary history of the woe oracle against Ashur can only be summed up here briefly. It contains some later additions that can be separated from the basic layer: v. 5b* (הוא בידם) and vv. 10–11, 12–13aα.[1] The basic layer (vv. 5a.b*.6–9.13aβ–15) was most likely composed in the years after 717 BCE, presumably still during the reign of Sargon II (till 705). This is supported by the list of six cities in v. 9, most of which have been defeated by the Assyrians around 720 (the last one, Carchemish, in 717),[2] and by the striking parallels of Ashur's speech (vv. 8–14*) in Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions, especially of Sargon II,[3] which suggest a deliberate reception of contemporary imperial propaganda.

The structure of the basic layer can be easily discerned. The woe cry against Ashur in Yhwh's mouth (vv. 5–7) contrasts Yhwh's purpose concerning Ashur (vv. 5–6) with Ashur's own aspiration. This is illustrated by a longer quotation of Ashur's own words (vv. 8–14*), which is replied by a concluding commentary (v. 15), taking up the rhetorical questions and similes from Ashur's speech as well as the terms שבט and מטה from the beginning of the poem. Thus, Ashur's speech, comprising almost half of the text, is framed by two divine speeches that put Ashur's speech into context and evaluate it theologically.

As regards genre, Isa 10:5–15* is an extended and prophetically defamiliarized woe oracle against a foreign nation with a disputative character. The *woe cry* (v. 5), originating from the mourning for the dead,[4] is paradoxical here in two ways: on the one hand, the ruling imperial power is rhetorically treated as dead; on the other hand, the Judean deity Yhwh, by expressing his grief about the loss of his instrument of punishment, demonstrates his solidarity with the foreign power. The contrast motif, which is typical for a dirge (former glory versus current

[1] Regarding the reasons, see Williamson, Isaiah 1–27 II, 481–483, 495–498, 507. Beyond Williamson, I also consider the speech introduction in v. 13aα as secondary, which became necessary because of the interruption of Ashur's speech by the insertion of v. 12.

[2] In the royal inscriptions of Sargon II that refer to the events of 720, the order Arpad – Ṣimirra – Damascus – Samaria is attested several times, and often, the "land of Amattu" is mentioned not far away (see the quoted passages in Frahm, Samaria, 63f.76.77.78). The city Gargamiš (= Carchemish) is also mentioned several times in one breath with the "land of Amattu". Hence, Assyrian propaganda may have affected the list in v. 9. This is an argument against Becker, Jesaja, 209–10, who considers the list an arbitrary arrangement of cities known to have been captured by the Assyrians that is merely based on other passages from the Book of Isaiah (Isa 36:19; 37:13) from a much later time without greater historical evidence (similarly, Gitay, Isaiah, 192–93; Müller, Carchemish, 72–73). It would be a great coincidence if a list of the cities Arpad, Damascus, and Samaria, that has – in this particular order – no biblical parallels, but several parallels in inscriptions of Sargon II, had been composed centuries later.

[3] Cf. Machinist, Image, 725, 734–35; idem, Polemic, 196–201; Gallagher, Campaign, 75–88; Liss, Prophetie, 151–52, 157–58, 161–66; Chan, Reversal, 717–33 and others.

[4] Regarding the woe cry cf. Hardmeier, Texttheorie, passim; idem, Art. Totenklage; Zobel, Art. הוי, 359–364.

death or destruction), is modified towards the contrast of Yhwh's purpose and Ashur's attitude. A *boastful monologue* (vv. 8–14*) often appears in the prophetic literature and especially in oracles against foreign nations.[5] In Isa 10, it serves to bring to light and to verbalize Ashur's inner attitude. Instead of a praise of the dead, which would be expected in the context of a dirge, the poem quotes the self-praise of the (fictitiously) dead and thus implies a rebuke by the divine speaker.[6] The concluding *rhetorical questions* (v. 15) imply a negative assessment of Ashur's speech and bring to light the absurdity of Ashur's attitude. By contrasting Yhwh's purpose and Ashur's attitude, demonstrated by direct speech, and by the concluding critical reply to Ashur's speech, the poem has a disputative character with Ashur as the subject of discussion (though not the partner of discussion since Ashur is not directly addressed). The rhetorical questions aim at convincing third parties that Ashur's self-praise is inappropriate and that it contains the seed of its own destruction (cf. the woe cry), but the ultimate verdict is left to the readers.[7]

In his boastful monologue, Ashur praises its irresistibility, its military achievements, and its universal power and hegemony. Ashur traces this to its own strength and wisdom (v. 13):

בכח ידי עשיתי	By the strength of my hand I have done (it),
ובחכמתי כי נבונתי	and by my wisdom, for I am intelligent.

What does Ashur mean by its wisdom (חכמה) and intelligence (בי״ן niph.)? The pairing of strength and wisdom and the following descriptions of global military conquests and lootings (vv. 13b–14) demonstrate that wisdom means here strategical skills. Within the Hebrew Bible, this military connotation of wisdom is very rare.[8] The large expansions of the Neo-Assyrian empire since the reign of Tiglath-Pileser at the latest manifested its superior military strength and strategical skills. Thus, Ashur's wisdom is the condition and driving force for its universal conquests.

Being exceptionally wise was in fact a claim uttered by the Neo-Assyrian kings of the Sargonid dynasty in their royal inscriptions.[9] Especially Ashurbanipal addresses the topos of royal wisdom and education.[10] His wisdom and knowledge result from the participation in divine knowledge; it is connected with antediluvian knowledge; he claims hardly accessible and exclusive knowledge, which he shares with his scholars and experts; it comprises literary, divinatory, and mathematical skills; and it serves for the exercise of power. But also Sargon II repeatedly mentions his own wisdom. Two of these passages may be quoted here:

[5] Regarding the boastful monologues ("Hoffartsmonologe") in the oracles against the nations see Höffken, Untersuchungen, 206–43.

[6] Cf. Hardmeier, Texttheorie, 318.380.

[7] Cf. Wildberger, Jesaja I, 400.

[8] Cf., however, Prov 21:22.

[9] Cf. especially Pongratz-Leisten, Herrschaftswissen, 309–20; Kvanvig, History, 138–42.

[10] Cf. especially the inscription L^4 (edited and translated in Livingstone, Ashurbanipal, 100).

"the king, intelligent *(pēt ḫasīsi)* (and) skilled in every craft, equal to the sage (Adapa) *(šinnat apkalli)*, who grew great in intelligence *(milku)* and wisdom *(nēmequ)* and matured in understanding *(tašīmtu)*."[11]

"With my broad knowledge *(mērešu palkû)* that was abundantly provided with understanding *(tašīmtu)* and full of cleverness *(niklātu)* by the command of the divine 'King of Deep' (Ea), the lord of wisdom *(nēmequ)*, and with my broad intelligence *(ḫissat uznīa palkâte, ḫasīsu)* that the goddess Ninmenanna, the creator of the gods, had made greater than that of the kings, my ancestors…"[12]

In both instances, the outstanding wisdom relates to the construction of the new royal residence Dur-Sharrukin. Like Ashurbanipal, Sargon II traces his wisdom to the gods and relates it to antediluvian knowledge (cf. the sage Adapa). Isa 10:13, in contrast, omits this mythical dimension and foundation of the claim of wisdom. It thus remains only a pretentious boast.

In the context of First Isaiah, this is not the only passage with a negative view on wisdom. Isa 5:21 directs a woe cry against those who are wise (חכמים) and intelligent (נבנים) in their own sight. According to Isa 29:14, Yhwh's wondrous and strange acting towards his people effects that the "wisdom of the wise" (חכמת חכמיו) and the "intelligence of the intelligent" (בינת נבניו) will perish.[13] These two passages do not utter a categorical criticism of wisdom but rather criticize a wisdom that is used autonomously from Yhwh and does not take his acting into account.[14]

In Isa 10:13, Ashur's wisdom (in the form of strategical skills) is neither criticized as such nor denied in principle.[15] Nevertheless, its wisdom is considered problematic for two reasons:

(1) There is a twofold correlation between Ashur's boast of its abilities (strength and wisdom) and the subsequent boast of its military achievements, which focuses on the overwhelming and hegemonial power over the entire world (vv. 13b–14). On the one hand, the military achievements serve as a confirmation of Ashur's abilities. On the other hand, Ashur's superiority in the form of strength and wisdom suffices as a legitimation for ruthlessly subduing all nations and for realizing its universal rule. As a result, there are apparently no more limits for Ashur, neither geographically nor morally. The hubris does not just consist in Ashur's boast of its own abilities and in claiming the achievements for itself, but also results in a virtually imperialistic and totally autonomous striving and acting. Ashur takes for itself what it is able to achieve, and the success seemingly proves it right.

(2) Verse 15 replies to the boastful monologue with rhetorical questions, which demonstrate the inadequacy and absurdity of Ashur's boast considering Yhwh's control of Ashur as his own instrument (cf. vv. 5–6). The form of a "disputation fable" derives from the tradition

[11] Text and translation according to RINAP 2, 228 (Sargon II 43, l. 38).

[12] Text and translation according to RINAP 2, 228 (Sargon II 43, l. 47–48).

[13] The combination of חכ״ם and בי״ן is also attested in Isa 3:3 (the wise as part of the social elite and "support" of the people, that will be removed by Yhwh) and 11:2 ("the spirit of wisdom and intelligence", that will rest upon the future king), although both passages are probably later.

[14] Cf. Kreuch, Unheil, 230, 236–238.

[15] However, the text leaves open whether Ashur has received its (strength and) wisdom from Yhwh or whether Yhwh has chosen Ashur as his instrument of punishment because of its (strength and) wisdom.

of wisdom.[16] The humanization of non-human objects serves to illuminate and to criticize Ashur's behavior. The form of rhetorical questions aims at reflection and consent on the part of the addressees. Its message is simple: The passive instrument (= Ashur) has no reason to boast towards the one who actively carries it (= Yhwh).[17] However, the text does not indicate or presuppose that Ashur knows about being commissioned by Yhwh.[18] Despite its wisdom, Ashur does not know Yhwh's plan in history. The prophet, in contrast, knows it and reveals it to his addressees. The revelation of the divine plan in history demonstrates, on the one hand, the limits of Ashur's wisdom because the crucial insight that is relevant for its own self-conception remains hidden to Ashur. On the other hand, it demonstrates the actual folly of Ashur. The addressees are initiated into the divine plan in history and thus recognize the folly of Ashur, boasting of its own wisdom. Therefore, they are wiser than Ashur and have a wider horizon: whereas Ashur only perceives itself, the addressees perceive Ashur as a tool in the hand of Yhwh while it magnifies itself. Paradoxically put in a nutshell: only out of ignorance, Ashur can boast of its wisdom. For the informed, this boast is the expression of an absurd and bizarre folly. Although Ashur may be strategically skilled and clever, it reveals its limited wisdom and actual folly by praising its own wisdom.

2. Ezekiel 28:1–10, 11–19

Ezekiel 28 contains two oracles against the ruler of Tyre: an oracle of doom in vv. 1–10 and a parodistic dirge (קינה) in vv. 11–19. Both passages include references to the king's hubris and to his wisdom. The literary relationship between the two passages is disputed. In the dirge, the king is initially located in mythical places like Eden, the garden of God, and the mountain of God, from where he is later expelled. The references to his trade in vv. 16, 18 as well as the conclusion in v. 19, which is almost identical to the conclusion of Ezek 27, seem to be adaptations to the literary context of the Tyre cycle Ezek 26–28. The basic layer of vv. 11–19 could originally have existed independently of its present literary context, although deriving from Ezekielian tradition (in the 6th century BCE?). After its insertion into the Tyre cycle, the preceding oracle in vv. 1–10* (probably composed between 585 and 572) has been expanded as well (during the Persian era). Most of the terminological connections between this oracle and the following dirge are limited to vv. 3–5 and the end of v. 7. The additional character of vv. 3–5 can furthermore be substantiated by the syntactically complicated parenthesis and the *Wiederaufnahme* of v. 2 in v. 6. Although somewhat speculative, there are good reasons to

[16] Whedbee, Isaiah, 73.

[17] Cf. the similar reasoning in Isa 29:16 and in the Story of Aḥiqar: "How can logs strive with fire, meat with a knife, (or) a man with a king?" (l. 104).

[18] Cf. Liss, Prophetie, 153, 159; Salo, Assur, 74.

assume that v. 3 was originally part of vv. 11–19*[19] and was later transposed into the oracle of doom. The additional passages within vv. 1–10 intensify the connection between the two oracles against the ruler of Tyre and strongly bring in the subject of wisdom into the oracle of doom.

But let us start with the second passage. I assume the basic layer in vv. 12bβ–13aβ, b, 3*(?), 14–15, 16aβ*b–17, 18b. Unfortunately, a lot of philological and text-critical difficulties complicate the interpretation of the passage. I will focus on the following extracts:

כה אמר אדני יהוה	12*	Thus says the Lord Yhwh:
אתה חותם תכנית		You were the legitimate sealer (?),[20]
מלא חכמה וכליל יפי:		full of wisdom[21] and perfect in beauty.
בעדן גן אלהים היית	13	You were in Eden, the garden of God;
כל אבן יקרה מסכתך […]		every precious stone was your covering/enclosure (?). […]
חכם אתה מדנאל (קְ מדניאל)	3*	You were wiser than Daniel,
כל סתום לא עממוך:		no secret was too dark for you (?).[22]
את כרוב ממשח הסוכך	14	<With> an extensive (?) cherub as guardian
<נתתיך>		<> I placed you;[23]
בהר קדש אלהים היית		you were on the holy mountain of God;
בתוך אבני אש התהלכת:		you walked in the midst of stones of fire.
תמים אתה בדרכיך	15	You were blameless in your ways
מיום הבראך		since the day that you were created,
עד נמצא עולתה בך:		until iniquity was found in you
ותחטא […]	16*	and you sinned. […]
גבה לבך ביפיך	17	Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty;
שחת חכמתך על יפעתך		you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor.
[…]		[…]

[19] The conception of wisdom in v. 3 with its superhuman and mythical aspects differs from that in vv. 4–5 with its economical aspects. The mythical dimension, however, fits well into vv. 11–19* with their reference to mythical places. Furthermore, v. 3 has syntactical parallels in v. 15 (predicative adjective + אתה + prepositional phrase) and in vv. 13–14 and v. 17b (final position of the verb in perfect form). The insertion of v. 3 into vv. 11–19* even raises the coherence of this passage because only with v. 3, *both* qualities mentioned in v. 12 (wisdom and beauty) would be further explicated (otherwise, only the theme of beauty would be explicated in v. 13). Finally, there is a conceptual connection between wisdom or secret knowledge and gemstones, which would only be realized in Ezek 28 by a transposition of v. 3. Presumably, the original place of v. 3* (without the particle הנה) was immediately before or after v. 13*.

[20] Some ancient versions presuppose the vocalization *חוֹתֵם "seal" (Septuagint, Aquila, Peshitta, Vulgate; cf. also some Medieval Hebrew manuscripts). However, the literary context clearly suggests a *person* that wears seals in the form of gemstones on his body. Therefore, the vocalization as a participle is preferable. The *nomen rectum* תכנית is uncertain as well (variant: תבנית). I decide for תכנית as the *lectio difficilior* (since it is attested more rarely in the OT). The tentative translation with "legitimate" is oriented at the meaning of the root תכ״ן "to measure, to be right".

[21] In the Old Greek, מלא חכמה is left untranslated. The absence is easily explicable as a deliberate omission. The translator has misunderstood the word חותם as *חוֹתֵם "seal" (see above). A seal as an object can in fact be beautiful (כליל יפי ≈ στέφανος κάλλους), but not filled with wisdom – in contrast to a "sealer". Hence, the omission logically results from the preceding misunderstanding. The originality of מלא חכמה is indicated by v. 17a, where a close connection between יפי and חכמה is presupposed. Precisely because vv. 16–19 strongly refer to vv. 12–15 on the lexical level, it is probable that מלא חכמה is an original part of the text.

[22] Verse 3b in the MT is rather difficult (uncertain meaning of the verb עמ״ם, incongruence in the grammatical number). The translation is oriented at the Targum, the Vulgate, Symmachus, and Theodotion. However, the text is possibly corrupt.

[23] I emendate the Hebrew text and its vocalization according to the Septuagint (cf. also Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, and the Peshitta). The words ממשח and הסוכך have probably been omitted in the Septuagint due to the difficulties of comprehension.

With the predicate “sealer”, the text credits the addressee – who is not necessarily the king of Tyre in the basic layer – with an official, authoritative status. The following explication מלא חכמה וכליל יפי “full of wisdom and perfect in beauty” is fully consistent: as a wearer of seals, the king is decorated with precious, glossy materials (cf. יפעה “splendor” in v. 17), turns out to be literate and has mantic abilities. The notion of jewelry in the form of gemstones and gold (v. 13) also fits into this symbolism. Wisdom and beauty are emphasized in the description of the king as his outstanding qualities.

Regarding the theme of wisdom in vv. 11–19*, three specifications need to be made:

(1) According to v. 3, the king has *superhuman wisdom in the form of secret knowledge*. The figure of Daniel, that the addressee is compared with, is probably somehow related to Danil, known from the Ugaritic Aqhat epic (cf. also Ezek 14:14, 20). Although this epic knows Danil primarily as a king and a just judge, the Northwest Semitic tradition of Dani(e)l also associates him with magical and mantic wisdom.[24] Dani(e)l is referred to as a non-Israelite legendary sage from a distant past, whose wisdom is even surpassed by the addressed ruler.[25] This superhuman wisdom is related to סתום “stopped up, closed” or “kept secret”. It has a semantical equivalent in the Akkadian term *katimtu*, which means “covered” or “hidden” but also refers – together with the terms *pirištu* “secret” und *niṣirtu* “kept safe” – to a secret, exclusive knowledge that comprises magical, divinatory, and ritual expert knowledge that is only available for a circle of insiders. It originates from an antediluvian era; legendary sages received it from divine revelation and transmitted it into the postdiluvian era. Apparently, Ezek 28:3 alludes to a similar concept of secret knowledge like that which is widespread in Mesopotamia. Especially striking is the parallel to a passage in the so-called (Persian) Verse Account on the Babylonian king Nabonidus (col. V, 8’–13’),[26] where Nabonidus boasts of his secret knowledge *(katimtu/niṣirtu)* and of his wisdom, which is superior to that of the primeval sage Adapa. In Ezek 28,3, however, this claim is not expressed in the form of a self-expression (boastful monologue) but of a eulogy addressed to the king by the divine speaker. Usually, this kind of flattering speech is addressed to a king by his subjects in a hierarchical and asymmetrical relationship.[27] The fact that Yhwh adapts this kind of speech although it does not fit to the situation of communication indicates that the intention is not to flatter but to

[24] In the Aqhat epic, Danil appears, for instance, as a conjurer of the clouds (CAT 1.19 I 38–42) and curses cities (CAT 1.19 III 45 – IV 6). His daughter Pughatu is called “one who knows the walk of the stars (*yd't hlk kbkbm*, CAT 1.19 II 2–3; IV 38), which demonstrates her knowledge regarding celestial divination (cf. Niehr, Mythen, 288 n. 452), and she is able to deal with magic (KTU 1.19 IV 59–60). Regarding the magical and mantic abilities of Danil and his children in the Aqhat epic see also Müller, Weisheit, 89–94. Furthermore, the biblical Daniel from the Book of Daniel, who demonstrates his mantic wisdom in the interpretation of dreams and signs, is probably also in a line of tradition with the Ugaritic Danil.

[25] Cf. the statements regarding Solomon’s wisdom in 1 Kings 3:12 and especially 5:10–11.

[26] Text and (German) translation in Schaudig, Inschriften, 569–570, 576.

[27] Cf. Ps 45:2–3; 2 Sam 14:17, 20 and three passages in letters from scholars to Sargonid kings in which the king is compared or related to Adapa (SAA 10 No. 29:r.2; No. 174:8–9; No. 380:3’–4’).

illustrate ironically the contrast between the former lofty status of the king and his tragical fall.

(2) According to vv. 13–14, the wisdom of the king is *located in a mythical, numinous sphere*. The king is positioned "in Eden, the garden of God" and "on the holy mountain of God (or the gods)". The location of both the garden and the mountain is not specified; both places belong to a sphere that is segregated from ordinary mortals and not accessible for them. The text thus draws a mythical topography. The places 'divine garden' and 'divine mountain' are not two separate places but two different aspects and illustrations of a mythical setting and a mythical sphere into which the king is carried away. The cherub (v. 14) is part of this mythical scenery and serves to mark the place as a sacral area. The same holds true for the "stones of fire" (v. 14).[28] They are not just a decorative element, but they underscore the mythical quality of the place and its location beyond the world of humans.[29]

(3) According to v. 17, *the wisdom of the king is corrupted by his hubris*. As a result, he is cast out from the mythical place (vv. 16–18*). After a blameless (תמים) conduct he commits עולה "iniquity, wrong" (v. 15) and fails or sins (ותחטא, v. 16a*). The concrete sin is not specified, until v. 17a identifies it with the king's pride (גבה לבך), which is caused by his beauty (יפי).[30] However, how the pride becomes manifest is not stated either. Whereas the connection of beauty, pride, and the loss of wisdom is clear, their causal relation is ambiguous. Most likely, the loss of wisdom is the result of the pride which is caused by the beauty and splendor. Wisdom as a superhuman, numinous quality is closely linked to the mythical place. Consequently, the pride results both in the expulsion from the mythical place and in the loss of the mythical quality. A certain inner-biblical analogy can be seen in Dan 4,26–34, where Nebuchadnezzar is deprived of his human reason due to his hubris and expelled to the beasts.[31]

In contrast to this mythical connotation and setting of wisdom, it gets a more "mundane" meaning in the younger additions in vv. 1–10 and vv. 11–19 in combination with the transposition of v. 3. The most relevant of the additional passages are:

בחכמתך ובתבונתך עשית לך חיל	4	By your wisdom and your understanding you have amassed wealth for yourself

[28] The exact meaning of the "stones of fire" is controversially discussed. The literary context suggests a connection to the gemstones (v. 13). It may be thought of sparkling, twinkling stones, of red gemstones like carnelian, whose color could be associated with fire, or specifically of fire stone (Akkadian: *aban išāti* or *pendû/pindû*), which could be used as jewelry and also occurs in magical contexts.

[29] Cf. Körting, Von Edelsteinen, 473. Cf. also tablet IX of the Gilgamesh epic, which tells about a garden of gemstones, that is found in a transcendental world as well, i.e. beyond the solar orbit.

[30] Regarding the connection of beauty and hubris see Isa 3:16–24; Ezek 16:15; 27:3; 31:3, 7–10.

[31] The loss of the human reason is not narrated, but presupposed, when the texts states before and after Nebuchadnezzar's praise of the highest God and his humble submission to him that his reason returns to him (מנדעי עלי יתוב, v. 31; מנדעי יתוב עלי, v. 33; however, both passages are absent in the Old Greek version) and that he is reinstated into his kingship (cf. also v. 13 [according to MT and Theodotion]). According to the text-critical and literary-critical reconstruction of Dan 4 by Segal, Dreams, 94–131, at least v. 31 belongs to the text of the common Aramaic precursor of MT and Old Greek.

ותעש זהב וכסף באוצרותיך:		and have gathered gold and silver into your treasuries.
ברב חכמתך ברכלתך הרבית חילך ויגבה לבבך בחילך: [...]	5	By your great wisdom in your trade you have increased your wealth, and your heart has become proud in your wealth. […]
ברב רכלתך <מלאת> תוכך חמס [...]	16	In the abundance of your trade you filled your interior with violence. […]
מרב עוניך בעול רכלתך חללת מקדשיך [...]	18	By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade, you profaned your holy district. […]

Wisdom (חכמה) and understanding (תבונה) now help the king of Tyre to accumulate wealth (vv. 4–5). In this context, wisdom means economical skills; the Tyrian ruler understands to use them successfully in his רכלה, the "'trade' in the sense of commercial activity or economic enterprise".[32] "Gold" and "silver" serve as an epitome of the wealth, which enters the אוצרות ("treasuries") of the king due to his skillful trade activities. The redactional additions thus take up the subject of trade from Ezek 27, where Tyre's extensive commercial relationships are described.

The connection of wisdom and wealth is probably best illustrated by the example of Solomon, who succeeds to amass vast amounts of gold due to presents and tributes, but also commercial relationships (cf. 1 Kings 10). In Prov 8:18, 21, Lady Wisdom promises wealth and full treasuries as a reward for those who love her.[33] However, numerous Old Testament texts know about the ambivalence and dark sides of wealth. In general, wealth carries the danger of boasting of it (הל״ל hitp., Jer 9:22; Ps 49:7), of trusting in it (בט״ח, Ps 49:7; 52:9; Prov 11:28) and of becoming proud (Deut 8:12–18; 17:17, 20) and boastful (Hos 12:9). This exactly is the transgression of the king of Tyre: because of his amassed riches, his heart becomes arrogant (ויגבה לבבך בחילך). In this way, his "great wisdom" (רב חכמתך, v. 5), which is the precondition of his great economical success, leads to his downfall.

Furthermore, wealth can also be suspected of resulting from dubious causes. It can be acquired by injustice and fraud (cf. Jer 17:11; Mic 6:10–12 at al.). Traders are under the suspicion of using wrong scales, measures, or weights (cf. Lev 19,35–36; Deut 25,13–16; Hos 12,8; Am 8:5; Prov 11:1). The image of Tyre according to some Old Testament texts – especially in the Latter Prophets – is connected with such negative views on trade and traders (cf. Isa 23; Am 1:9–10; Jo 4:4–8; Zech 9:1–8; Neh 13,15–22; cf. also Zech 14:21).[34] Tyre is viewed as a trading power that becomes proud, is engaged in human trafficking, and commits acts of sacrilege against the temple of Jerusalem and the Sabbath. Against the background of these texts, the negative assessment of the commercial activity of Tyre in Ezek 28 and especially the mention of violence, iniquities, and injustice (חמס, עון, עול) in the context of trade (רכלה) in vv. 16a and 18a becomes better comprehensible. It may be thought of human trafficking, but possibly, this view is also affected by the fact that the Phoenicians, who dominat-

[32] Lipiński, Art. רכל, 499.

[33] Cf. also Prov 3:16; 14:24; 24:3–4; SapSal 7:11–12.

[34] Regarding the images of Tyre especially in post-exilic texts and their background see Müller, Phönizien, 189–204 and extensively Saur, Tyroszyklus, 252–314.

ed the international as well as the regional trade, got rich at the expense of Jerusalem – at least according to certain groups in Judah. With the image of Tyre as a commercial power that gains great wealth by means of a lot of cleverness, but also by improper means, Ezek 28:4–5, 16a, 18a is a document of polemic against Tyre or the Phoenicians that was widespread in post-exilic times.

Consequently, the connection of wisdom and hubris is redefined in the redactional additions. Wisdom manifests in the successful trade and generates great wealth, which seduces the ruler of Tyre, representing the city of Tyre, to arrogance. Both this arrogance as the consequence of wealth and the injustice and violence as means of the acquisition of wealth lead to a negative assessment of Tyre as a commercial power. The criticism of wisdom and hubris is thus part of the broader criticism of commerce.

Overall, Ezek 28:1–19 shows different facets of wisdom: the owner of wisdom is the king, wisdom has spatial and temporal dimensions (mythical places and a distant, mythical past), it is connected with secret knowledge and with beauty, and it is practically applied in the accumulation of wealth. In both parts of the text, wisdom, hubris, and downfall are closely interrelated.

*3. Isaiah 47**

Isa 47 is directed against the personified city of Babylon. It is the only oracle against a foreign political entity in Isa 40–55. Its basic layer can be limited to vv. 1–2, 5, 8–9, 10aγδ.b, 11.[35] Since it is conceptually close to texts that are generally recognized as the oldest ones in Second Isaiah and since it expects the reversal of fortune and the catastrophe of Babylon in the future, the dating shortly before 539 BCE is most reasonable. However, Isa 47* may have been an independent literary unit before it was incorporated into the growing book of Second Isaiah.

This basic layer is divided into two parts. The first part (vv. 1–2, 5) contains eleven imperatives to Babylon. Verses 1 and 5 are closely connected (imperative שבי, vocative בת כשדים, causal clause ... כי לא תוסיפי יקראו לך) and enclose the six imperative sentences (each with an imperative and an object) in v. 2 (scheme A–B–A'). In the second part (vv. 8–9, 10aγδ.b, 11), introduced by ועתה "and now", two rebukes, each including a boastful monologue, and two announcements of doom alternate (scheme A–B–A'–B').

[35] Similarly, Hermisson, Deuterojesaja II, 157–162; Weidner, Ende, 151–155. See there regarding the reasons. In contrast to these two exegetes, however, I consider v. 9bβγ (ברב כשפיך בעצמת חבריך מאד) as part of the basic layer because v. 10aγδ is well connected to v. 9bβγ with the reference to Babylon's wisdom and knowledge, and v. 11 presupposes that this wisdom and knowledge manifests in such magical practices. The literal accordance with the secondary v. 12a does not necessarily mean that both passages belong to the same literary layer.

Concerning the genre, Isa 47* rests on literary traditions of the city lament.[36] This is indicated by the personification of the city as a female figure and its form of address with בת "daughter" and בתולה "virgin", the imperatives to mourning (with subsequent כי-clauses), the use of titles of honor, the use of the contrast motif (here: present glory versus imminent doom and destruction), the quoted speech of the personified city, the motifs widowhood and loss of children, and the partial qina meter. However, the genre 'city lament' is modified: the doom lies still ahead, and the imperative to descend from the throne anticipates Babylon's reversal of fortune and functions as its verbal mise-en-scène in advance. The boastful monologue of the personified city takes the place of the usually expectable lament. This monologue motivates the announcement of doom, which occurs instead of a description of misery. Consequently, Isa 47* is a prophetical adaptation of the city lament.

With regard to the subject of wisdom, the second paragraph (vv. 8–9, 10aγδ.b, 11) is of special interest. Wisdom is seen as an unfavorable factor regarding Babylon's hubris and fall:

חכמתך ודעתך היא שובבתך	10*	Your wisdom and your knowledge led you astray,
ותאמרי בלבך		and you said in your heart,
אני ואפסי עוד:		"I am, and there is no one besides me."

The doom which is about to come over Babylon is related to her magical and mantic practices: neither could she foresee it by means of divination nor avert it by means of magic. Thus, Isa 47 addresses two fields that had great importance in Mesopotamia and especially in Babylonia. Both fields are closely related and can be subsumed – although somewhat anachronistically – under the term "future science":[37] both aim at safeguarding the future by the aid of mythically and cosmically anchored traditional knowledge in order to recognize imminent evil early enough, to avoid it, and to avert it. Although the authors of Isa 47* probably had no deeper insight into Babylonian divination and magic, they knew at least about this close interrelation between the two fields, their connection with Babylonia, their political significance, and their performing by means of great erudition.[38] As outsiders, they were apparently quite well informed about Babylonian divination and magic.

However, the text does not intend to provide a realistic and appropriate depiction of these Babylonian practices, but, in contrast, to defame it polemically. First of all, this can be seen at the mentioned terminology: both in Hebrew and in Akkadian and Ugaritic, the root כש״ף (v. 9) means witchcraft and sorcery ("black magic") and has thus a clearly negative connota-

[36] Regarding the city lament cf., e.g., Dobbs-Allsopp, Daughter; Wischnowsky, Tochter Zion; Berges, Klagelieder, 46–52; Heskett, Isaiah. This genre is only rarely considered regarding Isa 47 (except in Dobbs-Allsopp, Daughter, 109–113; Heskett, Isaiah, 86–100).

[37] This term ("Zukunftswissenschaft") is used regarding Isa 47 by Hermisson, Deuterojesaja II, 180 and Berges, Jesaja 40–48, 502.

[38] Of the terms that vv. 9 and 11 use for magical practices, at least כשף, חבר and שח״ר have Akkadian equivalents *(kašāpu/kišpu/kaššāpūtu, ubburu, saḫāru)* with similar semantics (cf. Hermisson, Deuterojesaja II, 152, 180, 184; Schmitt, Magie, 107, 110; Paul, Isaiah 40–66, 297, 299). The last one even seems to be an Akkadian loan word (cf. Schmitt, Magie, 110).

tion.[39] The Hebrew Bible uses the root for religious or ritual practices that are considered as prohibited, unwelcome, damaging for society, or alien.[40] The same applies to the root שח״ר (v. 11), which has a synonymous and thus a pejorative meaning as well.[41] Hence, Isa 47 is an expression of the purpose to discredit and disparage the Babylonian magic. The "daughter Babylon", who exercises these practices, is thus stigmatized as a sorceress.[42]

Which are the reasons for such a negative assessment of the Babylonian "future science"? The fact that Babylonian divination and magic are derived from other gods (Ea, Marduk, and others) and are rooted in a polytheistic worldview is apparently not an issue. Although this would be expectable within the context of Second Isaiah with its tendency towards the emphasis of monotheism (cf. especially the argument of prophecy[43]), Isa 47* mentions neither other gods nor the uniqueness of Yhwh. The opposition of inductive (= false) divination and intuitive (= true) divination in the form of prophecy does not seem to have any relevance either.[44] The problem is rather that daughter Babylon trusts in an autonomous security system, by which she gets a false sense of security (cf. v. 8). The Babylonian "future science" is accompanied by the conviction of being perfectly equipped to meet all future challenges.[45] The supposed security is false in two respects: on the one hand, it is *deceptive*, because it is based on false premises and does not factor in Yhwh's power in history, which is not affected by Babylonian divination and magic. Captured by the conviction of having control of the future, Babylon does not recognize the signs of the times. With her "science" she cannot foresee her own destruction, which therefore strikes her abruptly. On the other hand, it is also *reprehensible*, because Babylon's trust in controlling the future with her expertise and thus in being safe seduces her to a hubris in which she considers herself to be virtually divine (cf. her statement אני ואפסי עוד "I am, and there is no one besides me", quoted twice in vv. 8, 10).[46] This twofold meaning is implied in the sentence: "Your wisdom and your knowledge led you astray (שו״ב pol.[47])" (v. 10aγδ), namely, towards a fatal error as well as to an arrogance and overconfidence that arises from her self-assurance. The consequences of her fatal error are mentioned

[39] Cf. Schmitt, Magie, 77–83.107–109.

[40] Schmitt, Magie, 109.

[41] Vgl. Schmitt, Magie, 78 (mit Anm. 51).110.

[42] Cf. Nah 3:4, where the personified city of Nineveh receives the not very honorable title "mistress of sorcery" (בעלת כשפים).

[43] Isa 41:4; 43:9–13; 45:21; 46:10–11 et al.

[44] Cf. Schmitt, Magie, 373 n. 169; pace Albani, Gott, 113–115; Erwich, Conflict, 34–35.

[45] Maul, Wahrsagekunst, 199.

[46] The claim of divinity is implied by the resemblance to the monotheistic statements in the preceding literary context of Second Isaiah, such as Isa 45:5, 21; 46:9. These statements occur in the context of Yhwh's power in history. Daughter Babylon, in contrast, claims this control of world affairs for herself by uttering similar words like Yhwh. This claim arouses the theological refutation in Isa 47*.

[47] The verb שו״ב in the Polel has different meanings ("to bring back", "to restore" at al.). Regarding the meaning "to seduce, to misguide, to lead astray" cf. also Jer 50:6 (Qere) (‖ תע״ה hiph.) and the verbal adjective שובב "recusant, apostate".

in v. 11. The emphasis is here on the unexpected and the unpreventable befalling of the coming disaster (cf. the relative clauses and the adverb פתאם "suddenly").

Overall, vv. 8–11* deal with the fatal connection of wisdom and hubris. Wisdom is understood as expertise in the matter of divination and magic, that is applied for the purpose of safeguarding the future in the conviction of being safe from all accidents and misadventures. In the eyes of the authors of Isa 47*, however, this Babylonian wisdom is useless and dangerous at the same time. Uselessness and dangerousness are mutually dependent: eventually, wisdom is good for nothing because the daughter Babylon can neither foresee her disaster nor avert it (cf. the contrast between דעתך "your knowledge" [v. 10aγ] and לא תדעי "you do not know" [v. 11aα, b]), and the *erroneous* sense of security has seduced her to an attitude of arrogance, in which she considers herself the sole power that rules history and thus does no more expect even the possibility of destruction. Consequently, Babylon's wisdom not just prevents her from averting her fall but indirectly even contributes to her fall.[48] The announcement of Babylon's loss of status and destruction despite *and* because of her wisdom forms, in the context of the oldest texts of Second Isaiah, the foil for the demonstration of Yhwh's superiority and sovereignty in history. Therefore, the announcement of Babylon's reversal of fortune and thus also the criticism of her wisdom have firmly theological reasons, even though Yhwh is not explicitly mentioned in the basic layer of Isa 47: Yhwh himself is the sole power that rules history; compared with this, the Babylonian scholarship turns out to be powerless and useless, despite its claim to control the future (cf. also Isa 44:25).[49] Put in a nutshell: wisdom leads to pride, pride comes before the fall, and thus wisdom contributes to Babylon's fall.

4. Conclusions

In summary, the analysis of the three passages leads to the following (preliminary) results regarding the conceptions and evaluations of wisdom.

(1) The texts treated above have *different conceptions of wisdom*. The term חכמה means strategical skills (Isa 10), divinatory and magical knowledge (Isa 47; Ezek 28:3, 11–19*), or economical skills (Ezek 28:4–5). In each case, the respective expertise is a unique characteristic of the protagonist vis-à-vis other human beings or nations.

(2) Despite the different conceptions of wisdom, all three texts somehow relate חכמה to *hubris and fall*. In Isa 10, the hubris consists in Ashur's boast of its own abilities as the al-

[48] Similarly, Hermisson, Deuterojesaja II, 181.

[49] This theological reason is probably sufficient to explain the announcement of doom against Babylon within the context of Second Isaiah. Although Babylon's reversal of fortune serves as a foil for Zion's salvific reversal of fortune in younger texts (cf. Isa 51:17–23; 52,1–2; 54,1–8), Babylon is not from the outset the counter model for Zion and Jerusalem in Isa 47* (thus Höffken, Jesaja 40–66, 111 et al.). The originally intended contrast of Babylon and Yhwh (rather than Babylon and Zion) is correctly pointed out by Kratz, Kyros, 155, 171.

leged cause for the military success and in the boundless urge to expansion, accompanied by ruthless violence. The fall is not announced explicitly but implied in the woe cry. In Isa 47, the divinatory and magical expertise leads daughter Babylon to a sense of security, in which she considers herself immune against all harms and thus virtually divine. As a result, the coming disaster, which is neither foreseeable nor avertable by means of her expertise, hits her unexpectedly. In Ezek 28:4–5, the wisdom of the king of Tyre enables him to gain great wealth, and in this wealth, his heart becomes proud. In the final form of the oracle of doom (vv. 1–10), this pride consists in his self-deification and undue self-assurance (v. 2). Therefore, Yhwh will bring "strangers" (i.e. the Babylonians) who will kill the king of Tyre and thus refute his claim of divinity (vv. 7–10). In these three passages, either wisdom (indirectly) leads to hubris and pride, which comes before the fall, or the claim and boast of wisdom is an expression of hubris and pride (thus in Isa 10). The connection of wisdom, hubris, and fall is somewhat different in Ezek 28,11–19*: the king has superhuman wisdom and beauty, but he becomes proud mainly because of his beauty. This pride then corrupts his wisdom and results in his expulsion from the sacral realm and in his death.

(3) Regarding the *rhetoric and stylistic form,* two features are noteworthy. Firstly, several passages use forms of lament and dirge. Isa 10:5–15* is opened by a woe cry; Isa 47 is stylized as a city lament; and Ezek 28:11–19 is at least on the redactional level categorized as a "dirge" (קינה, v. 12). However, some features of a dirge or a city lament are defamiliarized. This results in a certain irony and mockery about the victim of (imminent) destruction. One of these features that is defamiliarized in comparison with a dirge or a city lament is, secondly, the boastful monologue, which includes a self-praise of the victim of destruction. Boastful monologues are found in Isa 10:8b–14*, Isa 47:8, 10 and Ezek 28:2. They serve as the verbal expressions and illustrations of hubris, they accentuate the contrast between the self-perception and the imminent destruction, and they justify the fall by referring to the arrogance of the speakers.

(4) Regarding the *assessment of wisdom,* it can be noted that wisdom is not considered reprehensible and sacrilegious per se, but the handling of it is pivotal. The negative assessment results above all from the connection with hubris. The wisdom of the protagonists of Isa 10, Isa 47, and Ezek 28:1–10 seduces them to a false sense of security or to an inappropriate boast of their own abilities. Their self-claim either explicitly includes the claim of divinity or implies the denial or contesting of Yhwh's acting in history. The criticism of wisdom is therefore motivated by theological reasons. Especially Isa 10 and Isa 47 are interested in emphasizing Yhwh as the sole power in history. Wisdom is never purely profane, but it is a quality that is connected with the divine realm. The boast of being wise or the trust in one's own wisdom thus implies the claim of a divine quality and position. The texts respond to this claim by referring to Yhwh's power to rule history: Yhwh is the one who holds Ashur as his staff in his

hands (Isa 10:5–6, 15), who commissions Cyrus as his salvific instrument for his people (Isa 40–48*), and who brings "strangers, the most terrible of the nations" (Ezek 28:7) against the ruler of Tyre. For this reason, he "turns back the wise and makes their knowledge foolish" (Isa 44:25; cf. also Isa 29:14; Jer 49:7; Oba 8). The motivation is to maintain the border between the divine and the human and to emphasize the sovereignty of Yhwh against the tendencies of the foreign empires to self-deification. As a result, criticism of wisdom in the oracles against the nations is part of a larger theological criticism of the rule and ideology of the imperial powers.

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Project Summary

Working Title:
Wisdom Comes before a Fall: Limits, Boundary Transgressions, and Dangers of Human Wisdom in Old Testament and Ancient Near Eastern Perspectives

Wisdom (חכמה and synonyms) in the context of the Old Testament is regularly associated with a positive and beneficial quality that is worth striving for. However, some texts in the Old Testament attest a critical attitude towards human wisdom or (supposedly) wise people. Especially striking is the close connection and the fine line between wisdom and hubris. Since hubris is often considered fatal ("pride comes before a fall"), wisdom does not always prevent from a fall but can even contribute to a fall. The aim of my post-doc project is to analyze these texts and their conceptions of wisdom and to better understand what makes wisdom an ambivalent or potentially dangerous issue.

The main part of the study starts with an analysis of the so-called Verse Account on Nabonidus, a Babylonian diatribe against the last Neo-Babylonian king, within the context of Mesopotamian tradition history and cultural history. This broader context also sheds light on the Old Testament texts analyzed next, which predominantly stem from the oracles against the nations (Isa 10:5-15; Ezek 28:1-10, 11-19; Isa 47), but also the fatal acquisition of the "knowledge of good and evil" in Gen 2-3 will be treated. Several smaller passages dealing with the perishing of the wisdom of the wise (Isa 29:14; 44:25; Jer 49:7; Ob 8; Job 5:12-14) or with being wise in one's own eyes (Isa 5:21; 19:11-12; Jer 8:8-9; 9:22-23; Prov 3:7; 26:5, 12, 16) will be considered as well.

The methodology is mainly based on historical-critical exegesis. Particular consideration is paid to the analysis of rhetoric and pragmatics on the one hand and to the ancient Near Eastern backgrounds on the other hand.

The Greek Minor Prophets Scroll and Kaige Tradition within Greek Bible Translations and Second Temple Judaism

In this paper I map out the kaige phenomenon within Greek Bible translations and Second Temple Judaism. Kaige is a group of loosely connected revisions of the Old Greek Septuagint made around 1st century BCE / 1st century CE and before the three major Greek revisers (Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion). It shares similarities with proto-Theodotion texts found in the New Testament, but they are not sibling translations.

My paper advances scholarship through placing kaige within its wider tradition and reveals the evolving Jewish attitudes towards Hebrew scriptures and translation. It is likely kaige is connected with the rise of the proto-Masoretic Text, but alternative suggestions of scribal and education practises are also possibilities that shall be discussed.

Beyond cultural attitudes to scripture, my work is also very useful in textual criticism, for it improves scholarly understanding of kaige translation technique. This is particularly true where the Old Greek reflects earlier versions of biblical books and our primary manuscripts contain the kaige revisions – such as in Samuel-Kings.

Regarding the structure of this paper, I shall share the findings of my fresh analysis into the translation revisions of the Greek Minor Prophets scroll (8ḤevXIIgr) from Naḥal Ḥever. This scroll witnesses a kaige text that has revised the existing Old Greek translation towards the proto-Masoretic Text. I shall also include a couple of interesting features from the latest scroll fragments discovered in the cave earlier this year. With this analysis, I critique and extend several features of kaige proposed in previous monographs and identify a key trend not previously spotted surrounding the standardisation of translation in kaige texts.

The Greek Minor Prophets Scroll and Kaige Tradition within Greek Bible Translations and Second Temple Judaism

Timothy A. Lee

Introduction

In this paper I map out the kaige phenomenon within Greek Bible translations and Second Temple Judaism. Kaige is a group of loosely connected revisions of the Old Greek Septuagint made around 1st century BCE / 1st century CE and before the three major Greek revisers (Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion). It shares similarities with proto-Theodotion texts found in the New Testament, but they are not sibling translations.

History of Research into kaige

For most of its history, scholars assumed the Hebrew Bible had been translated once and not revised until the second century CE. Origen and later scholars detected different translations in earlier patristic writings and even the New Testament,[1] but the idea of a single translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek and then no major revisions for several centuries later was assumed by all.

With the advent of modern criticism, scholars began to question the *status quo*. In 1838, Karl Credner while re-examining Septuagint quotations in Justin Martyr found readings which were corrected towards the Hebrew and appeared independent of Aquila

[1] Vries and Karrer 2013.

himself.[2] In Justin's quotation of Micah 4 the standard Septuagint text was not used, instead some of the readings were found only in Aquila, others were found in Symmachus and Theodotion, but not Aquila.[3] The text was slightly different to all three recensions and required a new explanation for the variety. Without more data, Credner, himself, suggested some of these corrections were made by Christians.[4]

However, another possible source for these quotations was about to be suggested, and it builds upon work undertaken around that time by Thackeray in Samuel-Kings. Henry St. John Thackeray, in his classic Grammar, identified different translations of the same book within the Septuagint itself.[5] He found four distinct units in Kingdoms (Samuel-Kings), which he divided as follows:

- 1 Samuel (α)
- 2 Samuel 1–11.1 (ββ)
- 2 Samuel 11.2–1 Kings 2.11 (βγ, kaige)
- 1 Kings 2.12–21.43 (γγ)
- 1 Kings 22.1–2 Kings (γδ, kaige)

Of these units in Kingdoms, Thackeray discerned βγ and γδ appeared to be from a different hand, one associated with Theodotion.[6] They were distinguishable by their differing translation styles, two of which displayed 'the beginnings of a tendency towards pedantic literalism.'[7] These 'beginnings' predated the assumed dates of Aquila, Theodotion and Symmachus, raising new questions on Greek Bible translations that could not be solved at that time. Thackeray writes,

[2]Credner 1838: 289.
[3]Ibid.: 299.
[4]'deise Berichtigung von Christen ausgegangen ist' (ibid.: 299, cited in Rahlfs 1921: 192).
[5]Thackeray 1909: 10.
[6]Ibid.: 10.
[7]Ibid.: 9.

> these [sections] are distinguished from the remaining portions by their particles and prepositions (e.g., καί γε = גם, καὶ μάλα, ἡνίκα, ἀνθ' ὧν ὅτι, ἀπάνωθεν), by the almost complete absence of the historical present ... by the use of ἐγώ εἰμι followed by a finite verb and by their vocabulary: they have much in common with Theodotion.[8]

Thackeray suggested the specific καί γε for וְגַם/גַּם translation technique was due to a tendency in later books of the Greek Bible to 'use Greek words of similar sound to the Hebrew'.[9]

[8] Thackeray 1909: 10.
[9] Ibid.: 36-7.



Figure 1: Zech 8.18–9.7, The Minor Prophets Scroll (Cols. B 1–2). This is the larger hand from Scribe B. Note the Paleo-Hebrew Tetragrammatons on the third and fifth lines, right column. Source https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nahal_Hever2.jpg

A very similar translation technique was discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls. This is the Greek Minor Prophets Scroll (8ḤevXIIgr).[10] This scroll was found in the caves around Naḥal Ḥever in 1952 and immediately analysed by a Dominique Barthélemy.[11] A more thorough examination was published in his 1963 work *Les devanciers d'Aquila.*[12]

The specific kaige feature identified by Thackeray also left its mark on this and other major manuscripts, leading to the identification of a whole kaige recension movement. Barthélemy noticed a new καί γε not in the Old Greek appear in Codex Washingtonianus in Joel 4.4.[13]

After Barthélemy, other books were studied for kaige features.[14] Barthélemy's nine suggested characteristics of kaige revision grew tenfold to the 96 collated by Greenspoon[15] and critiqued by McLay.[16] These features are less uniformly found across texts associated with kaige. Therefore, scholars have concluded kaige revisions are less homogenous and a less-centralised movement with changing criteria over a longer period of time.[17] The consensus is that the kaige was a movement that sought to bring the Greek Bible closer to its Hebrew original, given the Greek translation was not always in harmony with it.[18]

More recently there has been a shift away from viewing the kaige revisors as automata, sticking to mechanical rendering and producing poor Greek,[19] to noticing signs of sophistication and good-education.[20] More work is required to comprehend this illusive kaige group. I shall now build upon the previous work with a fresh examination of the Minor Prophets scroll and reflection on its implications.

[10] Emanuel Tov edited a critical edition for DJD-8 in 1990 (Tov, Kraft, and Parsons. 1990)
[11] Barthélemy 1953.
[12] Barthélemy 1963.
[13] Ibid.: 241.
[14] E.g. Greenspoon 1983; Gentry 1995
[15] Greenspoon 1983.
[16] McLay 1998.
[17] Aejmelaeus Forthcoming: 4.
[18] Schenker 2017: 14.
[19] McLean 2007; Kreuzer 2015
[20] Aitken 2015c; Aejmelaeus Forthcoming: 3

An examination of the method of kaige with special reference to the Greek Minor Prophets Scroll (8ḤevXIIgr)

I shall now share some of the most pertinent results of my analysis of the scroll when compared to the Old Greek.[21] I shall provide examples of theological change; changes in representation of Hebrew syntax; examples of formal equivalence; and mistakes by the reviser. I shall then consider a few further questions, before concluding my analysis.

In comparison with the Old Greek text of the Minor Prophets, my analysis suggests kaige revisional features occur where there were: (i) non-standard translation equivalents idiomatic to the older translation; (ii) rare free translations and mistakes (omissions or misreadings). The new translation equivalents are sometimes specific to what has become known as the kaige features, with words only found in kaige texts. However, I noticed often the reviser updates the text to follow a standard Septuagintal translation in a way akin to a glossary. This has been overlooked in scholarship, and changes what we think of as kaige revision. Kaige appears to be a correction towards a received choice of translations for words and phrases which are found in the majority of non-kaige Septuagint texts.

Representation of Hebrew syntax

One unusual feature of the revised Minor Prophets scroll is the rendering of כִּי + yiqtol as ὅτι + subjunctive.[22] Throughout the Septuagint, כִּי + yiqtol is usually translated with a standard ὅτι + imperfect. Remarkably ὅτι + subjunctive seems limited to kaige texts. This syntax is found, not just in the additions to 8ḤevXIIgr, but Kaige Samuel (2

[21] For the Old Greek I use Ziegler's eclectic critical text of the Minor Prophets (Ziegler 1967).

[22] I have investigated this feature after Jan Joosten suggested this might be a mark of kaige revision.

Sam 18.22),[23] Ecclesiastes and Theodotion-Job[24] – texts associated with kaige. I shall now explore this strange syntactical feature with reference to two passages.

There are three possible exceptions (1 Samuel 28.22, Jeremiah 35.4 and Job 10.3), but these all have plausible explanations. The Samuel reading, which comes from a non-kaige section of Samuel, could be evidence of change or contamination. Scholars such as Kreuzer speaks of a 'milder' revision according to similar principles in the non-kaige sections of Samuel-Kings.[25] The unusual Greek syntax in Job 10.3 could also be an unmarked kaige reading. Job 10.4b is the only marked Theodotion reading in Job 10 and could be out of place, or perhaps through scribal haplography Job 10.3b lost its asterisk and metobelus in our extant Hexapla manuscripts. Jeremiah 35.4 (28.4 MT) translates כִּי אֶשְׁבֹּר with ὅτι συντρίψω, but Codex Alexandrinus reads ὅτι συνέτριψα which is uncommon, but plausible syntax used elsewhere in Jeremiah.[26] This would suggest kaige readings have interfered with the text of Jeremiah.

I shall now explore this strange syntactical feature with reference to two passages.

Micah 5.4-5

... אַשּׁוּר | כִּי־יָבוֹא בְאַרְצֵנוּ וְכִי יִדְרֹךְ ... מֵאַשּׁוּר כִּי־יָבוֹא בְאַרְצֵנוּ וְכִי יִדְרֹךְ בִּגְבוּלֵנוּ

... ὅταν Ἀσσύριος ἐπέλθῃ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν ὑμῶν καὶ ὅταν ἐπιβῇ ... ἐκ τοῦ Ασσουρ, ὅταν ἐπέλθῃ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν ὑμῶν καὶ ὅταν ἐπιβῇ ἐπὶ τὰ ὅρια ὑμῶν. (OG)

... Ασσουρ ὅτι ἐλθῃ [εἰ]ς [τὴν γῆν ἡμῶ]ν καὶ ὅτι ἐπιβῇ ... ἐξ] Ασσουρ ὅτι ἔλθῃ εἰς τ[ὴν γῆν ἡμῶν καὶ ὅτι] ἐπιβῇ εἰς τὰ ὅρια [ἡμῶν.] (8ḤevXIIgr)

[23]Despite this odd form, the Hebrew does not display a כִּי and so cannot be used as evidence.

[24]Job 16.3, 22.3, 34.33; Ec 2.18, though without כִּי.

[25]Kreuzer 2015: 235. Kreuzer points to Aejmelaeus' work on 1 Samuel.(Aejmelaeus 2008: 366). And Aejmelaeus reminds us 'sporadic corrections may be present in all lines of textual transmission' (Aejmelaeus 2007: 126), especially 1 Samuel (Aejmelaeus 2015: 18).

[26]It is found, for example, in Jeremiah 30.10 (49.16 MT) which translates ὅτι ὕψωσεν for כִּי־תַגְבִּיהַ.

Job 16.3

הֲקֵץ לְדִבְרֵי־רוּחַ אוֹ מַה־יַּמְרִיצְךָ כִּי תַעֲנֶה

τί γάρ; μὴ τάξις ἐστὶν ῥήμασιν πνεύματος; ※ ἢ τί παρενοχλήσει σοι, ὅτι ἀποκρίνῃ; ✓

I have underlined where the redactor of 8ḤevXIIgr has changed the כִּי + yiqtol formation to read as ὅτι + subjunctive in Micah.[27] In Job, it is remarkable this feature is only found in Theodotion-Job, for these passages are associated with kaige. This feature should be included in future lists.

However, I am confident this was not an established feature of kaige recensions and only originated by accident. It seems clear the redactor decided to update ὅταν with ὅτι and left the following subjunctive standing (see Micah 5.4-5). This leaves us with atypical Greek syntax.[28] I believe this can explain the other renderings of כִּי + yiqtol using the standard ὅτι + indicative. Evidence is limited, but in Habakkuk 1.5, we can probably recreate ὅτι ἐκδιηγ]ηθῇ, which suggests an aorist passive, not subjunctive followed ὅτι in this kaige text. If ὅτι + subjunctive were a specific kaige features, this too ought to have been updated. The fact the aorist remains suggests ὅτι + subjunctive is a by-product of the kaige recensions, not a deliberate feature. However, when this by-product is identified, it can be inferred some kaige redaction has taken place. Therefore, this feature should be added as a mark of the kaige translation.

OG idiolect standardised

The kaige redactor standardised idiosyncratic renderings of the Old Greek Minor Prophets. These idiosyncrasies were suppressed and brought the kaige revision in-line with the standard translation renderings. I was struck by observing many of the redactor's updates involve removing idiosyncratic renderings of the OG translator which are peculiar to the

[27] See also Job 22.3, 34.33.
[28] BDAG 730-2.

Minor Prophets, parts of Ezekiel, and Jeremiah. While the updating of particular renderings is new, the links between the translation techniques in OG Ezekiel α,[29] Jeremiah and the Minor Prophets are not. This observation was made by Thackeray.[30] The Old Greek Minor Prophets are generally taken to be the work of a single translator,[31] and I suggest much of Ezekiel should be included also.[32]

This idiosyncratic translation technique was removed by the kaige redactor. I have found this with the rendering of כִּי, and several other lexemes. This could explain why we have so many different suggested kaige features in the monographs looking into kaige since Barthélemy. Many suggested marks of kaige translation are not true kaige features, but simply update their parent translations' own idiosyncrasies. So O'Connell's work on Exodus lists lots of words unique to the tabernacle, likewise Bodine's on Judges.

Ratio of כִּי translated with διότι to ὅτι

The Minor Prophets scroll shows the kaige reviser consistently corrected idiosyncrasies in the OG Minor Prophets. The translator of the OG Minor Prophets (along with Ezekiel and Jeremiah) was virtually distinct among the Greek translators in rendering כִּי with διότι with some consistency, while still using the standard ὅτι. I have plotted the ratio of these translations in Figure 2. The translation shows some similarity with Ezekiel, but beyond that it is almost unique in rendering כִּי with διότι at some frequency. This shows homogeneity in translation of the OG Minor Prophets. It also highlights a style the kaige revisers set about to eliminate (e.g., Hab 1.5). When they found a non-standard translation, they often replaced the word with the standard translation.

[29] That is Ezek 1–27, 40–48.

[30] Thackeray 1909: 11-12 and held today Aitken 2015b: 440, Pietersma and Wright 2007: 780, Dogniez 2021: 310.

[31] Kraus and Karrer 2009: 1165.

[32] C.f. Hauspie 2021: 279.

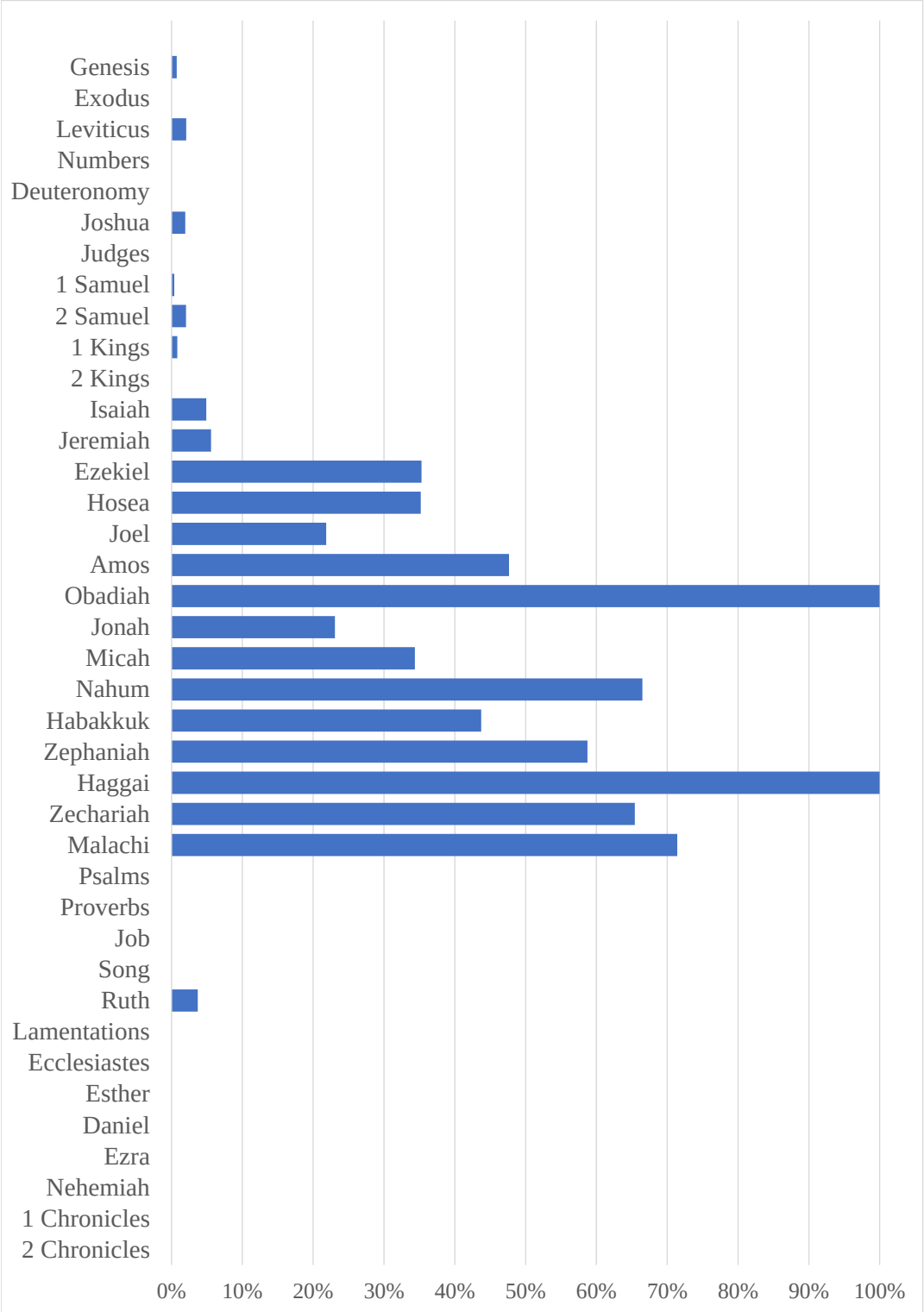


Figure 2: Ratio of כִּי translated with διότι to ὅτι

This particular standardisation is part of kaige, but it appears to link kaige with other lighter revisions. One thing I find fascinating about this particular standardisation is that the same revision is evident in the Ezekiel passages of Papyrus 967.[33] It is possible this very important third century papyrus was influenced by kaige revisions. While this needs further investigating, it probably only witnesses to a lighter independent revision.[34]

Translating the name of God: יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

Throughout the scroll we find the redactor standardises the OG Minor Prophets translation of the divine title **יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת**. This important title appears a late addition to the numerous divine titles in the Hebrew Bible. It is found only in the Prophets and Psalms,[35]

The first strategy was to transliterate the Hebrew **צְבָאוֹת** into Greek, κύριος σαβαωθ.[36] This was the strategy adopted almost uniquely by the translator of Isaiah, he transliterated this way 48 times. Apart from Isaiah, the transliteration was used elsewhere only once in Jeremiah 46 and four times 1 Samuel (non-kaige).[37] Transliteration of unknown words is common in kaige revision,[38] but they used a different strategy to translate this title.

The second strategy was to translate the phrase κύριος τῶν δυνάμεων. This is the approach adopted by the Greek translator of Psalms, which accounts for two thirds of

[33]E.g., Ezekiel 20.12, 42, 44. However διότι remains in 21.12, 26. Since διότι is the non-standard translation, it is almost certainly original and not the other way round. Incidentally, Papyrus 967 is very significant since it contains our earliest reference to Old Greek Daniel and the oldest near-complete text of Esther and Ezekiel.

[34]Papyrus 967 does not itself use the standard mark for identifying kaige, καί γε for גַּם, so is not classified as a kaige manuscript, but there might be other connections.

[35]Plus three times in Chronicles, but these are all parallel to passages in 2 Samuel

[36]The final θ is interesting for it shows ת without a dagesh was pronounced soft '*th*' in the late Second Temple period.

[37]Perhaps two more occurrences should be added. It is used also twice to translate when the MT contains only יהוה, suggesting a different Hebrew *Vorlage* once existed for Joshua 6.17 and 2 Kings 10.16.

[38]Greenspoon 1983: 332.

all occurrences.[39] δύναμις is an interesting translation within the semantic domain for צָבָא, emphasising powers not the standard armies or hosts. Song of Songs (a text linked to kaige) also translates צְבָאוֹת with δύναμις, although here it is plural of צְבִי 'gazelle' (Song 2.7, 3.5, c.f. 5.8, 8.4).

The third strategy was to translate with the phrase κύριος παντοκράτωρ. This is the approach adopted by the Greek translator of Jeremiah and is also found in Kingdoms and Chronicles. It is also the predominant translation found in the OG Minor Prophets, suggesting dependence on Greek Jeremiah or vice versa. The Septuaginta Deutsch editors believe this translation emphasises the role of God as the power that simply determines the history of Israel.[40]

Finally, a fourth strategy was to translate the phrase (κύριος) ὁ θεός, ὁ παντοκράτωρ (e.g., Zech 10.3, Nah 3.5). This translation is unique to the OG Minor Prophets, although it is likely influenced by translations for יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי־צְבָאוֹת and so should perhaps be seen as simply a variant of the third strategy. Readers of the New Testament book of Revelation will be familiar with this description ὁ θεός, ὁ παντοκράτωρ 'God Almighty', which occurs throughout the letter. It was this translation that inspired later Christian theology and puns on it have even made their way into Hollywood. However, this term seems to have been coined by the OG translator of the Minor Prophets.

When presented with this conundrum of how to translate יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת, the kaige redactor decided to adopt the second strategy and replace the Old Greek text with κύριος (𐤉𐤄𐤅𐤄) τῶν δυνάμεων. This suggests the kaige redactor was dependent on the Old Greek Psalms as his translation guide.[41] This should not be a surprise as kaige's dependant on the Greek Psalter has been argued by Munnich.[42] Alternatively, LSJ lists

[39] 16 out of 24.
[40] Kraus and Karrer 2009: 1166.
[41] Aitken 2015a: 322.
[42] Munnich 1987: 205.

παντοκράτωρ as referring to Hermes in a Greek epigram,[43] so παντοκράτωρ might have carried pagan connotations and so been felt impious for translating יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת.[44]

Readers of Rahlfs' Septuagint find the fourth option (τῶν δυνάμεων) used only once in the Minor Prophets. This is Zephaniah 2.9 which reads 'δια τουτο ζω εγω λεγει κς των δυναμεων ο θς ιηλ' in the great Uncials: Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus as well as the earliest Minor Prophets manuscripts after the Dead Sea Scrolls, Codex Washingtonianus. However, Ziegler was probably correct to remove this outlier which is not found in Codex Venetus or key Coptic translations. These are early translations of the Septuagint, the Sahidic is from the second century CE. So is an important pre-Hexaplaric witnesses to the Old Greek.[45] This reading in all the major manuscripts is evidence of a kaige variant slipping into non-kaige manuscripts at a very early stage of transmission. The wide prevalence of this reading suggests perhaps a mistake in something like Origen's hexapla from which other manuscripts were affected. Origen's revision significantly affected the later manuscript traditions.

Theological change

Some of the kaige transformations have significant theological implications. It seems unlikely these changes were made without the redactors realising what was happening. Jonah 3.9–10 addresses the question of God and repentance, while Habakkuk 2.4 address justification by faith.

Before coming to the key phrase, note how the OG translator struggled with the proto-MT's hapax עֻפְּלָה and resorted to etymological exegesis by translating ὑποστείληται.[46] 8ḤevXIIgr's translation, on the other hand (σκοτία) suggests its *Vorlage* contained the

[43] Kaibel 1878: 331.

[44] 'Οὐρεσι Ταλλαίοισι ἱδρυμένε Μαιάδος Ἑρμῆ
... καὶ σὺ δέ, παντοκράτωρ Ἐριούνιε, τόνδε φυλάσσοις
ζωόν, ὅπως τιμᾷ σὸν δι' ὅλου τέμενος' Epigr.Gr.815 (Cret.)

[45] Würthwein 2014: 149.

[46] CATSS Parallel Septuagint.

BHS	OG	8ḤevXIIgr	Change
הִנֵּה	ἐὰν	ιδ[ου]	word
עֻפְּלָה	ὑποστείληται,	σκοτία	word
לֹא־	οὐκ	οὐκ	
יָשְׁרָה	εὐδοκεῖ	εὐθεῖα	εὐδοκεῖ → εὐθύς
נַפְשֹׁו	ἡ		-
	ψυχή	ψυχή	
	μου	αὐτοῦ	μου → αὐτοῦ
	ἐν	[ἐν	
	αὐτῷ	αὐτῷ	
וְצַדִּיק	ὁ		-
	δὲ	καὶ	δὲ → καὶ
	δίκαιος	δί]καιος	
בֶּאֱמוּנָתְו	ἐκ	ἐν	ἐκ → ἐν
	πίστεώς	πίστει	Gen. → Dat.
	μου	αὐτοῦ	μου → αὐτοῦ
יִחְיֶה׃	ζήσεται.	ζήσετ[αι.]	

Habakkuk 2.4

Hebrew אֲפֵלָה or אֹפֶל and translated accordingly.[47] 8ḤevXIIgr's *Vorlage* thus appears to have muddled ע with א, a common occurrence from phonological similarity.[48] Apart from this 8ḤevXIIgr apparently follows the proto-MT. Which contrasts with the OG where בֶּאֱמוּנָתְו is translated ἐκ πίστεώς μου, not ἐν πιστει αὐτοῦ as in 8ḤevXIIgr.

Habakkuk 2.4 plays a key role in debates recorded in the New Testament around the nature of justification (c.f. James 2.24, Romans 1.17, Galatians 3.11, Hebrews 10.38).[49] The Old Greek rendering of this verse enabled a theology of justification to develop in Paul and his circles.[50] The Old Greek reads a yod for waw as the pronominal suffix to בֶּאֱמוּנָתְו and so changes the subject of faith. The kaige editor corrects this revision to avoid such theological ambiguity. It cleaves with the Masoretic Text. Does the righteous person live by his faith/faithfulness or God's faithfulness? The MT and 8ḤevXIIgr suggest it is the person's faithfulness. On the other hand, the OG leaves open room

[47] Theodotion-Job also translates אֹפֶל by σκοτία (Job 28.3).
[48] Tov 2012: 233.
[49] Watson 2016: 79.
[50] However, in each case they lack to possessive pronoun.

for Paul to develop his alternative understanding of justification through faith, or God's faithfulness.

The prevalence of kaige in the Minor Prophets outside the scroll

This kaige revision influenced other manuscripts that generally reflect the Old Greek. I am specifically addressing Barthélemy's first criterion, the καί γε translation. Barthélemy noticed a new καί γε almost certainly not from the Old Greek appear in Codex Washingtonianus in Joel 4.4,[51] but he does not mention two further attestations I found on fresh examination of the manuscript, both from the Minor Prophets. The second corrector's hand can also be seen inserting a γε after καί in Joel 2.29 (3.2 MT) (see Figure 3. I have digitally enhanced the text with colours).[52] Likewise, in exactly the same location and manner, a scribe corrects the great uncial Codex Sinaiticus (Figure 4). My favourite discovery, however, is the erasure of γε and possibly also καί itself in Zechariah 3.7 of Codex Washingtonianus. The early scribes did not know what to do given the variegated textual tradition with καί γε. Kaige revisions have influenced numerous non-kaige manuscripts. Supposed Old Greek texts may themselves contain later revisional readings.

[51] Barthélemy 1963: 241.

[52] Sanders and Schmidt 1927: 84. Sanders 1927: 25.

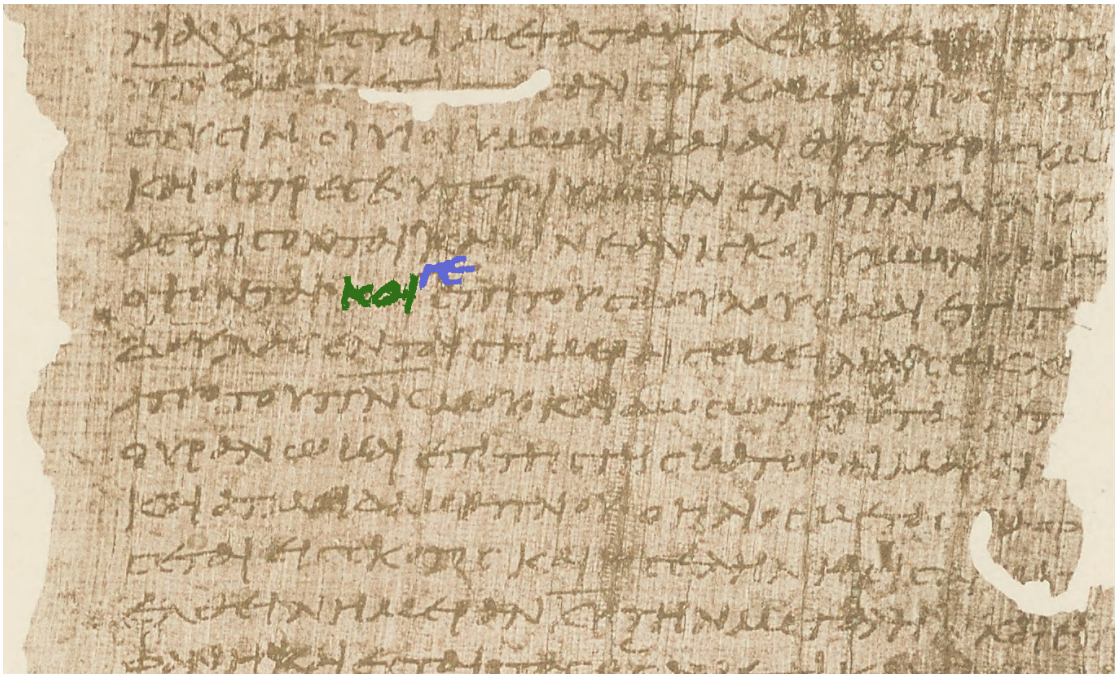


Figure 3: Joel 2.29, Codex Washingtonianus

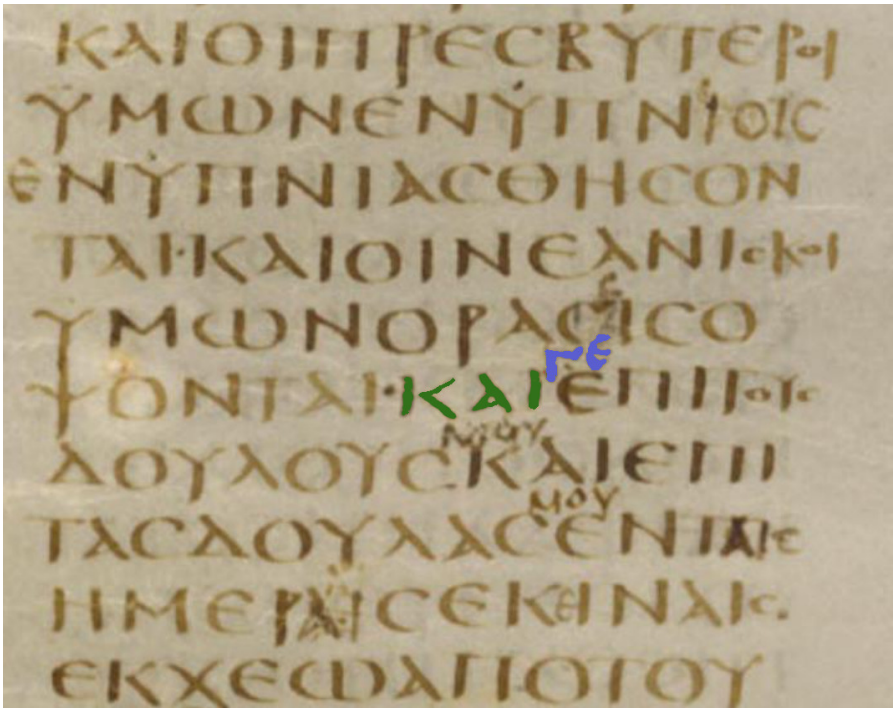


Figure 4: Joel 2.29, Codex Sinaiticus

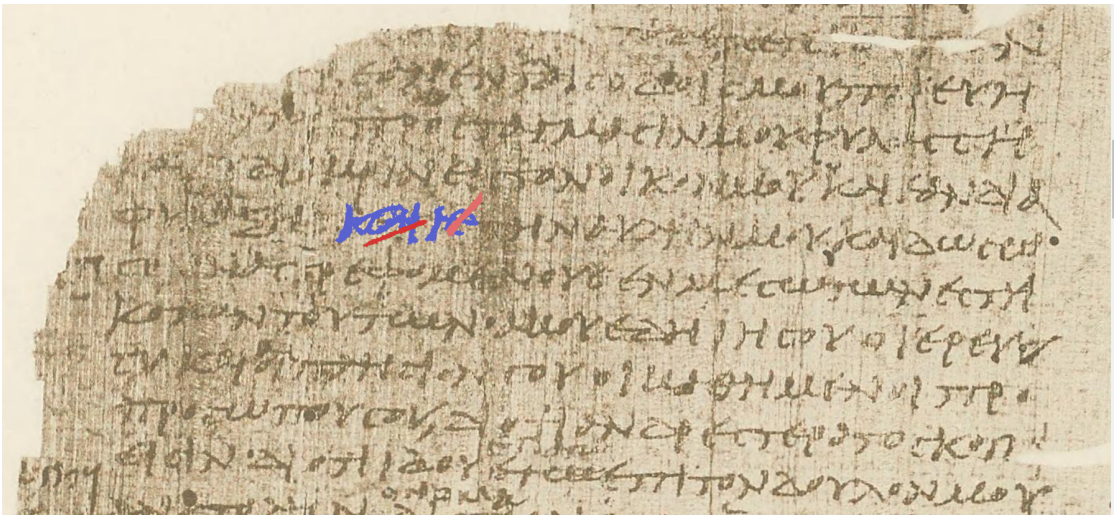


Figure 5: Zech 3.7, Codex Washingtonianus

Latest discoveries in the Dead Sea Scrolls

I turn to show the results of my analysis on the latest discoveries from this manuscript. In March 2021, for the first time in sixty years new Dead Sea Scroll fragments were discovered in the Dead Sea region.[53] Remarkably the fragments were from this Greek Minor Prophets scroll. The fragments have not been published, so I have analysed the fragment from the best available public photos.[54]

Reports of carbon dating would be the most significant development as this technique has not been applied to the scroll before. Until now we have relied on Pearson's paleographical analysis which dated the scroll around 50 BCE.[55] However, reports suggest the

[53] https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-56405090,
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/mar/16/israeli-archeologists-find-new-dead-sea-scroll-fragments,
https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/world/middleeast/dead-sea-scrolls-israel.html,
https://edition.cnn.com/style/article/israel-dead-sea-scroll-cave-scli-intl-scn/index.html

[54] These are available here: http://www.sci-news.com/archaeology/new-dead-sea-scroll-fragments-09454.html and here: https://www.rtbf.be/culture/arts/patrimoine/detail_un-parchemin-biblique-vieux-de-2000-ans-devoile-par-israel?id=10720747

[55] Tov, Kraft, and Parsons. 1990: 19-26.

scroll has now been dated to the second century CE.[56] This is one or two centuries after the previous estimate. So it could shift our understanding of when kaige revision took place and bring it closer to Aquila's revision, which took place in the second century CE. However, the scroll is almost certainly a copy of a kaige revision in another *Vorlage*. For the two scribal hands translated the same revision without discernable differences. So, kaige revision could still have taken place during the first century BCE or CE.

Zechariah 8.16–17

The largest fragment nicely demonstrates the kaige features found throughout the manuscript. Transcribing the letters was difficult and I had to rearrange the photos as some of the tiny pieces were misaligned, or in a couple of cases in the wrong place. I had the added difficultly and enjoyment of having to guess the kaige changes before rearranging and identifying the letters. However, with perseverance this proved fruitful.

[56] https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/mar/16/israeli-archeologists-find-new-dead-sea-scroll-fragments



(a) Original photo



(b) My personal rearrangement to better align the texts

Zechariah 8.16-17

The fragment is from the second scribal hand and contains the bottom lines of what I am labelling Column B0. The following column B1 is partially extant and can be seen in Figure 1.

22 [εἴτε 16 οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι, οὓς]
23 ``ποιή[σετε· λαλεῖτε ἀλή-]
24 ``θειαν ἀνὴ[ρ τὸν πλησί]
25 ``ον α[ὐ]τοῦ ἀλ[ήθεια καὶ κρί-]
26 [μα] εἰ[ρή]νης [κρίνα]τε [ἐν]
27 ``ταῖς πύλαις [ὑμῶν] 17 κα[ὶ
28 ``ἀνὴρ τὴν [κακίαν το]ῦ π[λη-]
29 ``σίον αὐτο[ῦ ἡ λο]γίζ[εσθε]
30 ``ἐν ταῖς κα[ρδί]αις ὑ[μῶν καὶ]
31 ``ὅρκον ψευ[δῆ μὴ ἀγαπᾶτε]
32 ``ὅ[τι] πάν[τα ταῦτα ἃ ἐμί]
33 [ση]σα λέγε[ι ⲁⲩⲁⲍ τῶν δυ-]

I have adopted the transcription format from DJD8. Waves represent kaige modifications, line numbers are on the left, square brackets represent reconstructed text. I have removed one fragment to the lower left of the new image. It is too large to be a theta and there is clear text on its left, probably the end of an alpha. So, I have rotated it 90 degrees anticlockwise. This is the first extant witness to a phi by scribe B. I suggest it comes from the previous column, where Zechariah 8.9 contains the letters αφ.

Key kaige translation equivalents

- 8.16 LXX ἕκαστος → ἀνήρ kaige
- 8.17 LXX ἕκαστος → ἀνήρ kaige

Kaige text follows MT

- 8.16 LXX πρὸ → omitted kaige. Follows MT
- 8.16 LXX omitted → ἀλήθεια kaige. Follows MT
- 8.17 LXX ταῦτα πάντα → πάντα ταῦτα kaige. Follows MT word order

Kaige text standardises idiosyncrasies of the Twelve

- 8.17 LXX διότι → ὅτι kaige *Probable
- 8.16 LXX εἰρηνικὸν → εἰ[ρή]νης kaige *Possible

I have suggested the text at the top of column B1, to fit the missing data

Suggested Col B1

1 [νμεων 18 Καὶ ἐγένετο λόγος
2 [illegible] τῶν δυνάμεων πρός με
3 λέγων 19 Τάδε λέγει [illegible] τῶν
4 δυνάμεων Νηστεία ἡ τετάρ-
5 τη καὶ Νηστεία ἡ πέμπτη καὶ
6 νηστεία ἡ ἑβδόμη καὶ νησ]τεί-

I am confident the Hebrew *Vorlage* of Zech 8.17 concluded יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת. For I cannot fit the Greek any other way. This suggests the OG represents the original Hebrew better than the MT in this one isolated instance. יְהוָה is always followed by צְבָאוֹת in chapter 8, except 8.17. 8.17 parallels 8.14, but without the צְבָאוֹת, so I am confident it was omitted in the MT. Thus, I disagree with BHQ's note 'assim-ctext'.[57]

[57]Gelston 2004: 132.

Nahum 1.5–6

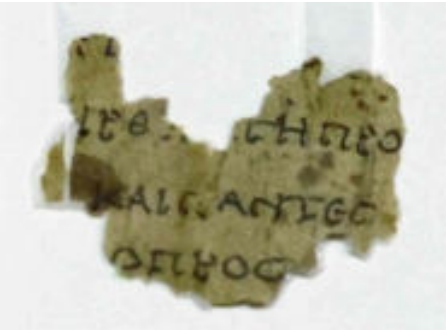


Figure 6: Nahum 1.5-6 New Discovery

Column 13

1 ``ὐτ[οῦ, καὶ] ο[ἱ βουνοὶ ἐσαλεύθησαν· καὶ]

2 ``ἤρθη [ἡ] γῆ προ[σώπου αὐτοῦ, ἡ σύμπασ

3 α] καὶ πάντες [οἱ κατοικοῦντες ἐν αὐτῇ. 6 ἀ

4 π]ὸ προσ[ώπου ὀργῆς αὐτοῦ τίς ὑποστήσε]

Kaige features

- 1.5 ἀνεστάλη → ἤρθη. This standardises the translation equivalent.
- 1.5 ἀπὸ → omitted. This suggests there was no mem in the scroll's *Vorlage*.

Kaige and the glossary

A glossary is a useful concept for the kaige phenomenon. Glossaries have been tools used by scribes and readers for millennia, for they help people read texts in non-native

languages.[58] New papyri finds have drawn attention to Greek glossaries and translations of Latin works such as those by Virgil or Cicero. These were used by Greek-speaking students when they first started to read Latin literature. They are 'painful to read', very 'literal', without literary or stylistic retentions, and sometimes display misunderstandings of the original.[59] These are some similarities between these descriptions and what some find in kaige texts.

Many of these translations – like the glossaries they evolved from – were presented in columnar format.[60] This is a compromise between two alternatives for bilingual texts.[61] First, bilingual texts can be facing-page translations where a text and a generally idiomatic translation faces it on another page; for example the Loeb Classical Library. Alternatively, bilingual texts can be interlinear translations which seek to provide word-for-word glosses. The columnar translation, on the other hand, can be regarded as a compromise between these two. A line-for-line equivalence offers the translator more flexibility than word-for-word equivalence, so it is possible to produce a translation that conveys the meaning of the original.[62] This concern over meaning is something shared with the Septuagint translators. Perhaps through rereading columnar translations the kaige revisers adopted stricter translators to standardise the whole Septuagint.

We have an ancient papyri glossary of the Greek Minor Prophets (Figure 7). This is a little-known papyri fragments of second–fourth century CE Greek/Coptic glossary (Rahlfs 829).[64] This is one of the most interesting witnesses to the ancient text and its transmission history. These fragments were excavated in Oxyrhynchus and acquired by the British Museum in 1924. This glossary specifically helps readers understand difficult

[58]I would like to thank Elizabeth Stell for pointing out glossaries are used for reading not translating and Jeremiah Coogan for his assistance pointing out several recent publications on Greek glossaries. These came from the Q&A after my seminar on kaige revision in the Greek Minor Prophets scroll at the Groningen-Leuven-Oxford conference 2021.

[59]Dickey 2015: 807.

[60]Ibid.: 814.

[61]Ibid.: 812.

[62]Ibid.: 813.

[63]© The Trustees of the British Museum. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA10825 (The relevant text is upside-down in the online viewer.)

[64]Bell and Thompson 1925.

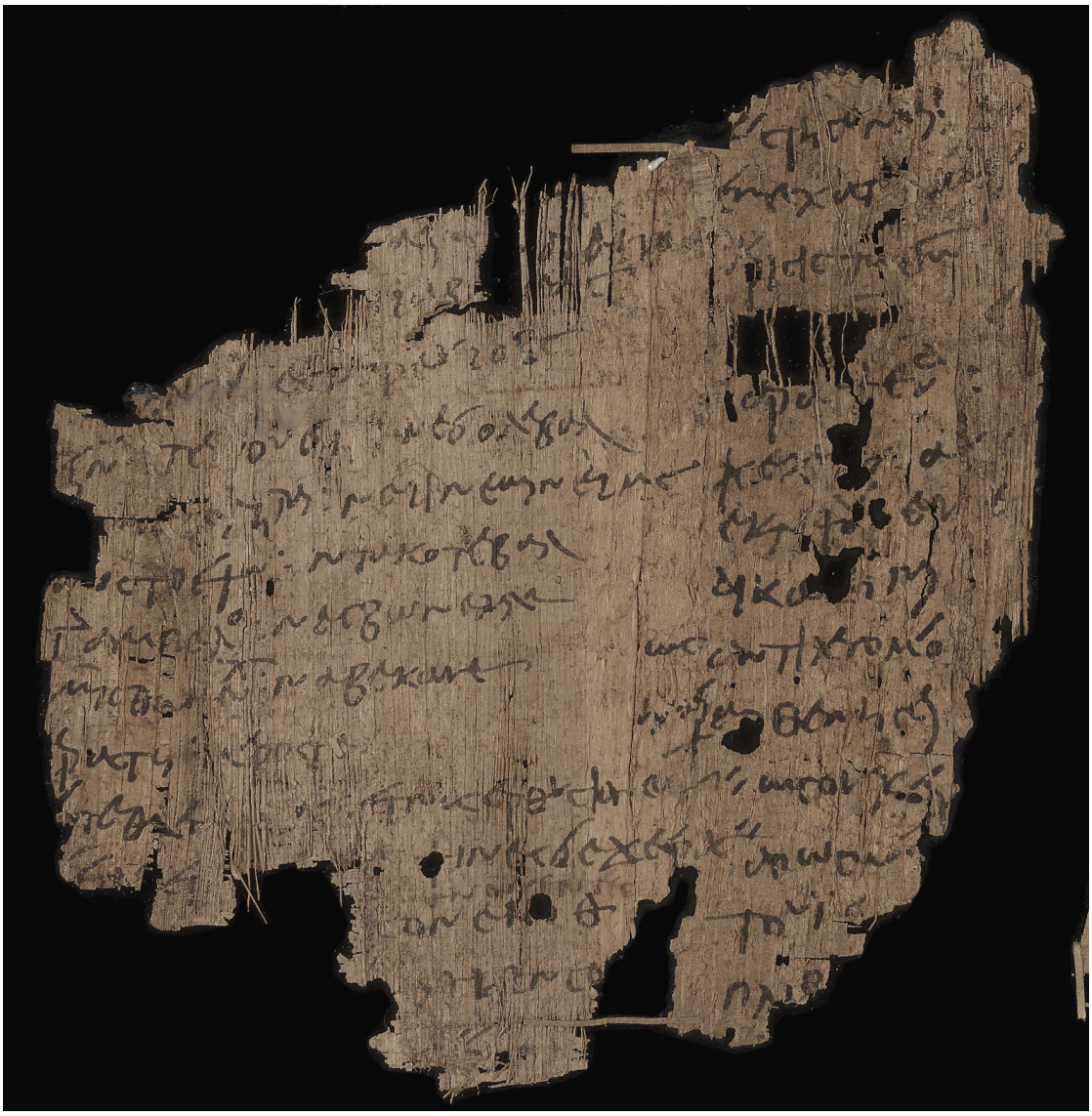


Figure 7: Greek-Coptic glossary of Hosea-Amos. Papyri fragment from EA 10825, verso.[63]

words from the Septuagint in Coptic, with glosses such as ⲙⲉⲣⲣⲉⲧⲉ for ερασται in Hosea 2.12.[65] While glossary terms for Amos and Hosea are extant, perhaps glosses for the rest of the Minor Prophets were originally included.

I do not suggest kaige revisers actually had physical glossary with translations equivalents. However, I believe a similar process where culturally accepted translation equivalents circulated in scribal circles in Palestine from the first century BCE. These ideas as to how certain words or phrases were to be translated meant any non-standard renderings in the Septuagint needed to be removed and replaced with the accepted norms.

What is the reason behind kaige revision?

A close examination of kaige translations tells us something about the theology and social environment of the revisers that led them to edit the Septuagint towards the MT. There are several possibilities that explain kaige revision. Suggestions for a rationale for revisers' adoption of 'literalism' have existed for a while.[66] I am unpersuaded by parallels with textual revision in Alexandria,[67] although there are undoubtedly overlaps. In this section I shall list the most promising suggestions.

The first option is that kaige might witness a developed theology of scripture as the inspired word of God. The Greek translators were fully aware that they were translating scriptures that were in some sense authoritative religious writings.[68] So we must ask what is at stake for the translators and why did they invest time revising texts of scripture? Rösel argues, books translated after the Pentateuch, 'follow their *Vorlage* more closely

[65]Bell and Thompson 1925: 244. I chose this since it is a rare complete gloss and interesting. See the short ninth line down on the left-hand column.
[66]Eg., Barr 1979: 324-5.
[67]E.g., Niehoff 2011.
[68]Rösel 2018: 257.

[due to] a more highly developed theology of Scripture or theology of the word of God.'[69] For Rösel, this led to revisions such as kaige towards the proto-Masoretic Text.[70]

This theory is supported by evidence of developing attitudes towards the Hebrew text in the Second Temple period. The Hebrew scriptures were growing in authority as literacy become more prevalent giving rise to a conflict between orality and textuality.[71] Hints of this may be detected as early as exilic times when Jeremiah 8.7–9 critiques the written Torah over the oral Torah. This shows the rising importance of written Torah used by religious elites to control orthodoxy.[72] In the century before that scroll we find the first reference to τὰ βιβλία τὰ ἅγια (1 Macc 12.9).[73] The very use of the term holy, Satlow writes, 'reflects the increasing value that the author, and presumably his wider circle, attributed to these works.'[74] Brock, likewise, saw kaige as evidence of an increasingly rigid view of the verbal inspiration of the Bible, that continued into revisions of the Syriac Peshitta and we could add the King James Bible.[75] Lim, following Brock, argues such tendency towards literalism as found in kaige discloses a high regard for the sanctity of the words of the biblical texts.[76] So it could be a developed view of inspiration initiated kaige revision. However, it is not necessarily an understanding of scripture as the word of God that led to kaige revision. In fact, more plausible alternatives have been suggested in recent years that do not project proto-Protestantism into these ancient Jewish translators.[77]

A second option behind kaige revision is that there arose a new conviction that there is meaning in every detail and all the elements of a text need to be preserved in translation. This is linked with the first option. While most have rejected Barthélemy's suggestion of rabbinic influence on kaige, Kreuzer finds evidence of rabbinic interpreta-

[69]Rösel 2018: 257.
[70]Ibid.: 258.
[71]Schniedewind 2004: 213.
[72]Ibid.: 138.
[73]Satlow 2014: 144.
[74]Ibid.: 144.
[75]Brock 1972: 20, Brock 1988: 90ff.
[76]Lim 1997: 43-44, 47.
[77]Aitken 2015c.

tion in Kaige-Ruth (Ruth 1.20–21).[78] The rule of Notarikon says that new meaning can be derived from an individual letter or dividing words individually.[79] This appears when שַׁדַּי is translated ὁ ἱκανός as the relative particle · שֶׁ plus the adjective דַּי 'enough'.[80] This translation now preserves a meaning in the Hebrew not found with a normal Greek translation. This translation equivalent originated somewhere and parallels with this rabbinic rule appear strong. Through these techniques, the actual details of the Hebrew text are represented to the Greek reader.[81] However, caution is required. Notarikon may not have been around at the time of kaige, and this could simple be a creative word division, not evidence of new convictions about meaning. This finds some agreement in Barr,[82] and Schenker who writes,

> Perhaps it betrays the conviction that every element of the text is meaningful, be it small or great., Therefore the faithful translator is obliged to reproduce the original Hebrew text in such a way that none of its elements be neglected in the rendering.[83]

A third option is the rise of the proto-Masoretic Text gave rise to the need for kaige revision. This overlaps with the second reason, since the proto-Masoretic Text seems to have arisen alongside a belief that details in the Hebrew letters mattered, so the Hebrew text needed to be fixed.[84] The canon was still forming in the century before kaige revision, evidenced by the variety of books found among the Dead Sea Scrolls.[85] However, kaige could be linked to the canon and Proto-MT. As a canon becomes a religious collection, the nature of its authority changes.[86] This authority is seen when commentaries began

[78]Upon my inspection this feature also occurs in Theodotion-Job 21.15, 31.2, 40.2, texts associated with kaige like Ruth.
[79]Kreuzer 2015: 121.
[80]Ibid.: 121.
[81]Ibid.: 123.
[82]Barr 1979: 324.
[83]Schenker 2017: 20.
[84]Ibid.: 20.
[85]For instance, the 15 copies of Jubilees show that book was highly treasured, and it is even cited as an authoritative source of teaching in the Damascus Document (VanderKam 2002: 99).
[86]Davies 2002: 52.

to be written on the scriptures and not others (e.g., 1QpMic, 4QpNah, 1QpHab). So, the process that led to scriptures canonisation is possibly connected to kaige revision.

However, it is possibly only a coincidence that the Greek was revised towards a 'proto-MT' text and not another text such as the text type found in the Samaritan Pentateuch.[87] The Proto-MT might have simply reflected the scrolls in Jerusalem where kaige revision probably took place, and so not been considered 'the standard text' across Judaism..[88] However, most scholars find it more deliberate the Proto-MT was used and not another tradition. For example, Aejmelaeus finds it logical to assume that the circles who corrected the Greek text towards the Hebrew, 'were the same learned circles among which the MT was eventually established as the correct and only text to be used and transmitted.'[89] Likewise, Schenker also suggests this third option, as a reason for kaige.[90]

A fourth option, and the most distinctive, is kaige could be a grammatical exercise to align the Greek with Hebrew ready for Hebrew education. If Greek-speaking Jewish students wished to learn Hebrew, an interlinear or columnar Greek-Hebrew text would be an invaluable tool to learn Hebrew. This would also kaige closely with the glossary and translation practices found in bilingual Greek papyri which translate Latin works into Greek for Greek-speakers to read and learn Latin.[91]

Having reviewed four options, I shall now suggest what I consider the most plausible reason behind kaige revision. The first option of changing views in inspiration should be ruled out as an example of anachronistic eisegesis. The second option deserves further study, but it suffers from limited evidence. I find the third option is the most plausible. For the rise of the Proto-MT and kaige revision occurred at a similar time and in the same region, perhaps Jerusalem itself. However, against this, while the Proto-MT was established as the only text in later Judaism, kaige revision faded from existence.

[87] Ulrich 2021: 441.
[88] Tov 2012: 177.
[89] Aejmelaeus 2007: 126.
[90] Schenker 2017: 22.
[91] Dickey 2015.

Therefore, I also am open to the fourth option of an educational method exerting some influence. For the adoption of a Hellenistic bilingual method to teach cultured Greek-speaking Jews the Hebrew language when the Hebrew mother-tongue began to die out is an attracted proposal.[92] Until all kaige texts are further studied, we cannot be more confident than this.

Conclusion

In this paper I have investigated the kaige phenomenon through adopting an evidence-driven approach. This focussed on comparing kaige revision in the Greek Minor Prophets scroll against the Old Greek and Hebrew Masoretic Text. My detailed analysis led to fresh insights into the method and process used by kaige revisers.

Kaige is fascinating, given its approach is antithetical to so much of the extant material from Second Temple Judaism. For example, the divergent literary editions of Jeremiah found within the same cave (compare 4QJer^{b} to the MT, 4QJer^{a} and 4QJer^{c}).[93] or the are multiple editions of Esther.[94] That period gave rise to many works of rewritten scripture, which engaged in ongoing Mosaic discourse.[95] However, kaige is evidence of a new appreciation of the exact wording of the Hebrew text that evolved into the Masoretic Text.

The evidence of the kaige revisers suggests a developing understanding of scripture before Christianity. It was not Jewish-Christian apologetics of the second century that gave rise to reflection and revision of Septuagint translations.[96] Instead the sophisticated kaige phenomenon pre-dated Christianity and shows precise translation of scripture mattered to Jews in antiquity. Their sophisticated historical reflection on the Hebrew text

[92]For the language environment of first century Judea see Buth and Notley 2014.
[93]Ulrich 1999: 69.
[94]E.g., Clines 1984, Fox 1991, and Jobes 1996.
[95]Najman 2003.
[96]So, for example, Conzelmann 1992: 33.

led to its careful translation revision and indicates how deeply they treasured the scriptures.

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Project Summary

The kaige tradition within Greek Bible translations and Second Temple Judaism

Timothy A. Lee

Paper summary

In my paper I map out the kaige phenomenon within Greek Bible translations and Second Temple Judaism. It builds on my master's work on the Greek Minor Prophets scroll which analysed the kaige revision technique adopted by the editors. The paper contains a brief history of kaige research, some key finds and conclusions around motivations behind the kaige phenomenon. The PhD builds on this work and looks at kaige like revisions in other books and extends the spectrum of revisions all the way to Aquila.

PhD Objective

I aim to map out the key kaige developments across the Second Temple period, rather than focus on an individual book. This advances scholarship through placing kaige within its wider tradition. Locating kaige in its place in time enables me to address the unanswered questions and consider what exactly kaige means for the evolving Jewish attitudes towards Hebrew scriptures and translation in that period. Through ascertaining what the kaige phenomenon means for Judaism, I shall extend our knowledge of ancient Jewish exegesis, education and scholarship. This in turn can help elucidate differences within Second Temple Judaism with regards to early biblical interpretation and engagement with Hellenistic culture.

Methodology

I shall compare variations and diachronic developments in texts from 8ḤevXIIgr and Lamentations to Ecclesiastes and finally Aquila. This rigorous investigation into translation technique will looks at features that vary between lexical, morphological and syntactical changes. Much of this work is of a quantitative nature, for which I can use statistical analysis and my own programming to identify subtle features across a broad corpus of texts. Other work is more qualitative and requires expertise in advanced Greek and Hebrew grammar. Then based on these findings, I will be well positioned to think about Jewish attitudes to grammar and exegesis of Hebrew in this period.

Previous Research

I have investigated kaige features in the Greek Minor Prophets scroll in my 30,000 word MPhil dissertation. This involved contrasting each word with: the Göttingen edition; Hebrew (through the CATSS parallel database); other manuscripts (e.g. Codex Washingtonianus) and witnesses (e.g. Justin Martyr). This analysis has led to the identification of numerous kaige features and allowed confirmation or rebuttal of previous suggestions for kaige translation technique, along with several new features I identify as marks of kaige translation technique. This scroll is an excellent foundation for further research, since it uniquely enables comparison with its Old Greek parent text. Building from this work, enables me to study better associated kaige revisions, for which we have no extant comparative Old Greek texts.

OTSEM 2021
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The Significance of Societal Dynamics in Biblical Reception. Critical Discourse Analysis as a Method for Ideological Reception Criticism: Representations of the Hebrew Bible in Swedish Media Debates.

Abstract

In my forthcoming dissertation I analyze interpretations of and notions about the Hebrew bible in Sweden's four major daily newspapers between the years 1987-2017. As point of departure I use one debate concerning the Old Testament and a so called "Old Testament view" on women, one debate concerning the Old Testament as a violent-affirmative text and its problematic depiction of god, and one debate concerning the bible's view of homosexuality and the Old Testament as an unauthoritative part of the Christian bible. I place this study within the ideological reception critical field of biblical studies and I use critical discourse analysis as method. I analyze events, currents and underlying ideologies in the surrounding society as well as dominating interpretative strategies in the history of reception as factors that make discourses concerning the Hebrew bible possible in the particular context (Swedish media debates in the years 1987-2017).

The aim of the paper is to give a summary of some of the dissertation's (preliminary) findings, and by doing so also argue that critical discourse analysis as develop by linguistic Norman Fairclough can be applied in and combined with ideological reception criticism. I will argue that Fairclough's version of critical discourse analysis and ideological critical reception have several common features and may easily be combined, giving ideological reception criticism a more transparent, valid and coherent methodological starting point.

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The Significance of Societal Dynamics in Biblical Reception. Critical Discourse Analysis as a Method for Ideological Reception Criticism: Representations of the Hebrew Bible in Swedish Media Debates.

Preface

In my forthcoming dissertation I analyze interpretations of and notions about the Hebrew bible in debate articles in the four largest nationwide daily newspapers in Sweden between the years 1987-2017.[1] As point of departure I use one debate concerning the Old Testament and "an Old Testament view"[2] on women (the so called Onsell-debate), one debate concerning the Old Testament as a violent-affirmative text and its problematic depiction of god (the so called Moberg-debate), and one debate concerning the bible's view of homosexuality and the Old Testament as an unauthoritative part of the Christian bible (the so called Green-debate).[3] I place this study within the ideological reception critical field of biblical studies and I use critical discourse analysis as method.

The aim of this paper is to give a summary of some of the dissertation's (preliminary) findings, and by doing so I will argue that critical discourse analysis (CDA), as develop by linguistic Norman Fairclough, can be applied in and combined with ideological reception criticism (IRC).[4] I will argue that CDA and IRC have several common features and may easily be combined, giving IRC a more transparent, valid and coherent methodological starting point. This argumentation is what I would like to see as the focal point of the discussion.

I will begin with a theoretical and methodological background to IRC as well as Fairclough's version of CDA. Thereafter, I will give a summary of some of the preliminary results of the dissertation. In the last section of the paper I will conclude my argumentation concerning the use of CDA in IRC studies.

[1] I will use "the Hebrew bible" when discussing from a biblical scholar perspective, and "the Old Testament" when referring to the debates, since that is the term used in the material. I will write "bible" with a small "b" to highlight that the term can refer to different canons.

[2] Swedish has an adjective similar to the German *Alttestestamentliche*: "gammaltestamentlig", used in the articles, perhaps translatable into "Old Testamently".

[3] I refer to the debates with the names of the debaters that initiated each particular debate. For a summary of each debate see *Appendix 1*.

[4] CDA has not yet, to my knowledge, become a frequently used method within biblical studies. I've come across one monograph concerning (various versions of) discourse analysis as methods in New Testament studies in which one chapter discusses CDA in a general sense and not Fairclough's model in specific (Porter 1999), one lecture discussing CDA as a method that can be applied to biblical texts (Bench, undated (1) (PDF) Questioning Discourse - The Role of Critical Discourse Analysis in the Study of the Hebrew Bible | Clayton Bench - Academia.edu downloaded April 23 2021) and one paper in which two linguistics analyze a fundamentalist discourse about "What the Bible really says", Kettemann and Marko 2005. See also New Testament scholar Leander 2011 who uses aspects of discourse theory (Laclau and Mouffe).

Ideological Reception Criticism

There is no clear definition of what reception history "is" and no single answer as to what reception history "does".[5] Hannah M. Strømmen, who has described the bible as a cultural chameleon,[6] has argued that:

> It is imperative for biblical scholars to grapple not only with the internal dynamics of biblical texts or their ancient contexts, but also with the contexts in which biblical texts become significant. It is a matter of critically examining, as Timothy Beal emphasises, 'how biblical texts, themes and even the idea of "the Bible" itself are handled in cultural terms' – how they inform and inflect particular practices, institutions and ideologies. These practices, institutions and ideologies does not, arise in a vacuum; they are frequently tied to acts of collective remembering, or collective interpretive legacies, that 'enable later communities to constitute and sustain themselves'.[7]

Strømmen raises the, in my view fundamental, question of ideological backgrounds at work in biblical interpretation. No interpretation arise in a vacuum, Strømmen states correctly. This has been highlighted by other biblical scholars as well.[8]

Scholars have argued that reception history to often become only descriptive, focusing on *what* people do with the texts.[9] More frequently, scholars have emphasized the critical aspect of the study of reception history, claiming that the analysis should not only focus on how biblical texts or (alleged) biblical motives are being interpreted or used, but also to problematize the interpretation or (ab)use. Hence, scholars engaging in reception history must take notice not only as to how the interpreter use the text, but also to analyze the use in relation to the broader social context (historical, cultural and ideological aspects), taking into consideration not only the question *what* people do with the texts, but also *why* they do it. Several biblical scholars have argued for the use of the term *reception criticism* in relation to this type of study.[10]

A biblical scholar who in my mind has contributed greatly to the development of reception criticism is Holly Morse.[11] Morse describes reception criticism as a critical and creative task which focuses on the interpretation and the influence of biblical texts and she uses it as a uniting term for

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[5] Many scholars have described the history of reception history and engaged in the discussion. Cf. Callaway 2004, Sherwood 2000, Sjöberg [Larsson] 2006, Knight 2010, Roberts 2011, Beal 2011, Spieckermann 2012, Klancher 2013, Breed 2014, Larsson 2015, Vander Stichele 2015, Crossley 2015, Harding 2015, Morse 2015 and Strømmen 2017a, 2017b. Two in my view useful definitions are firstly John F. Sawyer's: "The history of how a book or a passage or a word has been contextualized and interpreted down the centuries in different parts of the world." (Sawyer in Olsson 2019:94). This definition appeals to me since it includes the study of not only the reception of biblical texts, but also the study of how the bible itself (as a symbol, artifact or discursive object) or biblical motives have been portrayed or used. Furthermore, Holly Morse has defined the term as the "study of the ways in which the Bible has been translated, transmitted, read and transformed in different times and cultures" (Morse 2020:3). This definition has yet another advantage since it points out the interpretative aspect of translation.

[6] Strømmen 2017a:168

[7] Strømmen 2017b:558.

[8] Cf. Emma England and William John Lyons who refer to reception history as "[…] the analysis of the (ab)use, influence and impact of it […]" (it being, of course, the bible). England and Lyons 2015:13. See also Edwards 2012:VIII-IX who claims that we may never understand the biblical text's original meaning(s), but we can study the text's social and cultural assumptions (and thus the consequences of the text) today.

[9] Gillingham 2015:24

[10] See for instance Klint 2000:89

[11] See for instance Morse 2015 and 2020. Morse promotes the use of the term reception criticism, not at least because it is compatible with the term historical criticism, and locates it within the wider field of biblical studies (2015:243).

reader-oriented and reception-focused studies. The field can be approached in different ways and use various methods and theories such as reception history, reader-response criticism or reception theory. She argues, however, that the outcome of the study should not only be a categorization of results but that the scholar also need to include a critical aspect in the analysis.

Morse differs between three types of reception criticism, which all aim to disclose what the reader has taken for granted.[12] Firstly, she describes the study of how a specific text has been interpreted through history, and she calls this *Historical Reception Criticism (Reception History).* Secondly, she describes the study of the dialog between a biblical text and a specific interpretation of it, such as an artwork, a study she calls *Formalist Reception History Criticism*. Thirdly, she describes the analysis of the reader's response to the text through history with the purpose to call into question dominating interpretational strategies, called *Ideological Reception Criticism*.[13] Concerning the latter she argues that the researcher should be particular mindful about what an interpretation choses to accentuate and ignore, that is, she raises a key question concerning what interpreters choose to emphasize and why.[14] Is for instance Eve a seductress or is that a later interpretation that has become naturalized? Morse writes: "By employing ideological reception criticism, scholars expand the interpretive possibilities of biblical texts for modern readers, as well as increasing the awareness of the problematic texts of the Bible and equally problematic appropriations of them.".[15]

As Morse, and others, I myself would argue that the field of reception has much to gain if approached not only with descriptive purposes but also critical. This is especially true, in my view, concerning interpretations that are used to justify different types of oppressions such as the marginalization of women, the LBGTQ-community or ethnic minorities etc. I believe an important question for the scholar interested in reception is not only *what* the reader is doing with the text, but also *why*? Which ideological backgrounds, consciously or unconsciously, make the interpretation possible? What cultural, historical and societal factors contributes to the making of an interpretation or notion?

The field of reception has met critic due to its underdeveloped methodological and theoretical framework.[16] In my dissertation, I am influenced by Morse and the concept of ideological reception criticism (IRC) and I try to conduct such a study with the help of a, in my view, highly compatible method, namely critical discourse analysis (CDA) described below. In this paper I will summarize the results of my coming dissertation as a way of argue that a combination of IRC and CDA generates a constructive methodological and theoretical approach applicable in biblical studies.[17] I will apply linguistic Norman Fairclough's three dimensional model for CDA, a model

[12] She describes these categories in Morse 2015.

[13] Morse seems to favor the latter approach, and has herself conducted such an analysis on Gen 1-4, see Morse 2020.

[14] Morse 2020:205-206

[15] Morse 2015:257

[16] Cf. Morgan 2015:62

[17] Biblical scholars have highlighted the importance of awareness of the historical, cultural and social context of not only the writers but also of the interpreters of the bible in ways which resembles CDA. David M. Gunn describes the field of biblical cultural criticism: "Culture is a language or set of codes […] through which people share values and beliefs, behave in certain approved ways, make and use artefacts in common. Culture lends people identity, helps them relate to each other, and provides the glue that sustains a society. […] Culture both produces and governs thought, feeling, and action, and is itself, over time, produced by these." (2007:202). And continuing: "If reception history is about the use of the Bible, what is the use of reception history? The cultural critic might reply that it helps us understand how cultures work in the lives of individuals and communities, how culture is connected to other aspects of social life such as economics and technology, and how we simply accept or assume ideas, practices, and values that are cultural 'givens'. It also enlarges our understanding of specific cultures where the Bible has played a significant

which aims at analyzing communicative events in their social and historical context, to give attention to underlying ideologies, and work against oppressive structures within society and language use.[18] Since it is by nature transdisciplinary,[19] it is easy to combine with IRC, which I hope to demonstrate in this paper. Below, I will first introduce Fairclough's version of CDA and thereafter present some of the results of my study that relates to findings made possible by CDA.

Norman Fairclough's Three Dimensional Model for Critical Discourse Analysis

Essential for Fairclough is the understanding of discourse as a social practice.[20] Discourse figures in three ways in social practices.[21] It figures as a part of the social activity within a practice, this constitutes *genres*. Genres are diverse ways of acting of producing social life, in the semiotic mode.[22] Secondly, discourse figurers in ways of being, the constitution of identities, this is *styles*.[23] Finally, discourse figures in representation, this constitutes *discourses*, ways of representing certain aspects of the world.[24]

Fairclough states that discourse works ideologically, which he defines as "meaning in the service of power".[25] Ideology functions as "ways of representing aspects of the world, which may be operationalised in ways of acting and interacting and 'ways of being' or identities, that contribute

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role, as in the United States. Perhaps most important, reception history demonstrates *empirically* that the meaning of biblical texts, like those of other cultural products, depend on who is using them, at what time, in what place, and for what reason. That understanding prompts the useful question: What circumstances, and what hidden cultural assumptions, govern our own use of the Bible? By examining our reactions to the ways others, in different times and places, have used the Bible, we may be led to challenge our own assumptions about the responsible use of religious texts today." (2007:204). Gale A. Yee writes about biblical ideological criticism: "Ideologies operate through a number of strategies to produce their desired social effects. They *unify* social groups. By linking the abstract level of ideas with concrete level of social practises, ideologies are *action-oriented*. They *rationalize* certain interests, beliefs, or behaviours by providing credible explanations for them. Moreover, they legitimate these beliefs or interests by sanctioning them, by having people accept their authority. They *universalize* historically specific values, ways of acting, and so forth as the only valid ideals for everyone for all time. They *naturalize* them by identifying them with 'common sense' of a society, so that they become seemingly self-evident and 'natural'." (2007:140-14).

[18] For the historical development of CDA, cf. Wodak 2001.

[19] CDA is, according to Fairclough, as much a theory as a method (2001:121), which consists of three basic properties: it is relational, dialectical and transdisciplinary (2010:3-4).

[20] Fairclough uses the term "discourse" in two ways, which can lead to some confusion. He defines the abstract noun "discourse" as language use as a social practice (2010:265). Fairclough states that "discourse is a mode of action, one form in which people may act upon the world and especially upon each other, as well as a mode of representation."(1992:63). Fairclough claims that there exist a dialectical relationship between discourse and the social structure, and that discourse is both shaped and constrained by social structures as well as socially constitutive (1992:64). Discourse contributes to the construction of social identities, social relationships between people and systems of knowledge and beliefs (1992:64). Fairclough also uses the term "discourse" as a count noun, by which he means a way of talking that gives meanings to experiences from a certain perspective (2010:265). A discourse is "a particular way of representing certain parts or aspects of the (physical, social, psychological) world" (2010:358).

[21] Fairclough 2010:264-265

[22] There are different types of genres such as a poem, a sermon or a commercial ad (Fairclough 1992:126f.). Genre determines how texts are produced and perceived and Fairclough stresses the importance of awareness of genre since genre determines what is possible to articulate and not. There are different limits concerning what to express in a political speech, a conversation between a customer and a waiter at a restaurant or a post on Facebook.

[23] Styles functions as the construction of a particular identity such as a political leader, a waiter at a restaurant or a journalist. Depending on style, the message will be interpreted differently.

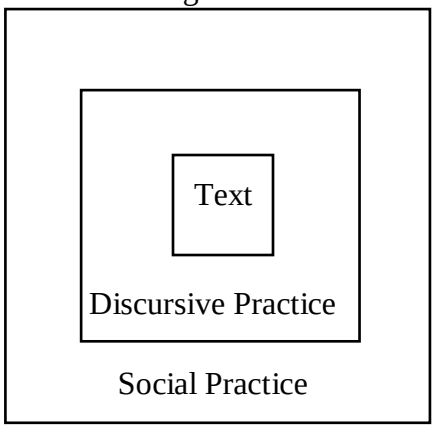
[24] The questions for the researcher thus becomes: What sort of activity is this (genre); what sort of authorial identity is constituted here (style); what sort of representation do we find here (discourses)? Fairclough 2010:268

[25] Fairclough 2010:8

to establishing or sustaining unequal relations of power".[26] Ideologies are understood as exercising power through a persuasive language instead of other types of compulsions.[27] Ideology is most effective when it becomes naturalized, when it achieves the status of "common sense" and when "its workings are least visible.".[28] Hegemony is the peak of ideology, the point when all alternative constructions are suppressed in favor of one dominating view.[29] When people in the same social context think alike on specific issues or even fail to realize that other ways of thinking are possible, this can be described as hegemony.[30] The hegemonic struggle is of key interest for Fairclough, and one of the aims of his approach is to analyze how discourses are produced, reproduced and transformed as part of the hegemonic process.

At least two dimensions of discourse are important to analyze, according to Fairclough: the communicative event and the order of discourse (all discursive types used in a social institution or a social field).[31] Every communicative event consists of three dimensions: text, discursive practice and social practice, illustrated in *Figure 1* below.

Figure 1. Norman Fairclough's three dimensional model



[26] Fairclough 2010:8
[27] Hjelm 2014a:860
[28] Fairclough 2015:107-108. Teemu Taira highlights the relevance of looking for what can be used to argue either for or against something. He gives as an example the role of the bible in the debate on homosexuality. Some use biblical texts to argue *against* LBGTQ-rights, while others use biblical texts to argue *in favor* of LBGTQ-rights. The common premises is the understanding of biblical texts as relevant in present-day debates on homosexuality and the bible as an authoritative source (2013:13). Another example from Taira is the discussion on the "Jewishness" of Jesus and the depiction of Jews as the Other. Taira shows that both a group of more recent scholars who have stressed the "Jewishness" of Jesus and a group of earlier scholars who have emphasized the distinctiveness of Jesus in relation to his Jewish contemporaries, reduces the Other (the Jews) to an unchanging essence, since both groups presupposes that Judaism can be understood and summarized to one consistent identity. Both groups are thus far from a lived reality in all its variations (2013:33). Likewise, Titus Hjelm have stressed that the researcher who wishes to apply CDA should look for forms of naturalizations (italic in the original): "The methodological implications of the critical conceptions of ideology are twofold: first, the focus is on how different aspects (e.g. grammar, rhetoric) of language use contribute to one-sided constructions of things or events that serve the interest of particular social groups. This is the 'meaning in the service of power' in action. Furthermore, it is equally important for CDA to study what is *not* said, that is, what we take for granted […] Because common sense *naturalizes* our conceptions of everyday life, it is the most effective way of sustaining hegemony, that is, an exclusive interpretation of reality." (2014a:860).
[29] Hjelm 2014a:860
[30] Wodak and Meyers 2015:9
[31] Winther Jørgensen and Pillips 2000:73

The three dimensional model attempts to explore what is possible to articulate and to make explanatory connections between the nature of the discourse processes in particular instances and the nature of the social practices which they are a part of.[32] Fairclough gives no exact instruction as how to conduct the analysis, instead he gives some general guidelines as to how to collect the data, conduct the analysis and to present the results.[33]

The textual dimension focuses on linguistic features of a particular text (or other types of utterances transcribed into a text). Fairclough describes several analytical tools for the textual analysis such as *wording*, *transitivity*, *modality* and *presupposition*.[34] These are just some of the analytical tools described by Fairclough as applicable in the textual analysis. Not all are relevant to each project and it is up to the researcher to decide which to use for the specific study.

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[32] Fairclough 1992:80

[33] Fairclough 1992:225

[34] *Wording* is used to study which words are used in the representation (Fairclough 1992:191). For instance, a person can be described as a ”terrorist” or ”freedom fighter” depending on who’s representation the texts is. John E. Richardson gives many illustrative examples on the relevance of wording in analysis of news reports on war, where for instance ”they” have a ”war-machine” and ”we” have an ”army”, ”they” ”kill” or “destroy” and ”we” ”eliminate” or “suppress”, ”their” men are ”troops” and ”our” men are ”boys” etc. (2007:47-48). The author’s chosen words will have an effect on how the text is interpreted. *Transitivity* concerns who in the text is given agency and who is portrayed as a passive object. Transitivity can be analyzed by studying the chain of events in the clause subject-verb-object. Transitivity is used as analytical tools to analyze power claims and representation. *Modality* focuses on the author’s degree of affinity expressed in the text as well as the degree of transparency concerning whose opinion is being expressed. Modality is either subjective: ”I think/I know/I suspect the earth is flat” or objective: “we believe the earth is flat/we have reason to think that the earth is flat/people say the earth is flat”. The utterance “”The earth is flat” and “The earth is not flat” contains maximum degree of affinity, whereas utterances such as “the earth could be flat/the earth might not be flat/the earth is probably flat” etc. contains less degree of affinity. The degree of affinity can be studied by analyzing if the claim is being uttered with modal verbs such as “must/may/can/should” etc. or with modal adverbs such as “probably/possibly/obviously” (Fairclough 1992:159). The use of objective modality implies some form of power (Fairclough 1992:159). Compare for instance the two sentences “It is cold today” and “I think it might be a bit cold today” (Winther Jørgensen and Pillips 2000:88). Fairclough also distinguishes between truth modality (”it will/can/necessarily be”) and obligation modality (“it must/should/ought to be”), signaling different degrees of authority (2010:106-107 cf. Richardson 2007:60-61). *Presupposition* is that which is considered given in the text (Fairclough 1992:120 f.). Fairclough describes presupposition under discursive practice, but I consider it to fit better under the textual analysis. Clauses or sentences are constructed in a way in which some part of the information is not included in the clause, but rather taken for granted. Examples are utterances including the verb ”stop” which presupposes that something has begun, or the inclusion of verbs such as ”begin” or ”continue”. The question “Have you stopped beating your wife?” presupposes that the person given that question at some point has beaten his wife, and it is impossible for a person who has not done such an act to answer with a simple “Yes” or “No” (Richardson 2007:63). Also, by paying attention to words with the definitive article ”the”, Fairclough suggests that presuppositions can be exposed, giving “the Soviet threat” as an example. The definitive article presupposes that such a threat exists (1992:120). Presuppositions are furthermore present in “wh-questions”, such as “why”, “when”, “who” etc. Compare for instance the questions “Who is responsible for this?” presupposing that someone is responsible, with “Is someone responsible for this?” leaving the question of responsibility more open (Richardson 2007:63). *Metaphors* are persuasive in all sorts of language and discourse (Fairclough 1992:194). As with wording the researcher should pay attention to which metaphors are being used and how. Some metaphors have become so naturalized that we don’t even consider them to be metaphors, and these are of special interest to the researcher. Fairclough gives as an example metaphorical constructions of argument as war, through utterances such as “your claims are indefensible” or “he attacked my argument” and “you are right on target” (Fairclough 1992:195). Metaphors exposes something about the society in which the metaphor is being used and can be analyzed to understand which underlying ideologies are in working. Fairclough exemplifies this with the use of the military metaphor ”invasion” for how the disease AIDS was spreading in the USA in the 1980:s, which he argues has led to the consequence that homosexuals and African-Americans were understood as something threatening (1992:197).

Between the textual dimension and the dimension of social practice we find discourse practice, or discursive practice.[35] The focus of the analysis is the production, distribution and consumption of the text.[36] Discursive practice is constitutive in both conventional and creative ways because it contributes to reproducing society (social identities, social relationships, systems of knowledge and belief) but also contributes to transforming society.[37] The discursive practice is a form of hegemonic struggle which reproduces or transforms existing orders of discourses (see below).[38] The two most important analytical tools are intertextuality and interdiscursivity.[39] Fairclough underlines that all communicative events are drawn on earlier communicative events and that it is impossible to avoid using words or phrases others have used before. He uses the term *manifest intertextuality* to examine the use of direct quotes or references to earlier texts.[40] *Interdiscursivity* is a form of intertextuality (Fairclough sometimes uses the term *constitutive intertextuality* instead) and the analysis focuses on which discourses, genres and styles are drawn upon in a text and articulated together.[41] A high level of interdiscursivity (as well as intertextuality) can be a sign of transformation in the order of discourse.[42]

The third dimension, social practice, is described by Fairclough as "the ways of controlling the selection of certain structural possibilities and the exclusion of others, and the retention of these selections over time, in particular areas of social life".[43] The analysis focuses on the broader context, ideological effects and orders of discourse. Two analytical tools are of importance here: order of discourse and ideology.

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[35]Fairclough describes the dimensions as overlapping (1992:73).

[36] Fairclough 1992:71

[37] Fairclough 1992:65

[38] Fairclough 1992:95. Fairclough stresses that: "Discursive practices may have major ideological effects – that is, they can help produce and reproduce unequal power relations between (for instance) social classes, women and men, and ethnic/cultural majorities and minorities through the way in which they represent things and position people." Fairclough and Wodak 1997:258

[39] Fairclough 1992:233

[40] Fairclough 1992:117 f. The analysis aims to discern if intertextuality is used in a conventional or creative way to explore if the discourse is reproduced or transformed. The researcher seek to comprehend whether there appears to be a reinterpretation within the discourse and whether the discourse is stable or unstable. With the help of examining intertextuality the researcher can find out if the discourse is becoming dominant or hegemonic. The relationship between intertextuality and hegemony is important, according to Fairclough, due to the fact that the concept of intertextuality point to how texts can transform prior texts and restructure existing conventions or generate new ones (1992:102). Fairclough also uses the term *resistant readings* (or *resistant interpretations*) to examine if someone goes against intertextual articulations, for instance if a reader of a debate article by X writes a reply in which s/he argues against X, and by doing so formulates yet another dimension of intertextuality in the hegemonic struggle (1992:136). He further describes the importance of discerning what he calls *moments of crisis*, moments when somethings are going wrong, for instance moments when one participant in a debate corrects another (1992:230).

[41] Fairclough 2010:7. Which other discourses is the discourse build upon and does this create tension and ambivalence? As an example Fairclough describes a militarized discourse on crime, building on the metaphor of criminals as being "at war" with society (1992:30).

[42] By using a creative language an order of discourse can be transformed, for instance if a communicator at a hospital, which is a part of the healthcare systems order of discourse, uses a consumption discourse (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000 s. 76). New, creative ways of using discourses and texts does not always lead to change, but increases the chances of transformation, in contrast to a conventional use. (Fairclough 1992:102-103).

[43] Fairclough 2010:294.

Order of discourse constitutes the sum of all discursive types (genres, styles and discourses) used within a social institution or field.[44] Orders of discourse are complex, heterogeneous and contradictory and because of this the researcher should try to make sense of the tendencies.[45] The focus therefore becomes to identify reoccurring patterns and changes in the order of discourse.

Beside the order of discourse the researcher should analyze the ideological and political effects of discourse, particularly in terms of systems of knowledge and belief, social relations and social identities.[46] Included in the analysis of social practice is also the study of the hegemonic struggle and *ideology*.[47] The aim is to discover the underlying ideologies, defined in this context as: ”significations/constructions of reality (the physical world, social relations, social identities), which are built into various dimensions of the forms/meanings of discursive practices, and which contribute to the production, reproduction or transformation of relations of domination.”.[48] However, one should not assume that people are aware of the ideological dimension of their own actions. Ideologies are, as stated above, more or less automatized.[49]

Media Representations of the Hebrew Bible in Sweden: A Critical Discourse Analysis

In my dissertation I analyze three debates concerning the Hebrew bible: a debate concerning the so called Old Testament view on women (the Onsell-debate), one debate concerning the Old Testament as text and its depiction of god (the Moberg-debate), and one debate concerning the bible’s view of homosexuality (the Green-debate). The study is conducted with the following questions in mind: Which representations (discourses) can be identified in the debates concerning the Hebrew bible? How are the discourses being constructed, reproduced or transformed during the selected time period? What social practices contributes to make the discourses possible to articulate? Furthermore, I conduct an IRC analyze with the following questions in mind: How do the discourses relate to the academic field of biblical studies? How can the discourses be challenged or problematized in relation to underlying ideologies, dominating interpretive strategies or presupposed interpretive preferences as well as to their effect concerning if the interpretations contributes to relations of dominance?[50] The overall material consist of 120

[44] Fairclough defines this as: ”An order of discourse can be seen as the discursive facet of the contradictory and unstable equilibrium which constitutes a hegemony, and the articulation and rearticulation of orders of discourse is correspondingly one stake in hegemonic struggle.”(1992:93)

[45] Fairclough 1992:219

[46] Fairclough 1992:238

[47] Fairclough 1992:86

[48] Fairclough 1992:87

[49] “By ’critical’ discourse analysis I mean discourse analysis which aim to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony […] In referring to opacity, I am suggesting that such linkages between discourse, ideology and power may well be unclear to those involved, and more generally that our social practice is bound up with causes and effects which may not be at all apparent […].” Fairclough 2010:93

[50] In the actual dissertation I conduct the IRC after the analyses of the dimensions text and discursive practice and before the third dimension, social practice, adding perspectives from biblical scholarly discussions as well. Since I have to limit the scope of the presentation of results I will here not present the results of the IRC analysis. In the IRC

newspaper articles published 1985-2017.[51] After a first frequency analysis and a thorough read-through of the overall material I found in total 12 relevant discourses concerning the Hebrew bible, presented in *Table 1* below. I then proceeded by selecting a representative sample article of each discourse on which I conducted the textual analysis.[52] The debates, the discourses and the sample texts are presented in a condense way in *Appendix*.

Table 1. The analyzed discourses.

the Old Testament is the reason for the patriarchy
there is an Old Testament view on women and it is one-sidedly negative
Eve is the prototype for an Old Testament view on women
the Old Testament is the Other
the Old Testament god has psychopathic features
the Old Testament god is a perpetrator of violence
the Old Testament is a violent-affirmative text
the bible is authoritative and normative
the bible forbids homosexuality
the Old Testament is irrelevant
secular laws outdoes biblical laws
knowledge in biblical studies is required for biblical interpretation

I will here, in a highly condensed way, present some of the results from the analysis of the dimensions discursive practice and social practice. I will then conclude with some final remarks concerning the usefulness of CDA in IRC studies.

In the analysis of discursive practice I find that all three debates consist of a relatively high degree of manifest intertextuality mainly due to the use of quotes from the Hebrew bible. The quotes are used to emphasize the debaters own argument, to create authority for and legitimize his or her argument. The quotes or references are often short and concise without any interpretation, the quote is supposed to speak for itself and to be interpreted in a so called literal way.[53] Very few debaters argue that the biblical texts must be interpreted with exegetical tools, such as considering

I use a variety of approaches from biblical studies such as historic-critical research, feminist- queer- and masculinity-studies etc.

[51] The material was collected in the fall of 2018, using The National Library's Database of Digitalized Magazines. I limited the search to the years 1987-2017 and to Sweden's four largest nationwide daily newspapers, *Aftonbladet* (independent Social Democratic), *Expressen* and *Dagens Nyheter* (independent Liberal) and *Svenska Dagbladet* (independent Conservative). As search words I used "bibel*" (bible) with 60 421 hits, "Gamla testamentet*" (Old Testament) with 3331 hits, "gammaltestamentlig*" (see footnote 2 above) with 2413 hits, "Tanak/Tanakh/Tanach" with 135 hits (almost exclusively used to describe a certain motor), "Mikra" with 304 hits (exclusively referring to the Swedish word for microwave oven), "Hebreiska bibeln*" (Hebrew bible) with 149 hits, and "judiska bibeln" (Jewish bible) with 30 hits. After a first screening I was left with approximately 600 debate articles discussing or using the Hebrew bible as argument in a debate. From this first screening I decided to limit the study to the three specific debates described in *Appendix 1* and 120 articles, including two from another magazine (*Ordfront Magasin*) and 6 articles printed before 1987 (1985-1986) to be able to follow the debate.

[52] Fairclough suggest that the researcher starts by collecting multiple samples of material and conduct an analysis on the macro-level looking for patterns in the material. After this first analysis the researcher should select a representative smaller sample for conducting an analysis on the micro-level (1992:230 f.). Fairclough suggest that one should start with the dimension of discursive practice, but I found it to be more logical to start with the textual dimension. Fairclough states that how one should proceed with the analysis has to be adjusted for each specific study (1992:225). He also points out that the two dimensions overlap (1992:73).

[53] Cf. Berlinerblau 2008

the texts in relation to their historical context or in relation to genre etc. Instead the Hebrew bible is compared to the modern Swedish society and texts such as the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and contemporary Swedish laws. The quotes are also compared with and put in contrast to quotes from the New Testament. Debaters tend to use problematic texts from the Hebrew bible and perceived non-problematic texts from the New Testament. For instance, the command to love one's neighbor is often quoted from the New Testament but similar commands in the Hebrew bible are only implied once, texts concerning god's judgement and use of violence is often quoted from the Hebrew bible while similar quotes from the New Testament are never quoted, etc. Also, quotes are used as contra-arguments in the debates: quotes cited by the opponent can be contested with the citing of another quote. Quotes from the Hebrew bible are mainly used to emphasize how problematic the Old Testament is, i.e. as argument for the irrelevance or even danger, of the Old Testament. Perceived problematic quotes from the Hebrew bible are also contested with perceived non-problematic quotes from the New Testament, mainly quotes by Jesus, as a way of arguing that the Hebrew bible stands in contrast to Jesus teachings and, since Jesus has replaced the legalistic teachings of the Old Testament, the quotes from the Old Testament should be considered irrelevant and replaced.[54]

The analysis of manifest intertextuality shows that it is the Old Testament that is perceived as the problem in most of the articles, not religion, the bible or Christianity as such. It is considered problematic to refer to the Hebrew bible in the debates, making the debater seem disconnected to the modern world, overly religious or old-fashioned in a negative sense, whereas the use of quotes from the New Testament can be accepted as long as the quotes can be considered to be in accordance with what is understood as Swedish values and dominant ideologies such as equality.

By applying the analytical tool interdiscursivity I show how the analyzed discourses are constructed with the help of other discourses, making the claims of the debater more important and topical in the public debate, thus legitimizing and creating authority and relevance to the debater and his or her claims. I have also highlighted the interdiscursive use of a discourse I call *an Evangelical-Lutheran discourse that downgrades the Old Testament* in all three debates, claiming that the problematic parts of the bible (being misogynic, violent and homophobic) is limited the Old Testament. The Old Testament is supposedly contrasting the New Testament and the latter is portrayed as a still relevant source, in accordance with modern, even secularist, values of equality and a perceived civilized way of life. Jesus is considered a feminist, a peace proclaimer and pro-LBGTQ-rights, someone who took a clear stance against the Old Testament (and its religion) as well as his own contemporary society. This discourse is reproduced in all three debates, as well as the discourses *the Old Testament is the Other*, *the Old Testament god is a perpetrator of violence*, and *the Old Testament is irrelevant*. All these discourses also have interdiscursive connections to a replacement theology discourse and an anti-Jewish discourse articulated in the Christian history of ideas.

I will now move on to present some of the results from the analysis of the third dimension, social practice. In the actual dissertation, the analysis of social practice is preceded by the IRC.

Crucial to Fairclough is the understanding that texts are not written in isolation from, but as a part of, a broader social setting. Texts are intertwined in complicated networks of other texts and social contexts. Fairclough is interested in the connection between discursive change and social

[54] Cf. Koch 2001

and cultural change.[55] The third dimension in his model, social practice, therefore adds non-discursive aspects into the analysis through an interdisciplinary approach. In order to understand the societal context of discourse, other theories need to be applied. In my dissertation I therefore conduct the analysis with the help of aspects from mediatization and secularization theory in order to understand the discourses in relation to the social, historical and cultural context (the social practice).[56] However, due to the limits of this paper, I will here only summarize the results regarding Fairclough's two analytical tools order of discourse and ideology.

I have identified the order of discourse as: ***the Old Testament's role as an authority in the Swedish society***. It is around this theme all of the discourses circulate, either by advocating the Old Testament's authoritative role or contesting it. The relations between the discourses and the order of discourse is shown in *Table 2* below.

Table 2. The discourses in relation to the order of discourse

The Old Testament is not an authority	**The Old Testament is an authority**
the Old Testament is the reason for the patriarchy	*the bible is authoritative and normative*
there is an Old Testament view on women and it is one-sidedly negative	*the bible forbids homosexuality*
Eve is the prototype for an Old Testament view on women	
the Old Testament is the Other	
the Old Testament god has psychopathic features	
the Old Testament god is a perpetrator of violence	
the Old Testament is a violent-affirmative text	
the bible forbids homosexuality[57]	
the Old Testament is irrelevant	
secular laws outdoes biblical laws	
knowledge in biblical studies are required for biblical interpretations	

The most dominant pattern in the order of discourse is that the Old Testament is perceived as a problem, through claims such as the Old Testament initiated the patriarchy, legitimizes violence and is irrelevant and non-compatible with the modern society. The Old Testament is interpreted as misogynic, violence fixated and homophobic. Therefore, it should not be considered an authority in the Swedish society. It is specifically the Old Testament that is perceived as the problem, not the Christian canon as a whole. One interesting parallel pattern is that the authoritative role of the New Testament is not discussed or contested in the same way, but instead more naturalized (although I did in my search for material not look for debates concerning the New Testament). Rather than to problematize the New Testament, debaters in the material who uses especially Jesus argues that they have Jesus on their side and that Jesus would agree with them. References to Jesus

[55] Fairclough 1992:96

[56] Cf. Hjarvard 2011, Axner 2013, Furseth 2018. I analyze how other debates, events and currents in the Swedish society enable both the construction and articulation of the discourses as well as contribute to make the debates newsworthy according to the media logic (such as the new bible translation, an ongoing feministic debate concerning men's violence against women and the pornographic industry, an ongoing debate regarding the Church of Sweden's decision to allow some-sex marriages, debates on religiously motivated violence, and secularistic and church-critical currents).

[57] The discourse *the bible forbids homosexuality* can be used both by those who argue that the Old Testament has an authoritative role and those who contest it, seeing the prohibition as a reason not to consider the Old Testament as an authority.

can legitimatize and give authority to debater's claims. To refer to the Old Testament as an authority comes across as relatively problematic, while at the same time references to the New Testament as an authority in some cases can be accepted. One pattern in the overall material is thus that it is the Old Testament in particular that is perceived as the strange, hostile and problematic text, always in relation and contrast to the New Testament. In the analysis of interdiscursivity I show that the discourse *the Old Testament is the Other* is reproduced in all three debates, thus not only hegemonic in the Onsell-debate but dominant in the order of discourse as well. Also, other discourses in the order of discourse contrasts the Old and the New Testament, due to the general assumption that the problematic aspects of the Christian canon is limited to the Old Testament. For instance is the discourse *the Old Testament god is a perpetrator of violence* (which in the Moberg-debate is an hegemonic discourse) present in the other debates as well, describing the Old Testament god as violent, as a war-god, as a goddess-assassinator, judging and threatening the LBGTQ-community, in contrast to the loving and non-judgmental Jesus. The discourse the *Old Testament is irrelevant* can also be found in all three debates, which makes it a dominant discourse in the order of discourse were it strengthens the claim that the Old Testament cannot have an authoritative role in the Swedish society since it can be used to contest modern values of equality. To "make Christianity Christian", to quote Onsell, the Old Testament is not necessary but rather an obstacle. Further, Moberg claims that the absolute majority of the Old Testament should be edited out, hence arguing that the texts have no value for either religious, historical or cultural purposes. Something similar is never claimed concerning the New Testament. The dominant pattern in the order of discourse is, in summary, that the Old Testament is a problematic text due to its portrayal of women, violence, god and homosexuality, in contrast to the perceived non-problematic New Testament and Jesus who, in contrast to his contemporaries, preached peace, love and understanding.

Regarding changes in the order of discourse three interesting tendencies can be emphasized. An increasing mediatization and individualization of religion leads to the Old Testament's loss of authoritative status, an increasing pluralism leads to the Old Testament in some sense gaining authority back due to new premises, and the combination of an increasing pluralism and a new visibility of religion leads to that the discourses are constructed concerning "the bible" rather than "the Old Testament" since the biblical text tends to be discussed more often in relation to the Quran. I will elaborate on these three changes below.

One change in the order of discourse is thus that the Old Testament during the selected time period (1987-2017) increasingly loses its position as an authority. This can be illustrated with the different proposals expressed in the debates concerning how the Swedish society should cope with the Old Testament: add an explanatory and cautionary foreword to the new bible translation (Onsell), edit the Old Testament and remove the most problematic parts which make up about two thirds of the text (Moberg), or perhaps to by legal means limit the possibility to read or refer parts of the Old Testament in public (discussed in the Green-debate). During the time period it also becomes less and less controversial to criticize the Old Testament, and its authoritative role is less and less taken for granted. The Old Testament goes from relating to "us" Christians (Onsell) to "them" in the Church of Sweden (Moberg) and finally back to "us" in the democratic society rather than "us" in religious communities. How are "we" secularists Swedes to cope with the Old Testament? The Onsell-debate presupposes a relation between readers and Christianity and the Church of Sweden (which was separated from the Swedish state in 2000), a presupposition not found in the later debates. Onsell wants to start a spiritual movement based on Jesus and a perceived highly cultivated pre-biblical goddess religion (which she claims are likeminded), while

Moberg wants to emphasize the significance of a secular state. In the Green-debate the main question concerns how the (presupposed secular) society should deal with problematic religious texts that a minority perceives as normative. The decreasing authoritative role of the Old Testament can be seen in relation to an increasing individualization of religion and secularist, church- and religion-critical currents in the broader social context.

Correspondingly, there is also a tendency in connection to a type of secular discourse claiming that a religious text can be perceived as an authority due to the secular fundamental law regarding freedom of religion. The discourse claims that the society to some extent must acknowledge the right to believe in the authority of religious texts in a pluralistic society.[58] Hence, an increasing pluralism and diversity in the social practice contributes to open up a new possibility for the perception of the Old Testament as an authority due to secularists values such as the freedom of religion.

Articles concerning the Old Testament keeps being published throughout the selected time period, so the question concerning the Old Testament's status is not completely unraveled. Since the Old Testament is part of the Christian canon, it is perceived as newsworthy. This, and the fact that debaters who uses Jesus does so to legitimatize and give authority to their own argument can be understood in relation to a more complex understanding of processes of secularization and the description made by sociologists of the Nordic countries as imbedded in a Christian tradition.[59] Even debaters claiming to have an atheist or secular position have an Evangelical-Lutheran understanding of the bible and interpret biblical texts from this premise. This is an example of the complexity of secularization and the ongoing parallel trends, where non-confessional newspapers publishes articles by mainly non-confessional debaters concerning the bible, interpreted, often unconsciously, through an Evangelical-Lutheran lens. All three debates are also examples of what sociologists refers to as a new type of visibility of religion: media representations of religion is conditioned by and limited to its function of being perceived as either a problem (the Old Testament) or as something useful (Jesus). Also, perceived controversies concerning religion leads to visibility.[60] Hence, biblical texts which are being cited and highlighted concerns topics such as sex, gender and violence, topics that can be perceived as controversial.

The conditioned and limited representation of religion as something problematic and controversial also relates to the third change in the order of discourse mentioned above. At the end of the time period when the Hebrew bible is cited or represented, the articles more often concerns the Christian canon and "the Bible" rather than the Old Testament specifically. This change in the order of discourse can be related to a change in the social practice, namely that debates concerning religion increasingly tend to concern Islam. Islam's increased visibility in Swedish media has been described in previous research.[61] This change can also be understood in relation to an increasing politicization of religion in which both Islam and Christianity are used in a way to create an Us and Them.[62] Problematic content in the bible is used in relation to the Quran, both by people critical of Islamophobia arguing that the Quran is no worse than the bible, and by those who are critical

[58] Cf. Lövheim 2017

[59] Cf. Furseth 2018

[60] Hjelm 2014b. Lövheim and Jensdotter have shown that media often reinforces notions about religion as something either good or bad. Lövheim and Jensdotter 2018:151.

[61] Cf. Lövheim 2017, 2019

[62] Jensdotter 2021. Lövheim has shown that mediatization of politics and religion have an enhanced effect on each other, and Jensdotter has shown that media co-structures political and religious change. Lövheim 2019:289, Jensdotter 2021:180

of Islam arguing that the problematic parts of the bible are irrelevant for a so called true Christianity, since Jesu's message of love has replaced the problematic Old Testament. A change in the order of discourse is thus that the discourse *the Old Testament is a violent-affirmative text* is reproduced in connection to the Quran, either to defend Islam by arguing that also Our scripture contains problematic texts (in the Old Testament) or to attack Islam by arguing that even though Our scripture includes primitive, violent and so called awful texts (the Old Testament), these problematic texts have no authority. Thus, at the end of the time period there is a shift in object of comparison from the previous binary contrast constructed between the Old vs. the New Testament to a comparison between the bible and the Quran. The order of discourse is more and more outrivaled by an order of discourse concerning the Quran's role as an authority in the Swedish society.

Changes in the order of discourse thus relates to social changes such as a decreasing individual religiosity combined with an increasing religious pluralism and diversity. Also, an increasing mediatization of religion can be highlighted, leading to decreasing opportunities for religious actors as well as so called experts such as biblical scholars to participate in media debates, hence having lesser possibilities to argue against one-sided representations of the Hebrew bible.[63] The media representations of religion in the material co-structures notions of how religious texts both conflicts with modern values, as well as contributes to the notion that some religious texts are of a more universal character, such as Jesu's message of equality and peace. Jesus, in the material, continues to be interpreted as relevant and authoritative, in contrast to the Old Testament (and in the latter articles, the Quran), and is generally depicted as a peace-loving, norm-breaking feminist.

Media debates concerning the Hebrew bible hence have as starting-points that which in the social context is considered important societal questions: equality, politics, legislation etc. Biblical interpretations are built upon discourses, currents, topics, metaphors and images that are current in the social context. Representations of the bible in media consists of biblical texts and interpretations that can be considered either problematic and "bad" (mainly texts from the Hebrew bible) or useful and "good" (mainly texts from the New Testament). Social practice affect interpretations of and notions about the bible.[64] This relates to the second analytical tool applicable in the analysis of social practice, namely ideology.

Fairclough's method aims at analyzing how different aspects of language contributes to one-sided constructions which serves particular groups interests and the analysis includes paying attention to that which is not being uttered, but taken for granted.[65] In all three debates the majority of actors aim at transforming a specific relation of dominance. In the Onsell-debate Onsell and others aim at transforming male dominance over women. In the Moberg-debate Moberg aims at transforming possibly oppressive or violent religious authorities and enhance a secular state. In the Green-debate several debaters aim at transforming oppression directed against the LBGTQ-community. All these ambitions of transformation of relations of dominance are deliberate and articulated. At the same time, another relation of dominance is being reproduced, not as clearly uttered but as an undercurrent and most likely in an unconscious way, namely one majority group's (Evangelical-Lutheran Christians) relation of dominance over a minority group (Jews). In all three debates it is possible to discern an underlying, sometimes articulated, kind of *antithetical ideology*,

[63] Cf. Lundby et al 2018:199-202

[64] In the dissertation I also discuss the other way around: how interpretations of the bible affect social practice.

[65] Hjelm 2014a:860

which positions the Old Testament in contrast to the New Testament. The Old Testament is seen as the problematic Other, but at the same time a problem easy to solve since the Old Testament is irrelevant to Christians due to the fact that Jesus introduced an entirely new message which has replaced to Old Testament. Several of the analyzed discourses are connected to, build upon or presupposes images or concepts from a replacement theology discourse and an anti-Jewish discourse as articulated in the Christian history of ideas and the antithetical ideology reproduces anti-Jewish stereotypes and simplified notions concerning the inherent differences between the two testaments and "their" religions (implicitly or explicitly understood as Judaism and Christianity). The Old Testament's patriarchal, violent and legalistic text and its deeply problematic notions of god and human are interpreted as the primitive and contrasting version of the loving, forgiving and equal text and god of the New Testament. This underlying ideology is often expressed in a subtle way, taking for granted that Jesu articulated a new message stressing the love of one's neighbor, that Jesus treated women in a, for the contemporary society, norm-breaking, equal and radially new way and that Jesus did not judge homosexuals.[66]

With the concept antithetical ideology I want to illustrate what is considered common sense in the debates, what constitutes the premises of the dominant discourses: in the Onsell-debate it is common sense that Jesus was a feminist with a message of equality, as an antithesis to the patriarchal message of the Old Testament: in the Moberg-debate it is common sense for the majority of the debaters that Jesus proclaimed peace, as an antithesis to the war-god and violence-message of the Old Testament: in the Green-debate (with the exception of Green and some other conservative Christians) it is considered common sense that Jesus was norm-breaking and non-judgmental, as an antithesis to the Old Testament's legalistic and judgmental message.[67] This perception of Jesus vs. the Old Testament in the debates supposedly comes from a so called unbiased literal reading of the bible, independent of nearly 2000 years of Christian reception history. The constructed binary contrast between the Old and the New Testament is taken for granted, it is considered common sense.

The antithetical ideology is not only "common sense" but also "meaning in the service of power" since it leads to the ideological consequence that debaters can criticize phenomenon considered having to do with religion (such as oppression of women, religiously motivated violence and homophobia) but when describing these problematic phenomenon as present only in the *old* and outdated part of Our canon, debaters at the same time can distance themselves from it. The Hebrew bible is even in some articles refed to as "the Jewish bible" to create further distance, also reducing Judaism to Tanakh.

The ideological effect of several of the discourses analyzed in the study is the risk of a reproduction of a replacement theology discourse or other anti-Jewish ideas and stereotypical notions of both the Hebrew bible and the New Testament. This reproduction appears to be oblivious for the debaters and the tendency is enhanced due to the fact that Jewish representatives are almost non-existing in the debates. Only one of the articles in the material discuss Jewish hermeneutics, and none mentions other authoritative Jewish writings. Thus, several of the analyzed discourses are problematic since they implicitly reproduce a stereotypical and antithetical view on Judaism and Christianity especially since no consideration is given to Jewish hermeneutics, but Christian.

Bearing in mind the effect on social identities and relationships there is a problematic effect to take into consideration as to how a well-established majority group (Evangelical-Lutheran

[66] Cf. Marchal 2017

[67] Cf. von Kellenbach (1994) and Plaskow (1991, 2014) for the portrayal of Judaism as the antithesis to Christianity.

Christians) reproduce a relation of dominance towards an underrepresented minority group (Jews). The effects on systems of knowledge and beliefs thus include a simplified, stereotypical and unjust one-sided representation of the Hebrew bible, reduced to the problematic, older, primitive and replaced half of the Christian bible, which also leads to the existence of Jewish reception history, and the existence of Jewish life in Sweden in general, made invisible in the public sphere.

In conclusion, all three debates have the purpose to transform relations of dominance but contribute to a relation of dominance through the construction of a reality where Christianity's dominance over Judaism is reproduced through discourses concerning the Hebrew bible.

Final remarks

In this paper I have argued that Fairclough's version of CDA is a valid method for IRC studies, and can help develop the theoretical and methodological framework of IRC.[68] The method's interest in linguistic aspects, as well as its understanding of the importance to consider societal, historical and cultural aspects in the analysis of discourse (seeing language use as social practice, both constitutive and constituted) is highly relevant and corresponding to IRC's interest in analyzing biblical interpretations in relation to the social context in which the interpretation is being uttered. For Fairclough, as for the biblical scholar conducting IRC, no discourse (or biblical interpretation) is articulated in a vacuum. By analyzing the social practice, the researcher can study what makes the discourse, or the biblical interpretation, possible to articulate at that particular time and place, what in an interpretation is being accentuated vs. ignored and challenge dominating interpretational strategies (Morse).

That the discourses depicting the Old Testament as a problem becomes dominant in the order of discourse, I argue, has to do with elements in the surrounding social context, and societal dynamics needs to be considered in a IRC study which aims at not only addressing the question *what* interpreters do with the bible, but also *why* they do it.

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[68] Due to the fact that the researcher needs to include other theories besides CDA, it can be quite an ordeal to take on a CDA project. At the same time, the biblical scholar can limit the analytical tools used for the specific project.

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Appendix.

Table 3. Discourses selected for analysis in the Onsell-debate[69]

The discourse	Claims that	Sample quote
the Old Testament is the reason for the patriarchy[70]	The Old Testament depicts a patriarchal ideology which was unique and new to its contemporary context. Before the Hebrews entered Canaan, with their new religion, there existed a peaceful and equal culture, religion and society in the region and a female goddess was at the center of worship. The male god of the Old Testament successfully eliminated the goddess and since women are slaves under the patriarchy. Comparing this misogynic view on women with the highly respectable view on women in pre-biblical goddess-religions and in the New Testament, the Old Testament is portrayed as the black sheep of the history of religions.	**I suggest to the General Synod of the Church of Sweden an introduction to open up our eyes to the underlying cause of today's million-dollar pornographic-industry. That clarifies why the literature, the science and the arts hides the work of women, why women's work is downgraded. Why Mother Earth is wounded, betrayed…**[71]
there is an Old Testament view on women and it is one-sidedly negative[72]	There is only one view on women expressed in the Old Testament and that is a negative one, portraying women as sinners, treacherous, senseless etc. This particular view on women as inferior to men and as doomed to have a marginalized role in society was a new and unique way of understanding women in the historical and cultural context.	The most prominent feature for women in the Old Testament has been the faithlessness. Furthermore, they have been representatives for fornication, lust and misdeeds.[73]
Eve is the prototype for an Old Testament view on women[74]	The sharpest weapon of the new patriarchal ideology was the portrait of Eve as a seductress, the source of evil, sin and death. The discourse claims that this narrative was of outmost importance for the Israelites, their understanding on women in general and their success in introducing the patriarchal society in specific.	The fake, seductive, wo-man-woman-Eve tricks Adam to eat of the fruit of knowledge, the forbidden. And thereby – from that day and time – the woman is transformed to THE GUILT. Guilty of the sin and death in the world, guilty of

[69] The first debate concerns "the Old Testament view" on women. The debate was initiated by author Birgitta Onsell in 1985 and lasted up until the year 2000, although most articles were published between the middle of the 1980:s to the middle of the 1990:s. The debate mainly focused on Onsell's demand that the forthcoming new bible translation (a Christian canon, payed for by the Swedish government published in 1999) should be attached with a foreword explaining and taking a stand against the patriarchal and misogynic content in the Old Testament. The material connected to this debate consists of 50 articles, mainly debate articles, in direct reference to Onsell, and four later articles used for the study of stability or change in discourse.

[70] Sample article:"Varudeklarera Gamla testamentet!" by Birgitta Onsell in *Dagens Nyheter* 87-12-31

[71] "**Jag föreslår Kyrkomötet en introduktion som öppnar våra ögon för den bakomliggande orsaken till vår tids pornografiska miljardindustri. Som klargör varför litteraturen, vetenskapen och konsten gömmer undan kvinnors verk, varför kvinnors arbete värderas lägre. Varför Moder Jord ligger sargad, förrådd…**" Bold in the original. The General Synod is the Church of Sweden's highest decision-making assembly.

[72] Sample article: "Dags att göra upp med mansguden" by Birgitta Onsell in *Dagens Nyheter* 85-04-28

[73] "Den mest framträdande egenskapen för kvinnorna i Gamla testamentet har varit trolösheten. Vidare har de stått som representanter för otukten, lustan och missgärningarna."

[74] Sample article: "Därför är kvinnan satans redskap och mannens ägodel" by Birgitta Onsell in *Aftonbladet* 89-05-28

		humankind's paradise lost, guilty of Christ's anguish, crucifixion and death.[75]
the Old Testament is the Other[76]	The Old Testament stands in direct opposite to the teachings of Jesus and the positive role of women portrayed in the New Testament. Jesus and Paul are considered feminists and their messages of equality and peace are applicable in contemporary society while the Old Testament is described as primitive, estranged from and hostile towards modern values. The discourse is presupposed in the debate making the Old Testament the object in focus, the foreign and strange Other. Jesus and Christianity are not the problem, only the Old Testament is.	Can we get financial support to "product declare" the Old Testament, tear down the dark wall of Moses, see the whole history, and deprogram the single-sex faith? Making Christianity Christian.[77]

Table 4. Discourses selected for analysis in the Moberg-debate[78]

The discourse	**Claims that**	**Sample quote**
the Old Testament god has psychopathic features[79]	The Old Testament god suffers from several different types of severe mental illnesses, depictions include schizophrenic, psychotic, neurotic and pathologically jealous.[80] Moberg and others articulating the discourse uses this image as a way of proclaiming that god in the Old Testament is crazy evil, an uncontrollable maniac etc.	Obviously he is very deranged. His paranoia and his lust for power are clearly pathological.[81]
the Old Testament god is a perpetrator of violence [82]	The god in the Old Testament is mainly occupied with different types of violent acts: killing; punishing; avenging; threatening;	The Lord could be the teacher of Attila, Hitler, Stalin, Idi Amin, Saddam Hussein, Milosevic and those guys. He is a full blood Nazi,

[75] "Den falska, förföriska maninnan-kvinnan-Eva lurar Adam att äta av kunskapsfrukten, den förbjudna. Och därmed – från den dagen och den stunden – förvandlas kvinnan till SKULDEN. Skulden till synden och döden i världen, skulden till mänskligheten förlorade paradis, skulden till Kristi kval, korsfästelse och död."

[76] Sample article: "Påskägget arv från gudinnan" by Birgitta Onsell in *Dagens Nyheter* 88-04-02

[77] "Får vi ekonomiskt stöd att 'varudeklarera' Gamla testamentet, riva ner den mörka Mosemuren, se hela historien, avprogrammera den enkönade tron? Kristna kristendomen."

[78] The second debate was also connected to the ongoing debate regarding the new bible translation and come about due to an article written by Swedish author, columnist and debater Eva Moberg where she gave harsh critic concerning the Old Testament's, and especially the Old Testament god's, depiction and use of violence. In the article she described the Old Testament god as a "full blood Nazi". She met some critic especially for using the term "full blood Nazi" but was also nominated for the award "Woman of the year" by the newspaper *Aftonbladet* for speaking the truth about the violent and misogynic Old Testament. The debate consists of 12 articles by or about Moberg's notions, but the analyzed material sums up to a total of 34 articles since I also study how the discourses are reproduced or transformed in later articles. The first article analyzed was written by Moberg in 1988 but the peak of the debate arose in relation to the more controversial article described above which was published in 2000. The debate lasted until 2002, but as with the other two debates I analyze articles who reproduce or transform the discourses up until 2017.

[79] Sample text: "Gud som psykfall" by Eva Moberg in *Dagens Nyheter* 88-06-04

[80] Moberg, and others, discusses mental illnesses in a stereotypical and downgrading way I myself do not approve of.

[81] "Uppenbarligen är han svårt störd. Hans förföljelsemani och maktlystnad är klart patologiska."

[82] Sample text: "Du skall inga andra gudar hava jämte mig" by Eva Moberg in *Ordfront Magasin nr 1-2* 2000

	judging; scaring etc. He is a war criminal, a mobster and a mass murder.	with a modern expression, and that is what the new translation strive for?[83]
the Old Testament is a violent-affirmative text[84]	The Old Testament not only depicts but also legitimizes and encourages acts of violence such as war, murder and genocide.	What I have suggested (without myself being Christian) is that the Church of Sweden desacralizes and separates the considerable part of the Old Testament that mainly depicts and glorifies war and genocide.[85]

Table 5. Discourses selected for analysis in the Green-debate[86]

The discourse	**Claims that**	**Sample quote**
the bible is authoritative and normative[87]	The Christian canon is the actual words of God and contains an Absolut Truth. There exists no contradictions if interpreted correctly, the message is undoubtedly clear. To be able to get into heaven one must live by the rules outlined in the Christian canon. If one does not, however, this might have repercussions here and now.	Here the word of God clearly states that you were created to become Father and Mother. To man and woman. They should be parents. That is what the Lord plainly and clearly states here.[88]

[83] Herren skulle kunna vara läromästare åt Attila, Hitler, Stalin, Idi Amin, Saddam Hussein, Milosevic och grabbarna. Han är en fullblodsnazist, med modernt språkbruk, och det är ju vad nyöversättningen eftersträvar?"

[84] Sample text: "Gud bevare oss för Herren" by Eva Moberg in *Ordfront Magasin nr 3* 2002

[85] "Vad jag har föreslagit (utan att själv vara kristen) är att Svenska kyrkan avsakraliserar och avskiljer den ansenliga del av GT som främst skildrar och förhärligar krig och folkmord."

[86] The third debate analyzed in the dissertation concerns a so called biblical view on homosexuality. The debate started with a legal case where for the first time a new law that made it illegal to incite against homosexuals as a group (in Swedish: *hets mot folkgrupp*) was applied in a court of law. A pastor of the Pentecostal church in Borgholm, Åke Green, was indicted for giving a sermon on homosexuality in which he stated that "abnormal sexuality is a cancerous abscess" in the society and that the bible teaches that homosexuals will go to hell. Green also made linkages between homosexuality an pedophilia, blamed homosexuals for the disease AIDS and urged the Swedish government not to allow same sex marriages and adoptions since that would lead to negative consequences for the Swedish society, maybe even making god vomit the Swedes out of the land. The sermon, more than eight pages long, was published in the digital versions of three of my selected newspapers. It was widely cited and discussed in the public sphere mainly between the years 2002-2003. Most of the debate articles regarding the legal case focused on questions concerning the laws of freedom of speech and freedom of religion versus the incitement law. How was the Swedish society to cope with the clash between violations against on the one hand the rights of a minority group not to be harassed versus the violation of the freedom of speech and religion of a religious person claiming only to be expressing his faith? In my analysis have limited my material to articles that refer to the bible. The material consists of 32 articles of which 29 refers directly to Green. The analysis differs from the previous two since Green himself didn't write any article, other than his sermon. In the sermon I found two relevant discourses: *the bible is authoritative and normative* and *the bible forbids homosexuality*. Reactions to these claims constructs three different discourses. I have thus analyzed the sermon plus three articles that represents the three relevant counter-discourses I have found in the overall material. These involves the sermon by Green and debate articles by journalist Bo Strömstedt, elected politician Mats Einarsson and biblical scholar Inger Ljung.

[87] Sample text: The sermon by Åke Green in the digitalized editions of *Dagens Nyheter* 05-01-21, *Svenska Dagbladet* 05-11-04 and *Aftonbladet* 05-11-09

[88] "Här säger ju Guds ord klart och tydligt att ni skapades att bli Far och Mor. Till man och kvinna. De skulle bli föräldrar. Det säger Herren här klart och tydligt."

the bible forbids homosexuality[89]	The Christian canon clearly states that any type of same sex relation or action is utterly forbidden and will lead to consequences for those who live out their devilish desires and also for the society which allows such acts.	The outcry from Sodom and Gomorrah is great and the sin is grievous. That is how God perceives the abnormal sexual relationship. It is very very grievous, says Gods.[90]
the Old Testament is irrelevant[91]	One should not pay attention to the legalistic, uncivilized and strange Old Testament and its ban against homosexuality. Representatives of the discourse either highlights the absurdity of the Hebrew bible or Jesus as an authoritative who replaced the Old Testament. Jesus did not forbid homosexuality but introduced a new message of love and non judgement, as a clear contrast to the legalistic Old Testament.	The books of Moses are filled with the Old Testament type of legalistic demands, for instance that one who works on the Sabbath should be punished by death"[92]
secular laws outdoes biblical laws[93]	Even though the bible clearly forbids homosexuality, Sweden as a society cannot take biblical laws into consideration. Still, since the secular law also enables the interpretation that the bible is an authoritative and normative source through the secular laws of freedom of religion and speech, it is not definite that he in fact should be judged since these laws are fundamental in democratic Sweden.	Does the Court of Appeal consider that it is only the Bible which has this normative function, or could one refer to any religious writing at all? Why not political texts, Mein Kampf for instance?[94]
knowledge in biblical studies is required for biblical interpretation[95]	One need fundamental academic knowledge of biblical studies to be able to interpret a biblical text. It is impossible to make general claims regarding biblical messages about any topic, including homosexuality. Biblical texts are part of a broader historical context and to understand texts and contexts from antiquity requires knowledge of biblical studies.	To a biblical scholar, as for most of the scholars of literature, it is surprising that Åke Green, The Göta Court of Appeal and defense attorney Bratt have such a positive attitude towards the possibility to determine something which they refer to as "the message of the Bible".[96]

[89] Sample text: The sermon by Åke Green in the digitalized editions of *Dagens Nyheter* 05-01-21, *Svenska Dagbladet* 05-11-04 and *Aftonbladet* 05-11-09

[90] "Ropet från Sodom och Gomorra det är stort och synden är svår. Så ser Gud på den avvikande sexuella relation. Det är mycke svårt säger Gud."

[91] Sample text: "Green till HD!" by Bo Strömstedt in *Expressen* 05-02-10

[92] "Moseböckerna är fulla av den gammaltestamentliga lagens krav, till exempel att var och en som uträttar ett arbete på sabbaten skall straffas med döden"

[93] Sample text: "Pastorers känsla för biblisk folkhets" by Mats Einarsson in *Expressen* 05-02-23

[94] "Anser hovrätten att det endast är bibeln som har denna normerande funktion, eller kan man hänvisa till vilken religiös urkund som helst? Varför inte politiska skrifter, Mein Kampf till exempel?"

[95] Sample text: "Som Åke Green läser bibeln" by Inger Ljung in *Svenska Dagbladet* 05-11-23

[96] "För en bibelvetare, liksom för de flesta litteraturvetare, är det förvånande att Åke Green, Göta hovrätt och försvarsadvokaten Bratt har en så positiv inställning till möjligheten att ringa in något som de kallar 'Bibelns budskap'."

OTSEM 2021
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The Significance of Societal Dynamics in Biblical Reception. Critical Discourse Analysis as a Method for Ideological Reception Criticism: Representations of the Hebrew Bible in Swedish Media Debates.

Summary

In my forthcoming dissertation I analyze interpretations of and notions about the Hebrew bible in Sweden's four largest nationwide daily newspapers between the years 1987-2017. As point of departure I use one debate concerning the Old Testament and a so called "Old Testament view" on women, one debate concerning the Old Testament as a violent-affirmative text and its problematic depiction of god, and one debate concerning the bible's view of homosexuality and the Old Testament as an unauthoritative part of the Christian bible. I place this study within the ideological reception critical field of biblical studies and I use critical discourse analysis as method. I analyze events, currents and underlying ideologies in the surrounding society as well as dominating interpretative strategies in the history of reception as factors that make discourses concerning the Hebrew bible possible in the particular context (Swedish media debates in the years 1987-2017). The material consists of a total number of 120 articles, and I have identified and selected 12 discourses for the analysis.

The aim of the dissertation is to identify how the Hebrew bible is interpreted and portrayed in Swedish media as well as to challenge and problematize these interpretations and portraits especially those who contribute to the production or reproduction of relations of dominance.

The aim of the paper is to give a summary of some of the dissertation's (preliminary) findings, and by doing so also illustrate how critical discourse analysis (CDA), as develop by linguistic Norman Fairclough, can be applied in and combined with ideological reception criticism (IRC). I argue that CDA and IRC have several common features and may easily be combined, giving IRC a more transparent, valid and coherent methodological starting point. Both theories, IRC and CDA, emphasize that utterances, such as a biblical interpretation, must be analyzed in relation to the historical, cultural and societal milieu in which it is being stated (such as events, currents and dominating underlying ideologies in the broader social context). Both theories also highlight the importance of challenging and transform unjust relations of power and dominance produced or reproduced by utterances. CDA as a method also offers concrete analytical tools to do such an analysis.

The paper is divided into three parts. I begin with a theoretical and methodological background to IRC as well as Fairclough's version of CDA.

Thereafter, I give a summary of some of the preliminary results of the dissertation. The summary demonstrates how discourses about the Old Testament are constructed, produced, reproduced and transformed during the selected time period in relation to societal dynamics and social change. I highlight the problematic fact that several of the analyzed discourses can be understood in relation to an Evangelical-Lutheran discourse which downgrades the Old Testament, and both a replacement theology discourse and an anti-Jewish discourse articulated in the Christian history of ideas.

In the last section of the paper I conclude my argumentation concerning the use of CDA in IRC studies. I emphasize the use of CDA as a way to discern and analyze both biblical interpretations and discourses about the bible as well as the method's relevance when it comes to analyze biblical reception in relation to the social practice in which it occurs. By applying CDA the researcher can in a systematic way analyze not only *what* people do with biblical texts, but also *why*.

Inherit the Land: exploring the conceptions of Land in Psalm 37

Abstract

Psalm 37 exquisitely expounds the persistence of evil in the world and the confidence that justice will prevail. The Psalm does not solve theological problems from a philosophical point of view, but provides practical advice on how to deal with injustices for the righteous. One should have patience and trust in God, always keeping in mind that evil people-even if they are prevailing and successful today-will perish, and righteous people-now rarely threatened-will rule and inherit the land.

Land is granted to those who בטח ביהוה ועשה־טוב (“trust in YHWH, and do good”, v. 3), who קוי יהוה (“wait for YHWH”,v. 9), the ענוים (“meek” ,v. 11), מברכיו (“blessed by YHWH”, v. 22), who סור מרע ועשה־טוב(“depart from evil, and do good”,v. 27), the צדיקים (“righteous” v. 29), and those who קוה אל־יהוה ושמר דרכו (“wait for YHWH, and keep to his way”, v. 34). Land is not only promised to the poor, but obviously, they are included in the group of good people. YHWH will reward them with the heritage of the land. This psalm reveals the obvious connection between the beneficiaries of the land and the poor and the righteous. This essay focuses on land conceptions in Psalm 37.

Keyword: Land, Psalms, theology of poor and povertry

Einleitung

Das Buch der Psalmen greift die Landthematik ~~in~~ verschiedener Art und Weise auf. In Geschichtspsalmen und manchen Klageliedern taucht der Geschichtsrückblick auf Landvorstellungen (Landverheißung, Landgabe und Landverlust) auf. Die Landvorstellungen ist ein Ausgangspunkt für die Gemeinschaft mit Gott. Die Gottesgemeinschaft beschreibt die Lebensgrundlage des Beters, und bringt damit die Hoffnung auf Rettung zum Ausdruck.

Solche Landvorstellungen aktualisiert auch in anderen Psalmen (Gattungen). Psalm 37 ist ein didaktischer Psalm mit sprichwörtlichem Charakter und es ist von der Weisheitstradition durchdrungen. Der Psalm ist ein Lehrgedicht; denn David wendet sich ~~in ihm~~ nicht an Gott, sondern nur an seine Zuhörer. Psalm 37 entwickelt einige der Ideen: den Gegensatz zwischen dem Weg der Gerechten und dem Weg der Bösen, die Konzentration auf das Gesetz und insbesondere die Aussicht auf eine zukünftige Trennung im Gericht. Typisch für die Anliegen der Weisheit kontrastiert der Psalm den Wohlstand und die Macht der Bösen mit der Entbehrung und dem Leiden der Rechtschaffenen. Das Besondere ist, dass sich die Landvorstellung durch ~~der ganze~~ Psalm zieht und wird jeweils dem Zustand der Gottlosen gegenübergestellt. Die Beschreibungen der Landvorstellung in Vers 3, wie die Gerechten im Land wohnen und sich von Gottes Treue ernähren werden, in Vers 9, wie die Bösen ausgerottet werden, aber die Gläubigen ~~werden~~ das Land erben, in Vers 11, wie die Armen das Land erben und Frieden genießen, in Vers 22 wie die Gesegneten des JHWHs das Land erben und die Verfluchten ausgerottet werden, in Vers 29 wie die Gerechten erben und ewig im Land wohnen und in Vers 34 wie JHWH will Erhöhe die Gläubigen, um das Land zu erben, wenn die Bösen ausgerottet werden. Es wird kein Nachdruck auf die Rückkehr zum Land gelegt; vielmehr scheint es, dass sowohl die Gerechten als auch die Bösen im Land wohnen, aber die Gerechten ~~werden~~ von habgierigen, wohlhabenden Feinden angegriffen. Ihnen wird geboten, treu zu leben und darauf zu warten, dass der Herr die Bösen beseitigt und den Rechtschaffenen ermöglicht, das Land in Frieden zu erben. Die Umstände des Psalms könnten beliebig

oft passen, und die Hoffnung, eines Tages das Erbe des Landes ohne Unterdrückung durch die Feinde des Herrn zu erhalten, war eine ständige Hoffnung des Volkes Gottes, das im Lande wohnte.

Sturktur und Gliederung

Psalm 37 verwendet Anordnungen (v.1-8,27,34) und Mahnungen (v.9,10,12-24,25-26,28-33, 35-36,38-40), um eine bestimmte Intention (auf JHWH zu vertrauen v.1-11,27-44) auszudrücken. Solche Aufforderungen folgen meistens den Begründungen (zehnmal mit dem Wort כי beginnt) nach. Die Anweisungen, im Glauben zu verharren, d. h. hoffen, warten, vertrauen, sich verpflichten, erscheinen besonders in den Versen 3, 7 und 34. Im ersten Teil (v.1-11) herrscht ~~von einer~~ Kette von Imperativen vor, es enthält eine Veränderung der Auffordeung: vom negativen Typ „du sollst nicht“ (mit der Negation „אל“) zum positiven Typ „du sollsr“. Im zweiten Teil (v.12-26) gibt es gar keine Imperative, stattdessen ~~kommt~~ die Behaup~~t~~tungen in der dritten Person vor. In dem dritten Teil (v.27-40) tauchen wieder aber weniger Imperative auf. Diese drei Teile bestehen aus sechs, acht und acht Strophen.

Im ersten Abschnitt dienen die Verbformen (Imperativ) als Gliederungsmerkmal. Die Bedeutungen beziehen sich auf die Zukunft. Das Verb in Vers 5b steht im Imperfekt und es folgt in 6a ein „Perfectum Consecutivium“ (Waw-Perfekt). Es taucht auch in Vers 11 auf. Diese Zukunftsperspektive kommt auch in V.2 und V.9. Die beiden Verse benutzen zweimal Verben im Imperfekt in der Konstruktion eines Parallelismus. In V.4b liegt auch eine Imperfektform vor. Im ersten Abschnitt wird dazu aufgerufen, trotz Ungerechtigkeit auf JHWH zu vertrauen. Der Gläubige soll sich nicht irritieren lassen (v.1,7,8), sondern sich auf JHWH konzentrieren, weil JHWH seine Gerechtigkeit durchsetzen wird (v.10). „Das Land in Besitz nehmen“ wird als Konsequenz für die Gläubigen in Aussicht gestellt. Hier ~~verbindet~~ die Landthematik mit einem theologisch-praktischen Argument: „Tue Gutes und es

geht dir gut“.[1]

Der zweite Block skizziert beide Seiten der Gesellschaft. In den Versen 12-26 verändert sich das Tempus. Anstatt des Imperativs werden AK. und Pk. Formen verwendet. Die Verse 25-26 handeln von der Lebenserfahrung des Autors. Die Imperfektformen leiten den Zukunftshorizont. Die Perfektformen und Partizipien werden entweder als vorzeitig oder als gleichzeitig hinsichtlich der Zukunft interpretiert.

Am Anfang des dritten Abschnitts (v.27-40) signalisieren wieder Imperative die Zukunftsbedeutung. In den Versen 35-36 und 37-38 werden ähnlich wie in v.25-26. v.39- 40 Zukunftsaussichten aufgezeigt.

Teil I . Verse 1-11 Vorschläge gegen Empörung

V.1-2 Einleitung

V.3-6 Vertrauen auf JHWH

V.7-11 Die Gerechten besitzen das Land

Teil II. Verse12-26 Schicksal der Gottlosen

V.12-15 Der Übeltäter und Gott

V.16-20 Der Kontrast zwischen den Gottlosen und den Gerechten

V.21-22 Die Lebensweise der Gerechten und der Gottlosen

V.23-26 Das Vorrecht der Gerechten

Teil III. Verse 27-40 Die Aufforderung und Begründung

V.27-29 Die erste Aufforderung

v.27 Die Aufforderung

v.28-29 Die Begründungen

V.30-33 Beschreibung des Gerechten

v.30-31Das Leben der Gerechten

V.32-33 Die Gefahr und die Hilfe der Gerechten

V.34-36 Die zweite Aufforderung

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[1] Gerstenberger, Erhard S., Björn Gerstenberger (Übersetzer), Arbeitsbuch Psalmen, W. Kohlhammer GmbH, 2015, 101. „Tue Gutes und es geht dir gut“ kommt meisten aus dem Weisheitsliteratur.

v.34 Die Aufforderung und die Begründungen

v.35-36 Die Beobachtung des Lehrs

V.37-40 Die dritte Aufforderung

v.37a Die Aufforderung

v.37b-40 Die Begründungen

Die Vorstellungen des Landbesitzes in Psalm 37

Ps 37 bezieht sich insgesamt sechsmal auf das Land: in den Versen 3,9, 11, (18), 22, (27,) 29 und schließlich im Vers 34, die Verse 18 und 27 benutzen das Wort ארץ nicht; aber das Wort „נחלה“ („Erbe“) bezieht sich auf das Land; V. 27 benutzt das Verb שכן („wohnen“) und ist ebenso auf das Land bezogen:

v.3 בְּטַח בַּיהוָה וַעֲשֵׂה־טוֹב שְׁכֹן־אֶרֶץ וּרְעֵה אֱמוּנָה׃

v.9 כִּי־מְרֵעִים יִכָּרֵתוּן וְקוֵי יְהוָה הֵמָּה יִירְשׁוּ־אָרֶץ׃

v.11 וְעַנָוִים יִירְשׁוּ־אָרֶץ וְהִתְעַנְּגוּ עַל־רֹב שָׁלוֹם׃

v.18 יוֹדֵעַ יְהוָה יְמֵי תְמִימִם וְנַחֲלָתָם לְעוֹלָם תִּהְיֶה׃

v.22 כִּי מְבֹרָכָיו יִירְשׁוּ אָרֶץ וּמְקֻלָלָיו יִכָּרֵתוּ׃

v.27 סוּר מֵרָע וַעֲשֵׂה־טוֹב וּשְׁכֹן לְעוֹלָם׃

v.29 צַדִּיקִים יִירְשׁוּ־אָרֶץ וְיִשְׁכְּנוּ לָעַד עָלֶיהָ׃

v.34 קַוֵּה אֶל־יְהוָה וּשְׁמֹר דַּרְכּוֹ וְיָרוּמֵמְךָ לָרֶשֶׁת אָרֶץ בְּהִכָּרֵת רְשָׁעִים תִּרְאֶה׃[2]

[2] Übersetzungen:

v.3Vertrau auf JHWH und tue Gutes,wohne im Land und hüte.

v.9 Denn die Übeltäter werden ausgerottet, aber die auf JHWH hoffen, die werden das Land besitzen.

v.11Aber die Sanftmütigen werden das Land besitzen, und sie werden sich freuen an der Fülle des Heils.

v.18 JHWH kennt die Tage der Gerechten, und ihr Erbteil wird ewig bestehen.

v. 22 Denn die von ihm Gesegneten werden das Land besitzen, und die von ihm Verfluchten werden ausgerottet.

v.27 Weiche aus dem Böse und tue Gutes, so wirst du für immer wohnen.

v.29 Die Gerechten werden das Land besitzen, und für immer darin wohnen.

v.34 Harre auf JHWH und halte seinen Weg ein, und er wird dich erhöhen, das Land zu besitzen.

1) ירש־ארץ

v.9.11.22.29	יירשו־ארץ	ירש steht in der 3.Per. Pl. Imperfekt Form und im Qal Stamm.
v. 34	לרשת ארץ	ירש steht in der Inf. cons. Form und im Qal Stamm.

In den Versen (v.9.11.22.29.34) wird das indeterminierte hebräische Nomen ארץ mit der gleichen verbalen Wurzel ירש (Sache oder Personenobjekt) und mit dem gleichen Stamm Qal verbunden. Die Wurzel ירש steht 128 mal im AT als Sachobjekt (meist Landbesitz). In Psalter kommt ירש 11 mal (Ps 25,13; 44,2,3; 69,36; 83,12; 105,44) vor und alle Wurzel steht im Qal Stamm außer Ps 44,2 (Hifil.). Die Bedeutung von ירש Qal mit Objekt des Landes ist „besitzen, sich des Besitzes erfreuen"[3]. ארץ ירש taucht meistens in die Vorstellung der Landverheißung auf, z.B. in der Eroberungserzählungen (Deut 1.-Jos 22).[4]

~~Im~~ Vers 9 wird die fundamentale Aussage getroffen: die auf JHWH hoffen, werden das Land besitzen. Auf dem von Gott gegebenen Land zu leben, ist eine persönliche Entscheidung des Schicksals, ob man von Gott abweicht oder auf Gott hofft. ~~Diese Ausdruch~~ bezieht sich auf die Besitznahme des ~~verheißenes Land,~~ die in den Text der deuteronomistischen Tradition entfaltet. Das Land ist ein Geschenk Gottes, deswegen kann das Volk erobern. Es blicket die Geschichte der Landverheißung zurück (Die Landverheißung an Abraham, Gen 15,7-11). Die Landverheißung knüpft mit dem „Landverhißungsschwur JHWHs an die Stammväter"[5]. In diesem Psalm kann nur der Insinder des Volks (die Gerechten/die Armen) das Land besitzen.[6]

~~Im~~ Vers 11 richtet die Landverheißung an den ענוים („Armen" oder

[3] Lohfink, Norbert, Art. „ירש", G. Johannes Botterweck; Helmer Ringgren; Heinz-Josef Fabry; George W. Anderson, ThWAT, Band III, 1982, 986.
[4] Lohfink, Norbert, Art ירש, ThWAT, 959.
[5] Lohfink, Norbert, Art ירש, ThWAT, 971.
[6] Ruiz, Eleuterio R., OSB, Antje Eichhorn (Übersetzer), Das Land ist für die Armen da: Psalm 37 und seine immer aktuelle Bedeutung (Stuttgarter Bibelstudien (SBS)), Katholisches Bibelwerk; 1. Auflage,2015, 23.

„Sanftmütigen“) und sie werden Glück in Fülle genießen. Die Wendung ירש ארץ verbindet mit ענג („freuen“) und שלום („Heil“). ~~Die~~ Landverheißung geht es nicht um ein konkretes Landbesitz, sondern eine Aussage des Heils, ~~die~~ eine Lebensfreunde und Lebensfülle im verheißenen Land. Die Freude im Land parallelsiert mit der Freude an JHWH.[7]

~~Im~~ Vers 22 bezugt die Landverheißung auf Segen und Fluch. Das Thema kommt häufig in Deuterinomium vor (Dtn 11,26; 28; 30,15, 19). In Deuteronomium Kapitel 28 haben die Menschen zwei verschiedene Möglichkeiten, und diese beiden Entscheidungen werden schließlich zu zwei verschiedenen Enden führen. Aber im Vers 22 geht es um den Unterschied zwischen den Gerechten und den Freveler. ~~Das~~ Landbesitz ~~hat~~ eine Möglichkeit, die von der persönlichen Entscheidung abhängt.[8]

Die Landverheißung im Vers 29 bezieht sich auf eine zukunftige Zeit. Hier richtet nicht an die Gerechten/ Armen, sonder geht es um eine ganze neue Situation, die eine neue Gemeinschaft mit Gott (vgl. Jes. 51,4-8). Die Beschreibung der „dem Weg des JHWH zu folgen und ihn nicht verlassen“ im Vers 34 blickt auf die Zukunft. Das Landbesitz ist ein Resultat JHWHs. „Du wirst es sehen“ weist nicht ferne Zukunft aus. Die Landverheißung ermutigt die Empfänger ~~für die~~ gegenwärtige Situation.

Der Ausdruck ירש ארץ wird als eine Art Leitmotiv (v.9,11,22,29,34; Synonyma in v.18,27,29) ~~verstehen~~, weil es die Freude und das Heil bringt. ארץ ירש wird im Psalm 37 nicht ganz Israel zugesagt. Da gibt es zwei Gruppe: Frevler und Gerechten/ Armen. Der Landbesitz ist für die Menschen, ~~die Gute tun, die enge Beziehung mit JHWH hat~~. Darauf hat Psalm 37 die ~~Ähnlichkeit~~ mit dem Psalm 1, die der ~~Vergelich zwischen~~ Frevler und Gerechten die gleich Formel „Tat-Folge“ ausdrückt. Die Wendung ירש ארץ impliziert auch ~~die~~ Landentzug. Obwohl es den Bösen so gut geht, dass sie in der Lage sein könnten, das Land anderer zu übernehmen, wird dieser Zustand kurzzeitig gekippt.

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[7] Liess, Kathrin. “‘Die auf JHWH hoffen, werden das Land besitzen’ (Psalm 37,9): Zur Landthematik in den Psalmen.”Heiliges Land: Jahrbuch für Biblische Theologie 23, Neukirchener Verlag, 2008, 61.
[8] Ruiz, Eleuterio R., Das Land ist für die Armen da, 39.

2) שכן־ארץ

שכן („sich niederlassen, wohnen“) hat nicht die gleiche Bedeutung wie ירש, seine Grundbedeutung ist „wohnen“ oder „bleiben“. שכן veranlasst dazu, sich einen nicht definierten Lebensraum vorzustellen.[9] Die Wurzel שכן legt ~~es sich~~ nahe, ~~die~~ vom „Wohnen Gottes“ oder „Gegenwart“ Gottes sprechen, nämlich im Volk Israel oder an einem bestimmten Ort, insbesondere im Tempel.[10] Die Vorstellung ~~des~~ „wohnen Gottes“ im Deuteronomium ist spezifisch, es enthalten seine Formel, die mit Gottes Namen verbindet, „euer Gott...seinen Namen dort wohnen lassen“ (Dtn,12,11; 14,23).[11] Wenn es darum geht, dass Gott in seinem Heiligtum wohnt, erinnert man zunächst an das 1. Könige 8,10-11, die Weihe des salomosichen Tempel, die Wolke der Herrlichkeit erfüllt ~~dem~~ Tempel. Anschließend ist Exodus 40,34-35, in diesen Texten ~~werden berschreiben~~, dass Gott Besitz von seinem Heiligtum nimmt. In Jesaja 6,1-8 entfaltet ~~den~~ Inhalt des „wohnen Gottes“, es verbindet mit der Tempeltheologie, der Gottesthron steht in der Höhe, aber der Weltkönig JHWH hat dem Tempel/Zion als seine Wohnung in der Welt genommen. In der exilisch-nachexilischen Zeit bekundet die Vorstellung vom Wohnen Jahwes „inmitten der Israeliten“ und „zusätzlich zu ihrem traditionellen Tempelbezug erhält die Schekina-Theologie jetzt eine nationale, auf die Restitution Israels als Gottesvolk bezogene“[12].

~~Von den~~ Vers 4 („Freue dich innig an JHWH“) und Vers11 liegen die beiden Konzepte„Freude an JHWH“ und „Freude am Land“ sehr nahe beieinander, deswegen ist der Landbesitz ein Ausdruck von der Gottesnahe der Gerechten. „JHWH verläßt seine Frommen nicht“ (v.25,28) und „sie finden Festigkeit und Halt in JHWH“ (v.17,23,31) solche Aussagen geht es um die beständige Gottesbeziehung, deswegen können die Gerechten das Land für immer besitzen und seine Gottesbezihung ~~auch~~ für immer Bestand. Darauf ist diese Perspektive sehr ähnlich mit

[9] Bauks, Michaela, „Das Land erben“ oder „die Erde in Besitz nehmen“ in Ps 36 (37 MT): ein Übersetzungsvergleich“, Hrsg. v. Martin Karrer u. Wolfgang Kraus, Die Septuaginta - Texte, Kontexte, Lebenswelten, Mohr Siebeck, 2008, 514.

[10] Janowski, Bernd, Die Einwohnung Gottes in Israel. Eine religions- und theologiegeschichtliche Skizze zur biblischen Schekina-Theologie, in: Der nahe und der ferne Gott. Beiträge zur Theologie des Alten Testaments 5, Neukirchen-Vluyn 2014, 246.

[11] Janowski, Bernd, Die Einwohnung Gottes in Israel, 256.

[12] Janowski, Bernd, Die Einwohnung Gottes in Israel, 280.

der Idee des Wohnen JHWHs.

~~Im~~ Vers 3 steht שכן im Imperativ, es folgen zwei Imperative (עשה, בטח), und ein Imperativ (רעה). „Wohnen auf dem Land“ gilt als ein Heilsgut und Muster der existenztragenden Güte Gottes. In der Wendung שכן ארץ ist das Land nicht als Ackerland zu verstehen, sondern ~~richtet es~~ auf das „verheißene Land“, das JHWH für sein Volk bestimmt hat.[13] Das Land wurde als das Erbe der Israeliten angesehen, die es als Eigentum und Lebensraum eines Volkes betrachteten, aber aus menschlicher Gier und Besitzgier verwandelten die Menschen das Erbe der Israeliten in das Privateigentum einiger weniger.

Es gibt auch eine Variante: ושכן לעולם (v.27). Hier ergänzt das Verb durch ein unbegrenztes Zeitraum לעולם, in V.29 taucht auch der gleiche Aspekt der Dauer (לאד) auf. Dies zeigt, dass „der Aspekt des dauerhaften Verbleibs in das Landthema“[14] eingeflochten wird.

3) Die Verwendung von נחלה

Das Substantiv נחלה („Besitzanteil“) kommt im AT 220 mal vor. Die Verwendung נחלה ist eine Kennzeichnung der Landnahmeübrlieferungen in der priesterschriftlichen und deuteronorniseben Theologie.[15] In Deuteronomium betont die Formel „dein Gott, dir als Erbteil gibt“(Dtn 4,21.38; 12,9; 15,4; 19, 10; 24,4; 25, 19; 26,1) die Verwirklichung der Landzusagen an die Patriarchen. Das Volk kann auch als Erbesitz, als נחלה JHWHs (Dtn 4,20; 1Sam 10,1; 2Sam 20,19; 1Kön 8,51; Jes 19,25; Jer 10,16; Jo 2,17; Mi 7,14; Ps 28,9) .[16] Eine Sonderstellung ist der Stamm Leviten als ~~die Erbetil~~ JHWH selbst, weil die Leviten kein Land erhielten (Num 18,20; Dtn 10,9;Jos 13; Ez 44,28).[17]

~~Im~~ Vers 18 wird נחלה zusammen mit dem temporalen Wort לעולם genannt. נחלה steht in Zusammenhang mit dem Landbesitz und es beschreibt das Land als

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[13] Ruiz, Eleuterio R., Das Land ist für die Armen da, 23.
[14] Bauks, „Das Land erben“ oder „die Erde in Besitz nehmen“ in Ps 36, 516.
[15] Wanke, G., Art. „ נחלה“ , Jenni, Ernst; Westermann, Claus, Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament (THAT) : zwei Bände, Gütersloher Verlagshaus Chr. Kaiser, 2004, 57.
[16] Wanke, G., Art. „ נחלה“ , THAT, 58.
[17] Wanke, G., Art. „ נחלה“ , THAT, 59.

Gabe JHWHs. Dieser Terminus impliziert, dass die Landnahme nicht Israels eigener Verdienst ist.[18] ~~Im~~ Vers 27 ~~fügt~~ „wohnen im Land“ mit einer Zeitangabe „für immer“ (לעולם) ~~hinzu~~. In den Psalmen wird das Volk auch als נחלה JHWHs bezeichnet (Ps 28,9; 33,12;74,2;78,62).[19] Der Besitz des Landes wird nicht nur eine Episode sein, sondern ~~es~~ wird ewig sein.

Landthematik und Armentheologie

In den Psalmen gibt es viele Stellen, die einen oder mehrere der hebräischen Termini für „Arm“ enthalten, z.B. אביון (Ps 12,6), ענו (Ps 10,12; 37,11), עני (Ps 12,6;14,6;37,14), דך (Ps 9,10) etc. Die klassischen Ausdrücke von „Armen“ beziehen sich: ~~zuerst~~ auf eine soziale Kategorie, die materielle Armut, Krankheit oder Leiden einbezieht; zweites auf einen moralischen Charakter, der mit der Formulierung „auf den rechten Weg gehen“ ausgedrückt wird.[20] An anderer Stelle soll Gott die Armen hören, über sie wachen und ihnen helfen und erhebe sie, füttere sie und stehe neben ihnen (Ps. 10,14,17;69,33; 107, 41; 109, 31; 113, 7; 132, 15; 146, 9). Weil die Schwachen und ~~arm~~ ~~sind~~ Gottes besonderes Anliegen, es ist besonders abscheulich anzugreifen und nutze sie aus (Ps.94, 6; 109, 16). Es ist bekannt, dass Gott ein besonderes Anliegen für die ~~Arm~~. In der Tat gibt der Gerechte den Armen frei (Ps.112, 9). Dies ist das Gegenteil von den Gottlosen, die „die Armen heiß verfolgen“ (Ps. 10, 2) und sie plündern (Ps. 12, 5) und ~~töte~~ sie sogar (Ps. 109,16). Der Schrei der Armen ertönt in den Psalmen von Anfang bis Ende. Der Psalter malt sie als Opfer der Bösen. Der Psalter endet, indem es ihre Hoffnung auf den erwarteten König bekräftigt, der kommen wird, um sie von der Gewalt zu befreien, der sie unterworfen sind (Ps. 72,12-14). Und am Ende des Psalters wird der Messias, der Sohn Davids, zu ihnen gezählt (Ps. 89). Der Psalter verbindet auch das Schicksal der Armen mit dem von Zion und Israel (Ps.102,14; 106,42). Das fünfte Buch schließlich bekräftigt ihre Befreiung (Ps. 149,4).

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[18] Hossfeld, Frank-Lothar, Zenger Erich, Die Neue Echter-Bibel Kommentar: Kommentar zum Alten Testament mit Einheitsübersetzung Die Psalmen, Psalmen: 1-50, Echter Verlag, 1993, 230.
[19] Bauks, „Das Land erben“ oder „die Erde in Besitz nehmen“ in Ps 36, 517.
[20] Bremer, Johannes, Wo Gott sich auf die Armen einläßt, 332 .

Im Psalm zieht sich die Vorstellung des Landes als Heilsgabe JHWHs an sein Volk durch[21] und wird zusammen mit der Armentheologie entfaltet. Die Überzeugung, dass Gott als Richter kommen wird, ist, wie Erich Zenger betont, die ultimative Hoffnung der Schwachen und Unterdrückten.[22] Der Richter wird sie aus der Hand der Reichen und Mächtigen retten. Dieses zentrale Thema des Psalters hat seine Wurzeln im Pentateuch. Alle Abschnitte des Gesetzes enthalten Ermahnungen und Regeln, um den Armen zu helfen (Ex. 20,10; Dtn. 5,14).

Psalm 37 handelt ~~sich~~ „ ~~um~~ einen Blick auf das Erbe Israels, um einen Blick auf das Land als Eigentum und Lebensraum eines Volks, das sich jetzt aus Besitzgier in das Privateigentum einiger weniger verwandeln wird“[23]. Psalm 37 offenbart eine deutliche Verbindung zwischen dem Nutznießer von Land und den „Armen und Bedürftigen“. Psalm 37 drückt die Ungerechtigkeit dergegenwärtigen Situation aus, in der die Bösen triumüphieren und die Gerechten ausnutzen. Psalm 37 beschreibt diese Lebenssituation der Armen und eine von dem Böse ausgehende Lebensbedrohung.

Im Psalm 37 wird עניים (v.11,insgesamt 12mal in den Psalmen) , עני (v,14, insgesamt 11mal im Psalter) und אביון (v.14, insgesamt 22mal im Psalter) verwendet. עניים sowie עני bezeichnet „die Situation der Statusminderung, der Unterdrückung und erzwungenen Abhänigkeit“[24]. Sie bezeichnen die Armen bzw. Die arme Person/Personen, und sie enthalten eine „sozial-materielle“ und eine „spirituell-religiöse“ Interpretation~~en~~.[25] אביון betont „die Bedürftigkeit des Armen und das Leiden an einem Mangel“[26].

~~Im~~ Vers 11 ist die Aussage „der Elenden (עניים) werden das Land besitzen“ eine Ergänzung zur Idee „Freude am Land“.[27] In diesem Vers wird diese armentheologische Aussage als eine exklusive Landverheißung verstehen, dass die Elenden als die Gerechten bezeichen können. Der Vers 14 ist eine Jagdmetaphorik,

[21] Hossfeld, Zenger, Psalmen 1-50(NEB), 229.
[22] Hossfeld, Zenger, Psalmen 1-50(NEB), 230.
[23] Ruiz, Eleuterio R., Das Land ist für die Armen da, 33.
[24] Berges,Ulrich; Hoppe, Rudolf, Arm und Reich.: Die Neue Echter-Bibel. Kommentar: Arm und Reich: Bd. 10, Echter, 2009, 14.
[25] Bremer, Johannes, Wo Gott sich auf die Armen einläßt, 334.
[26] Bremer, Johannes, Wo Gott sich auf die Armen einläßt, 322.
[27] Bremer, Johannes, Wo Gott sich auf die Armen einläßt, 359.

die unerwartete Aggressionen impliziert. Es geht um einen Krieg, den die Frevler gegen die Gerechten führen. Der Doppelasudruck עני אביון bezeichnet „Elenden und Armen“ Der Fokus ist allgemein, es geht um ein Schkisal der Armen, die das Land besitzen werden.[28]

Die beiden Passagen deuten ענו, עני und אביון als Synonym zu צדיק, deswegen lässt sich annehmen, dass die Gerechten in einem metaphorischen Sinn als die Armen bezeichnet werden.[29] Die Gerechten und die Bösen stellt der Psalmist nicht als feste Gruppe dar, sondern betont stattdessen, dass der Schwerpunkt auf einer persönlichen Entscheidung zwischen „Gesegneten“ und „Verfluchten“ liegt. Die Landverheißung richtet sich an die Gruppe, die in diesem Psalm als die „Gerechten“ bzw. die „Armen“ bezeichnet werden, und auf dem Weg Gottes gehen.

In Verbindung mit dem Vers 15 ist die Gegenüberstellung der רשעים und der עני/אביון charakteristisch für den Psalter (z.B. Ps 1). Eine sozial-materielle Konnotation von Armut ist weder in Bezug auf ענוים noch auf עני אביון. Sondern nach der Beschreibung in den Versen 16,19 und 25 deuten eine soziale Verarmung und Hungersnot. Im Vergleich zum Überfluss der Bösen ist es das Wenige der Gerechten besser. Diese Gegenüberstellung deutet das Interesse dieses Psalms nicht an Armut oder Armentheologie an, sondern eine Armenfrömigkeit. Die als eine Voraussetzung für den Landbesitz und die Freude am Land bzw. Die Freude an JHWH.

Land als Belohnung für die Gerechten/ Armen

Nach der Beschreibung von verschiedenen Lebenssituationen der Gerechten und Frevler taucht eine wichtige Frage auf: Wer kann das Land besitzen? Land wird hier denjenigen gegeben, die ביהוה בטח ועשה-טוב („auf JHWH vertrauen und Gutes tun“, v.3a), die יהוה קוי („auf JHWH warten“, v.9), die ענוים („elend“, v. 11), מברכיו („seine Gesegneten“, v. 22), die ועשה-טוב מרע סור, („weiche ab vom Bösen und tue Gutes“, v. 27), die צדיקים („Gerechte“, v. 29), und diejenigen, die קוה אל-יהוה ושמר

[28] Ibid.
[29] Ruiz, Eleuterio R., Das Land ist für die Armen da, 33.

דרכו („warte auf JHWH und halte dich an seinen Weg“, v. 34). Land wird also nicht ausschließlich den „Armen“ versprochen, wie teilweise angemerkt wird, vielmehr scheint es offensichtlich, dass diese zu einer „Gruppe von guten Menschen“ gehören. Sie werden שכן-ארץ אמונה ורעה („auf dem Land leben und sicheres Weideland genießen“, v. 3), יירשו („erben“, v. 9, 11, 22, 29, 34), התענגו על-רב שלום („sich an reichlichem Wohlstand erfreuen“, v. 11), und ושכן לעולם („ewig bleiben“, v. 27). JHWH wird sie mit dem Besitz des Landes belohnen.

Psalm 37 verbindet צדיק mit ירש ארץ. Der ~~Gengensatz~~ von צדק ist רשע. Psalm 37 stellt ~~das~~ Lebensweise und Schicksal der zwei Gruppen dar, solche Beschreibungen zeigt auch das Verhältniss~~es~~ zum Gott. Deswegen wird צדיק und רשע bezeichnen Parteien in einem Rechtsstreit. Das Urteil ist durch die persönliche Entscheidung, weil Gott schon seine Gerechtigkeit durch seinen Bund zeigt. Gott ist der Ursprung und Garant aller Gerechtigkeit. Die richtige und gerechte Lebensweise bedeutet als ein Mitglied des Bundesgemeinschaft und gemäß Gottes Bund zu leben.[30]

ירש ארץ wird klar nicht als ganz Israeliten zugesagt, weil es ~~gibt~~ auch böse Meschen und gute Menschen. Ps 37 schränkt die Landverheißung auf die Gerechten (die Armen) ein. Die Gerechten, die Armen und die Unterdrückten im Land werden sich des Landbesitzes erfreuen. Der Ausdruck klingt die weisheitliche und auch deuteronomistische Traditionen an.[31] Die Gerechten soll „in JHWH seine Wohne finden“, dann findet sie seine Wohne „in der Fülle des Friedens“ (v.4,11). Die Gerechten sind die, die auf JHWH hoffen (יהוה וקוי v.9), die sanftmütig sind (וענוים v.11), die von JHWH gesegneten (מברכיו v.22), die Gerechten (צדיקם v.29), die auf den Herrn harren und seinen Weg einhalten (ושמר יהוה אל קוה v.34). Im Kontext des Psalms 37 werden die Gerechten das Land besitzen, außerdem wird eine Hoffnung auf eine neue Landverteilung ausgedrückt.[32]

Psalm 37 konzentriert sich nicht auf das Land selbst, vielmehr beziehen sich alle auf das Land und/oder das Erbe, den Besitz und das Leben auf dem Land als eine Art „Belohnung“. Das Erbe ist dann eine Belohnung für diejenigen, die zu dieser

[30] Johnson, B., „צדק“, ThWAT, 920.
[31] Lohfink, Norbert, Art „ירש“, ThWAT, 983.
[32] Hossfeld, Zenger, Psalmen 1-50 (NEB), 235.

Gruppe gehören. Dieser Psalm bezieht sich auf eine bestimmte Auffassung des Landes, und sie alle haben als Weisheits-Psalmen einen didaktischen Charakter.[33] Darüber hinaus konzentriert sich auf das Erbe und den Besitz von Land als Belohnung für eine gute und rechtschaffene Lebensweise.

Der Psalm stellt somit den Besitz des Landes als von der richtigen Ethik abhängig dar.[34] Psalm 37 hat viele Berührungspunkte mit der Weisheitsliteratur. In Psalm 37 wird die These aufgestellt, dass das richtige Leben der entscheidende Faktor für den Besitz des Landes ist. Der Psalmist stellt den Besitz von Land entweder als Bedrohung oder als Möglichkeit dar: Die Gerechten, die innerhalb der Gemeinschaft moralisch handeln, erhalten Land als Segen von JHWH, während diejenigen, die störend handeln, exkommuniziert werden. Interessanterweise ist jede Verwendung von כרת passiv (niphal), während ירש ein aktives Verb ist; Dies schafft das Gefühl, dass Bosheit zu Landverlust führt, während Landerwerb ein positives, aktives Ergebnis der Treue ist.[35]

אחרית in den Versen 37 und 38 ~~lässt~~ sich entweder als Zukunft oder als Nachwelt übersetzen.[36] Es kann sich entweder auf die Lebensperspektiven einer Person oder auf das Vermächtnis von Kindern beziehen, die man hinter sich lässt. Auf diese beiden Weisen wird ~~das~~ richtige Lebensweise zum Segen führen. Die Bösen werden vernichtet und werden ohne Zukunft und Nachkommenschaft bleiben.[37] Der Psalm schließt mit der Bekräftigung, dass die Gerechten letztlich siegreich sein werden. JHWH wird ihnen helfen und sie erlösen, JHWH ist ihre Zuflucht und sie können in ihm Schutz finden (v.40).

Die Aufforderungen, auf JHWH zu vertrauen, spielen eine große Rolle. „Das Land in Besitz nehmen“ wird als Konsequenz für die Gläubigen in Aussicht gestellt. Hier verbindet die Landthematik mit einem theologisch-praktischen Argument: „Tue Gutes und es geht dir gut“.[38] Psalm 37 artikuliert eine äußerst enge Beziehung

[33] Hossfeld, Zenger, Psalmen 1-50 (NEB), 237.
[34] Ruiz, Eleuterio R., Das Land ist für die Armen da,53.
[35] Brueggemann, The Psalms and the life of faith, 238.
[36] Hossfeld, Zenger, Psalmen 1-50, (NEB), 238.
[37] Hossfeld, Zenger, Psalmen 1-50, (NEB), 238.
[38] Gerstenberger, Erhard S., Björn Gerstenberger (Übersetzer), Arbeitsbuch Psalmen, W. Kohlhammer GmbH, 2015, 101. „Tue Gutes und es geht dir gut“ kommt meisten aus dem Weisheitsliteratur.

zwischen Tat und Konsequenz. Diese Beziehung ist auch sehr vorhersehbar, da die gerechten Taten der Gläubigen zum Erfolg führen werden, während die bösen Taten der Bösen abgeschnitten werden.

Das Land als Geschenk JHWHs

Eine auffällige Diskussion des Psalms ist das Erben oder die Vernichtung des Lands: Das Land dient als Metapher für den göttlichen Segen und in späteren Zusammenhängen eventuell auch als Symbol für das ewige Leben.[39] Der Fokus des Psalms liegt auf dem Besitz des Landes und kann als Versprechen und als Garantie des Landbesitzes für die Bevölkerungsgruppe, die kein Mittel hat, um das Land zu erwerben, interpretiert werden.[40] Der Psalm verkündet, dass die Gottlosen abgeschnitten werden und die Gerechten und Sanften das Land in Besitz nehmen werden. Die Gerechten werden das Land erben (ירשו־ארץ Verse 9, 11, 22, 29 und 34 לרשת־ארץ), immer bewohnen (Vers 27) und Erlösung und Befreiung erhalten (v. 39-40).

Das Land ist Gottes Bundesgeschenk als Ort einer lebendigen und blühenden Existenz, in diesem Fall wird die Aufmerksamkeit auf das Ungleichgewicht im Zugang der Menschen zu ihren Vorteilen gelenkt.[41] Dazu gehört insbesondere die Bekräftigung der Notwendigkeit, auf JHWH zu vertrauen und sich nicht um die Bösen zu sorgen. Sowohl die Aktivität, Gutes zu tun, als auch die Haltung des hoffnungsvollen Vertrauens sind Eigenschaften, die bestimmten, ob das Land besitzen kann oder nicht.

Die Israeliten verstehen das Land als Geschenk JHWHs. Dieser Ausdruck wird in den Texten der deuteronomistischen Traditionm ausbreiten. Diese Formulierung wird als Gabe Gottes verstehen, Gott schenkt das Land, damit erbocrn das Volk das Land.[42] Die Erzählung von der anfänglichen Wanderung Abrams (Gen. 12,1-9) und dem anschließenden Eintritt seiner Nachkommen in das Land Kanaan (Dtn. 1, 6-8)

[39] Kraus, Hans-J., Psalmen 1-49 (BK), 440.
[40] Gerstenberger, Erhard S., Arbeitsbuch Psalmen, W. Kohlhammer GmbH, 2015,101.
[41] Craigie, Psalmen 1-50 (WBC), 300.
[42] Ruiz, Eleuterio R., Das Land ist für die Armen da, 26.

bestätigt diese Besitznahme des verheißenes Landes. Bestimmte Texte beschreiben, dass die Israeliten das Land ewig besitzen werden (Gen. 17,8; Dtn. 4, 40; 2 Sam. 7, 10; Am 9,15), während andere Texte eine Verbindung zum Bund herstellen, den die Israeliten mit JHWH geschlossen haben. (Dtn. 4, 25-27, 11, 13-17, Jer. 7, 1-15; Am. 6,1-8).[43] Im Allgemeinen, blickt die Texte von Deuteronomium bis Richter das Volk als Ganzes; das Land ist ein Geschenk Gottes an das Volk. Das ganz Volk besitzt es, und wenn sie untreu sind, werden sie es vorübergehend verlieren. Wegen der Erfahung des Landverlusts werden in späteren Text das Thema des Landbesitzes sprachlich verändert, gelichviel im Inneren des Volks wie die betonte Aussage im Psalm 37: nur die Gerechten werden das Land besitzen, nicht die Frevler.

Die Sicht auf das Land als Geschenk Gottes zeigt, dass die Israeliten völlig von JHWH abhängig sind. Der Besitz des Landes war nicht das Ergebnis ihrer eigenen militärischen Fähigkeiten oder ihrer zahlenmäßigen Überlegenheit; Israel wurde tatsächlich als eine der geringsten Nationen angesehen (vgl. Dtn. 7, 7-8; 8, 17-18; 9, 5)[44]. Darüber hinaus bedeutete die Gabe des Landes auch, dass JHWH ein verlässlicher Gott ist. Jede Ernte erinnerte Israel speziell an diese Wahrheit. Sie genossen die Produkte des Landes, ein Land, das nicht immer in ihrem Besitz gewesen ist, sondern ihnen von einem verlässlichen Gott gegeben wurde (Dtn. 26, 5-10).[45] Es ist die Bezogenheit auf die Gebote, die die Israeliten achten sollen, damit sie in das schöne verheißene Land kommen werden bzw. damit sie lange in dem Land leben dürfen, das JHWH ihnen geben wird. Dieses Schema deutet auf eine Bedingung für den Empfang und den Besitz des Landes hin.[46]

Die Gottesbeziehung als Zentrum des Lebens

Die Besonderheit des Psalms 37 ist seine Gattung. Ps 37 ist ein Lehrpsalm, der einen tiefen theologischen Sinn trägt und hat eine vertrauensbildende Funktion. Der

[43] Walter, Zimmerli, Grundriß der alttestamentlichen Theologie, 7. Auflage, Stuggart, Kihlhammer, 1999, 54.
[44] Ruiz, Eleuterio R., Das Land ist für die Armen da,100.
[45] Zimmerli, Grundriß der alttestamentlichen Theologie,55.
[46] Von Rad, Gerhard, Verheißenes Land und JHWHs Land im Hexateuch, Gerhard, Verheißenes Land und JHWHs Land im Hexateuch, Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins (1878-1945), Bd. 66, H. 2 (1943), pp. 191-204, Deutscher Verein zur Erforschung Palästinas, 192. 202.

Psalm steht fest in der Tradition der Weisheit und sollte als Lehrpsalm interpretiert werden.[47] Es enthält ein Beispiel des Lehrplans, der in den moralischen und religiösen Bildungssystemen des alten Israel verwendet wurde. Der Psalm gibt einen klaren Einblick in die erzieherische Rolle und Verantwortung der Weisheitslehrer, sie sind Erzieher, die eine Verantwortung gegenüber den gegenwärtigen und zukünftigen Generationen zu erfüllen hatten.[48]

Der Psalmist betrachtet den Lehrer als einen Sprecher der Offenbarung. Der Lehrer bezieht sich nicht auf eine allgemeine Weisheit, sondern verkörpert die Aussage eine seiner Verkündigung und fördert auf diese Weise deren Glaubwürdigkeit, indem er einfach abwartet.[49] Dieser Aspekt spielt auch in den folgenden Versen eine Rolle, in V.18 taucht z.B. ein Wortfeld der Zeit auf: „ימי (Tage)“, “לעולם (auf ewig)“, „עת (Zeit)“. Solche Ausdrücke betrachten die gegenwärtige Situation als einen Teil des Prozesses, der zu einem sicheren Ende geführt wird.[50]Darauf weist in Ps 37 ein anderes Verb ענג („freuen“) mit der Temporalangabe לעד („immer“, z.B. v.29 „für immer wohnen“) hin.[51] Deswegen wird der Besitz des Landes als ein dauerhafter verstanden. Mit dem Ausdruck ירש ארץ wird auch die Lebensfreude und das Heil verheißenen Land ausgedrückt.[52] Der Psalmist hat seine eigne Architektur, z.B. die häufige Begriffe צדיק, רשע, ארץ und auch die ~~vielfalte~~ Art der Verbformen.

Lohfink spricht das Land von einer eschatologischen Vision, JHWH handelt die Zeit, ~~so dass~~ die Bösen austreten und die Gerechten/ Armen das Land besitzen werden.[53] Herman Gunkel wird der Psalm als eine Sammlung von zeitlosen sprichwörter angesehen.[54] Dieser weisheitliche Psalm fordert die Leser aus jeder Generation auf~~, dass sie an~~ JHWH ~~vertrauen~~. Die Information des Psalm 37 ist eine Aufforderung, die ohne Zeitbeschränkung ist, deswegen ist das Land ~~als~~ ein zukünftige~~s~~ (oder zeitlose~~s~~) Gabe/ Heil des JHWHs. Aber es überträgt die Hoffnung

[47] Craigie, Psalmen 1-50 (WBC), 296.
[48] Craigie, Psalmen 1-50 (WBC), 300.
[49] Ruiz, Eleuterio R., Das Land ist für die Armen da, 31.
[50] Ruiz, Eleuterio R., Das Land ist für die Armen da, 35.
[51] Liess, Kathrin, Art. „Die auf JHWH hoffen, werden das Land besitzen“ (Psalm 37,9) in JBTh, Band 23 Heiliges Land, Neukirchener Verlag, 2009, 61.
[52] Ruiz, Eleuterio R., Das Land ist für die Armen da, 27.
[53] Lohfink, Norbert, Die Bedeutungen von hebr. jrš qal und hif, 25.
[54] Gunkel, Hermann, Die Psalmen, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 5.Auflage, 1968,173.

auf eine Zukunft, in der diese Situation sich ändern wird.

Frank-Lothar Hossfeld spricht den Landbesitz nicht als ein tatsächlicher Besitz, sondern als ein Metaphor, der über eine Lebesqualität mit Freiden und Wohlstand spricht.[55] ~~Nach ihm~~ versteht den Landbesitz als eine ~~spritualiserend~~ Diemension. Deswegen meint er ירש ארץ eigentlich nicht einem konkreten Landbesitz, sondern eine Art ~~für~~ „Heil“. Obwohl ירש ארץ ein zukunftige Aussage ist, bedeutet es nicht ein unwirklicher Landbesitz. Der Fokus dieses Psalms ist nicht ~~an dem~~ Land, stattdessen benutzen er den Landbesitz, um das Volk davon zu überzeugen, eine richtige Beziehung zu Gott zu haben.

Der Inhalt von Psalm 37 ~~sind die~~ Prinzipien ~~darüber~~, wie man ein gottesfürchtiges Leben führt und einen breiteren Kontext setzt, um den scheinbaren Erfolg und Wohlstand derer zu verstehen, die ein rigtiges Leben führten. Aber die Unterweisung ist im Wesentlichen praktisch, was das Leben betrifft, sie geht in keinem theoretischen Sinne auf die größeren Fragen von Gerechtigkeit und Ungerechtigkeit ein. ~~-~~Vielmehr wird Israeliten als Heilsgabe JHWHs, und sie wird auf ihr Verhalten geprüft. Eine Wortverbindung bezieht den Ausdruck in v. 11 auf v.4a: על־יהוה והתענג („erfreuen sie sich an JHWH“). Die Freude am Leben im Land (v. 11) korreliert mit der Freude an JHWH (v. 4), damit verbunden ist der Besitz des Landes mit der Beziehung zu JHWH.

„Es ist die Absicht des Dichters, den Adressaten zu einer persönliche Beziehung mit Gott zu bringen, denn er ist überzeugt, dass eine geordnete Beziehung zu Gott die einzige treibende Kraft für die Verwirklichung und Erhaltung des Lebens auf dieser Erde ist.“[56] Der Schwerpunkt dieses Psalms liegt nicht auf der an die Gerechten gerichteten Landverheißung, sondern auf der Gültigkeit der Gottesbeziehung, sodass „das Zeugnis vom lebendigen Eingreifen JHWHs in das Leben der Menschen“[57] im Zentrum des Psalms steht.

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[55] Hossfeld, Frank-Lothar, Art. „Die Metaphorisierung der Beziehung Israels zum Land im Frühjudentum und im Christentum“, Hahn, Ferdinand ; Jorissen, Hans; Neuwirth, Angelika， Zion - Ort der Begegnung. Festschrift für Laurentius Klein zur Vollendung des 65. Lebensjahres, 1993,24-26.

[56] Tiquillahuanca, Naciso Crisanto, Die Armen werden das Land besitzen: eine exegetische Studie zu Psalm 37, LIT Verlag Münster, 2008,321.

[57] Kraus, Hans-J., Psalmen 1-49 (BK), 444.

Zusammenfassung

Ps 37 stellt eine sehr enge Verbindung zwischen Tat und Konsequenz her: Gute Taten werden belohnt, ~~Böses~~ bestraft. Der Dichter geht es um eine innige Beziehung zu Gott um ein bewusste soziale Verantwortung und die Hoffnung auf Gottes Heil. Das Landbesitzen handelt sich nicht um ein eigenes Stück Land zu haben, sonder um ein gemeinschaftliche Besitz. Das heißt ein neues Volk, das auf JHWH vertrauen und warten. ~~Darauf~~ ist die Voraussetzung des Landbesitz~~es~~ nicht eine persönlische Entscheidung, sondern eine Lebensentscheidung. In der Weisheitsliterature weist das Wortfeld der Zeit das Landbesitzen ein dauerhafter Prozess hin. Das Land ist ein Ort oder ein Lebensraum für die Gemeinschaft, die eine enge Beziehung zu Gott habe. Ps 37 steht ein altes Ideal, das das Land Israels als Erbteil bedeut, dass das Volk Güter des Landes und JHWHs Heil genießen.

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Projekt Summary

The land as the theme of the Psalms

The land is the scene narrated in the Old Testament and the axis of the story. It is not only a space of field but also a place to listen to God's words, a space for making a covenant. The connection between God, people, and land is characteristic of the Old Testament: God is the God of the people and of the land, the land belongs to God and the land is a gift from God to the people, the people are God's people and the people dwell in the land. The history of the people of Israel connects it with the land of Israel: the land is promised to the arch-fathers; the goal of the exodus from Egypt is the entry into the Promised Land; YHWH gives his land to the Israelites; the Israelites live in this land according to the laws of YHWH; they are led into exile for not following these laws; a part of the people returns from exile to this land.

As promised by God, the land is a place for people to keep, even a land flowing with milk and honey. It is a place for people to celebrate and enjoy. However, the abundance brought about by the resources of the land has also become a danger and temptation. The psalms used a unique style to record the different dimensions of the Israelis' knowledge of the land. The land becomes the road to fellowship with God. The land theme always aims at the importance of contemporary time; the Land is a place of community with JHWH. In my dissertation I will deal with those issues: How does the theme of land appear in various psalms (genres)? How is the transformation of the concept of land in Psalms? How does the theme of land contribute to the theology of the Psalms?

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OTSEM 2021 Abstract

„Some Considerations on the Connections between the Cult in Cyprus and Philistia"

During the 12th century, the Southern Levant likely witnessed an influx of people from areas to the West of it, but the origin of the migrants is intensely debated. During the Early Iron Age (ca. 1200-1000 BCE), these western people mixed with locals became the ancestors of the people later known as the Philistines. Some of the origins of the culture (and cult) of these people can be tentatively traced back to Cyprus.

This paper deals specifically with material from Philistia that has a Cypriot connection and some possible cultic associations. This material includes incised bovine scapulae, wheeled bronze stands, iron knives with bronze rivets and hearths. To a varying degree, these items have been connected to both Cyprus and some cultic contexts, be they public or domestic in nature. Several of these objects also appears in Philistia in a more advanced stage of the Iron I period, showing a potential continuity of links between the regions. Some of the similarities between the items and installations of Cyprus and Philistia can thus inform us about the possible transmission of cultic aspects. The migrants undoubtedly brought religious ideas with them and If one can attest to the Cypriot roots of the aforementioned items, these could show the migration of some Cypriot people to Levant.

However, this reconstruction needs to be handled with caution and the aforementioned archaeological material discussed more critically than often done by researchers. That is why I consider all categories of material in my article separately and in the light of three questions: is there a link to Cyprus, is it indicative of the migration and is it connected to cult or are other interpretations more likely?

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Preface: Some considerations on the connections between the cult in Cyprus and Philistia

Dear all,

below is my paper for the OTSEM 2021 meeting on the possible cultic connections between Philistia and Cyprus. In the discussion, I would like to concentrate on the following questions amongst others:

What kind of archaeological material could be used to indicate migration from one place to another?

Is the transfer of cultic customs enough to claim migration?

What makes a location or an item cultic?

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Some considerations on the connections between the cult in Cyprus and Philistia

The Early Iron Age period (ca. 1200-1000 BCE) in the Eastern Mediterranean, which followed the collapse of Late Bronze Age systems (large empires, rich interconnected small states, extensive interregional trade), was characterized by relatively modest political entities and trade connections. Areas like Phoenicia or Egypt seem to have suffered less but in other areas stable political entities and intense long-distance trade only started to reappear towards the end of the Early Iron Age.[1] My paper focuses on two regions, which experienced transformations - Cyprus and Philistia in the Southern Levant - and on links between the two areas.[2] Of the varied cultural, economic and demographic interactions, I am focusing on the possible cultic connections.

The potential links indicated by (potentially) cultic objects, their find-contexts and usage help to answer another important question about Early Iron Age Philistia: was there a notable migration and settlement of people from Cyprus in the region? Links in the religious sphere are somewhat more indicative in that regard than for example similarities in architecture, which may relate to technological advantages, or in commonly traded luxury items. This is not to deny that religious ideas or rituals also cross group (e.g. ethnic) boundaries but this tends to require intensive contact and awareness of another culture (its material, ritual and the mental world behind it).[3]

I will investigate these contacts through four types of items and installations – incised bovine scapulae, bimetallic knives, wheeled cult-stands and hearths – which other researchers have previously pointed to as (possibly) Cypriot.[4] However, terminology and previous research needs to be considered before the analysis

[1] Egypt's XX dynasty continued until the 11th century and excavated Phoenician cities do not seem to be destroyed or suffered seriously in the beginning of the 12th century as many other areas were (Bikai 1992: 133).

[2] By Philistia, I mean the territory of settlements of Ekron, Gath, Ashdod and Ashkelon and possibly Gaza. The name, as used here, is anachronistic because it originates from Old Testament narratives, which are written in a period considerably later than the Early Iron Age. But the name is useful as, in general, it encompasses the area I am discussing based on archaeological data and where new types of material showing foreign contacts and probably settlement was found.

[3] Extended contact explains, for example, how Egyptian Hathor imagery got appropriated by the Canaanites to depict their deities (Koch 2019: 169), while Levantine gods like Baal became to be worshipped by the Egyptians (Hermann 1999: 133).

[4] See references below for researchers who have proposed Cypriot origin for types of artefacts.

The terminology

The Philistines known from the Old Testament have commonly been connected to people who arrived into the Southern Levant in the 12th century.[5] The excavations of Philistia's settlements have revealed material of foreign origin, which, supposedly, is a result of migration to the area. However, it is also clear from continuity in ceramics, for example, that a considerable local population continued to live in the area.[6] Thus, the group referred to in the Old Testament as the Philistines must have had both immigrant and local Canaanite ancestors. That is why instead of using the name "Philistine" in this paper, I will refer to the new Iron Age settlers as "western migrants".[7]

The term "cultic" used in this paper also needs some clarification. In the paper I will see it as relating to the archaeological material and possible religious rituals apparent from artefacts. All the related terms "cultic", "religion" and "ritual" remain debated.[8] I use Melford Spiro's definition of "religion" as relating to people's interaction with superhuman beings and beliefs in the ability of these beings to influence people's lives and "ritual" as activities related to religion.[9] In the absence of texts and with limited iconography to explain the meaning of objects and places, I will only focus on archaeologically visible religion- and ritual-related material, to which I then refer to as "cultic", the term also commonly used in archaeology.[10] The similarities in cultic contexts and material can show deeper, perhaps religious connections.

The definition of material as "cultic" remains to be discussed.[11] There is little disagreement in the case of certain buildings over their cultic nature. Large temples of Kition (Cyprus) are given this description because they have monumental construction, centrally-placed hearths and tables ("altars"), iconographic material and related findings.[12] However, finding common threads even between commonly acknowledged sanctuaries is difficult. For example, the "Philistine" sanctuary in Tell Qasile is much smaller than Kition ones, without a hearth and with different sort of "cultic artefacts".[13] What terms a buildings as cultic remains open. Similar problems relate to "cultic

[5] Cline, O'Connor 2003: 116.
[6] Yasur-Landau 2010: 228-264, 294-295.
[7] The adjective "western" is used because, although there are disagreements over their regions of origin, most theories place them in areas to the west of Levant (Aegean, Cyprus, Anatolia).
[8] See about the term "religion", "cult" and related terminology in Christensen 2009; D'Agata 2009; Webb 1999: 1-2, 8-9.
[9] From discussion of terms in Webb 1999: 1.
[10] Absence of texts remains a common problem in analyzing deeper religious ideas (Christensen 2009: 13; Webb 1999: 2).
[11] See for example Steiner 2019.
[12] Demas 1985: 24-164.
[13] Mazar 1980: 13-49, 78-121; Mazar 2000: 215-218. Possible hearth was found in the associated yard though (Aja 2009: 343; Mazar 1980: 41).

artefacts" as this name is often given to material based on the context, its uniqueness or occasionally, because it is not known what the object was used for.[14]

The migration to Philistia

Though the western migrants and "Philistines" are often connected to the Sea Peoples (especially the "Peleset") who battled with Egyptians in the late 13th and early 12th century, I will not delve into the Egyptian sources.[15] This is because the link between the archaeologically attested migration and texts of the Sea Peoples is part of a substantial unresolved debate and the importance of these texts to the problem at hand is limited.[16] Instead, I will focus on theories relating to archaeology of Philistia's settlements. The theory of the Philistine Aegean origin was proposed by Trude and Moshe Dothan based on these excavations. The original theory saw two waves of settlement in the Early Iron Age Philistia based on two types of Aegean-style ceramics: the so-called "monochrome" and "bichrome" pottery.[17] However, it is now commonly accepted that the latter was a development of the former and the prevalent theory nowadays only proposes one episode of settlement to Philistia from the Aegean (Greek) area in the beginning of the 12th century.[18] The argument is based not only on pottery, but on hearths (a new feature in the Iron Age Southern Levant), other Aegean-style material (loom-weights) and changes in diet.[19] However, other theories for the origin of the

[14] D'Agata 2009: 6; Zevit 2001: 82. For example when Ben-Shlomo (2019: 17) claims that "knobbed stands" may have been cultic because of they are "rare and peculiar items".
[15] Cline O'Connor 2003; Dothan 2000: 145.
[16] The link is based mostly on the proposed connection between the names "Philistine" and "Peleset" (Machinist 2000: 53-53), the fact that central Philistine settlements overlap largely with the locations the western peoples settled and proposed violent settlement processes and the Sea Peoples' attacks (Dothan 2000: 145, 147). However, the Egyptian "Sea Peoples" texts themselves and their analysis have not brought about any conclusive ideas about "countries of origin" and thus are unhelpful, even if "Sea Peoples" are related to the migration to Philistia in the Early Iron Age.
[17] Finkelstein 2000: 162.
[18] Finkelstein 2000: 163. There is a debate over whether the archaeological "western material" should be dated to the early part of the 12th century (Middle or Conventional chronology) or towards the center/end of the century ("Low chronology") (Finkelstein, Piasetzky, 2007: 75; Grabbe 2014; Lehmann 2008: 145–148.). In here I am using the former for absolute dates and dating of periods. For example, Iron I period is dated to 12th and 11th centuries like in Ben-Shlomo 2010: 22. This seems to fit better with the dating of ceramics on Cyprus, which in turn has the backing of radiocarbon dating (Sherratt 2006: 361, 364-368), but even the Low chronology does not change the conclusions of this paper considerably. The only important result of using the other chronology here would be the dating of Philistine material up to 50 years later, but given that in the analysis below even the Conventional chronology places many of the developments on Cyprus in an earlier time than in Philistia, then it does not influence for example the question of whether certain material is attested earlier in Cyprus or in Philistia.
[19] Maeir, Hitchcock 2011: 46; Yasur-Landau 2010: 234-238, 267-268, 295-297.

western-type material in Philistia have been proposed, due to the differing interpretations of the archaeological finds (and the Egyptian "Sea Peoples" texts):[20]

1) Origin in Greece remains a popular theory. In addition to mainland Greece other areas of the Aegean area are included. For example, Assaf Yasur-Landau proposes that the western migrants originated from the general Aegean Sea region.[21]
2) While some see Cyprus as a stopover in this migration, Ann Killebrew has proposed that the western migrants originated from Cyprus and Southern Anatolia based on pottery analysis.[22]
3) Susan Sherratt proposes that local Canaanites took over foreign traits through trade contacts and the Levantine production of western-style pottery is a result of changes in economic systems rather than migration.[23]
4) Aren Maeir, Louise Hitchcock and others propose that western settlers in Philistia (and the "Sea Peoples") represent a mix of people of different origins with traces of Aegean, Cretan, Cypriot and Anatolian cultures among the Philistine culture.[24]
5) Elizabeth Ben-Dor Evian proposes that the Egyptians fought the "Sea Peoples" in Syria and at least some of the new settlers in Levant came from that region.[25]

My interest is contacts between Cyprus and Philistia and I concentrate on specific items proposed to have come from Cyprus, although I agree that at least some western settlers are from the Aegean area.[26] There are six categories of proposed "Cypriot" items. Amihai Mazar and Trude Dothan have singled out bimetallic knives, wheeled cult-stands and incised scapulae.[27] Killebrew has connected the development of pottery in Philistia to Cyprus and Philistine writings have been linked to the island.[28] Maeir and Hitchcock have noted similarities between some hearths in Philistia and

[20] As noted above, part of the inhabitants of Early Iron Age Philistia (probably the majority) were local Canaanites (Yasur-Landau 2010: 294-295).
[21] Yasur-Landau 2010.
[22] Killebrew 2000: 243. The similarity between much of the Cypriot material and the Aegean is behind the theory in some part. The island's culture had always allocated foreign influences, including the Aegean ones (like in the case of ceramics) (Knapp, Voskos 2008).
[23] See about it for example in Sherratt 1998.
[24] Hitchcock, Maeir 2014; Hitchcock, Maeir 2016: 149; Maeir, Hitchcock, Kolska Horwitz 2013: 25-26.
[25] Ben Dor Evian 2017: 271-278.
[26] The Cyprus as a place of origin of all western settlers does not explain changes in diet (increased consumption of pork), while the Aegean area exhibits similar diet (Yasur-Landau 2010: 295-299).
[27] Dothan 2002: 4, 20; Mazar 2000: 227.
[28] Killebrew 2000: 243. While it has been implied that Cypriot writing influenced the Philistine one (Maeir, Hitchcock, Kolska Horwitz 2013: 10-11), convincing parallels (identical writings) are yet to be found (Davis 2011: 61-62).

Cyprus.[29] I concentrate on the incised scapulae, wheeled cult-stands, bimetallic knives and hearths as these have either been related to cult or at least could have had cultic uses.

The Philistine religion

There has been extensive discussion about the "Philistine religion", especially the "imported" aspects. While some of the research focuses on the analysis of archaeological data, a substantial part of it is based on the Old Testament narratives, the use of which to describe Early Iron Age religion is open to doubt.[30] Little is known about cult in Philistia in the absence of texts. Two locations seem more likely to be (public) cultic areas. Tell Qasile has three subsequent constructions (latest with three small rooms) identified as temples inside a walled courtyard. Finds from the site include numerous unique items, figurines, apparent libation vessels and stands.[31] While Tell Qasile temple is inside a town, Nahal Patish is a small rural structure with numerous unique items (like stands).[32] However, even though both are probably cultic structures, they are from the end of 12th century at the earliest: more than half a century after the first appearance of the western migrants.[33] By this time, western influences (like in pottery) had started to fade and material with clear foreign influences is scarce in Tell Qasile.[34] Two proposed sanctuaries in Gath are unpublished and belong to the end of Iron I at best.[35]

In other cases, the existence of a cultic location is more debatable. A monumental building 350 in Ekron has been proposed to have been a temple because of its size and finds from two siderooms (two features identified as baetyls and some bronze items).[36] However, Laura Mazow proposes that it is instead an elite building based on architecture and the nature of the finds.[37] At best it seems that the siderooms may have had a (domestic) cultic nature. Structures are often claimed to have a cultic function because of the presence of a certain kind of object, installation (like a hearth or a bathtub)

[29] Hitchcock, Maeir 2014: 58-59. They do not suggest that hearths in general have come from Cyprus (they also note for examples similarities between Philistine and Cretan hearths) (Maeir, Hitchcock 2011). As noted above they see the new settlers as a mix of people from different regions (Hitchcock, Maeir 2014).
[30] See Machinist 2000 for the Philistines in the Old Testament.
[31] Mazar 1980: 13-49, 78-121.
[32] Ben-Shlomo 2019: 6; Nahshoni, Ziffer 2009.
[33] Tell Qasile is dated to the late 12th century at the earliest (Mazar 1980: 10) and Nahal Patish to late 11th- 10th centuries (Nahshoni, Ziffer 2009: 543).
[34] Mazar 1980: 119; Mazar 1985: 104; Yasur-Landau 2010: 171.
[35] Ben-Shlomo 2019: 6.
[36] Dothan 2003: 194; Gitin, Garfinkel, Dothan 2016: 27-31.
[37] She argues this based on for example continuity in the architecture from earlier strata, which she sees as the elite's attempt to emphasize inherited power (Mazow 2014: 139-143). She has also compared architecture, features and luxurious finds to elite and other cultic buildings (e.g. the Tell Qasile temple) and concludes that elite residences offer better parallels to Building 350 (Mazow 2005: 293-394).

or architectural feature (apsidal part of a room in Ashdod).[38] Similarly, some objects get labeled cultic even though their context or meaning remains unknown. Philistia's female figurines are interpreted as goddesses, although it is not clear who is depicted, and are commonly seen as (domestic) cult items.[39]

Besides the western influence, Philistine religion was tied to the Canaanite religion, because large part of the Philistia's population was of local origin. Foreign elements became less distinct during the Early Iron Age.[40] For example, many Tell Qasile items seem to be connected to Levantine culture and the late stage of Philistine culture, possibly echoed in the Old Testament, is largely indistinguishable from Canaanite one.[41] In addition, either through migration or other contacts, the culture (and cult) of Philistia remained open to influences from Egypt (for example Amun seals continued to be used).[42]

Incised bovine scapulae

The first items I will analyze in regards to contacts between Cyprus and Philistia are incised bovine scapulae.[43] These are the shoulder bones of bovines found separately (not in conjunction with other parts of the skeleton) that have parallel notches incised onto their edges.[44] This type of object has a long history in the Eastern Mediterranean and all scapulae from different periods (from Neolithic to Classical antiquity) and regions are unlikely to be related, especially as crafting bones is a common activity throughout human history and notching bones is a relatively basic process.[45] However, the scapulae from the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age form a closer group (in temporal and geographic sense). The group consists of 56 incised bones and 4 subgroups, where the number of incised scapulae is either unclear or it is unclear, if the pieces came from the same broken scapula.[46]

[38] For example, room 16 in Ekron is labeled "cultic" because it contains a hearth and a bathtub (Gitin, Meehl, Dothan 2006: 34-35) and seemingly also Building 353 for the same reason (Gitin, Meehl, Dothan 2006: 35). The apsidal part of Building 5233 in Ashdod has been proposed to have been a part of a cultic location (Mazow 2005: 325), even though there are no other supporting finds from the area (Russell 2009: 5).
[39] Press 2012: 16, 21, The figurines have been found mostly in domestic contexts (Ben-Shlomo 2019: 11-14).
[40] Hitchcock, Maeir 2013: 44-45; Stone 1995: 7.
[41] About Tell Qasile items and discussion about their origin see Mazar 1980: 78-121 and Mazar 2000: 223-227. About the Philistines in the Old Testament see the article by Machinist (2000). Besides the Old Testament being later than the settlement processes, many characteristics of Philistines from the Old Testament (like not being circumcised) (Machinist 2000: 68) cannot be discussed based on archaeological data.
[42] Ben-Dor Evian 2017b: 52-53.
[43] Noted to be of Cypriot origin (Mazar 2000: 227, Zukerman et al. 2012: 520).
[44] The reports do not typically specify whether these come from bulls or cows.
[45] See the database in Reese 2002.
[46] The count is based on the database I have created for my PhD dissertation on the basis of Reese 2002, but with additions, corrections and modifications.

It is difficult to say which are earliest, as some are vaguely dated (e.g. the „Late Bronze Age"), but besides being common on Cyprus (up to the Cypro-Classical period), the scapulae have been found in the Southern Levant (including Philistia), Syria (Ugarit, Nuzi) and Sinai (Tell el-Borg).[47]

Cyprus in the most common context, with 32 single scapulae and 3 additional groups of scapulae. They are generally found in relatively definite cult locations. Several come from different locations in the Kition temple area and others from siderooms of a sanctuary complex in Myrtou-Pigadhes (along with unincised scapulae).[48] Most scapulae (at least 20 incised scapulae in addition to unincised ones) come from Enkomi, mainly from the Ingot God sanctuary (named after a statue found in one of its rooms).[49] The items were discovered in the main hall near and on benches and a niche in the northern part of the main room.[50] The finds there were rich, because the sanctuary was abandoned without a major cleaning operation and scapulae were found along with numerous bull skulls, ceramics, a double hearth, possible slaughtering blocks and numerous figurines.[51] Whether other scapulae on the island were related to cult is difficult to say as the finds from Stylli and Palaepaphos-Teratshoudhia are unprovenanced or roughly dated.[52] The earliest scapulae may come from the late 13th or early 12th century.[53] Only the finds from Ugarit, which was destroyed in the early 12th century, can be as early or earlier as the ones from Cyprus and the scapulae could be there due to intense trade between the areas.[54]

The incised bovine scapulae from Philistia are clearly later, coming from the 11th century strata.[55] Not all contexts are clear or published, but none are from the more definitely identified cult places mentioned above. However, one small group of scapulae (three incised, one unincised) may come from a minor cult location, although its identification as such is based partially on the presence of the scapulae themselves and not all come from the same stratum (one is in the Iron II stratum fill).

[47] Reese 2002, Zukerman et al. 2012: 518. Although scapulae from Gath in Philistia are later (9th century), they are important as they represent a late Philistine settlement stage and are one of the most thoroughly scientifically analyzed and measured finds of this type (see about these in Zukerman et al. 2012).

[48] In Myrtou-Pigadhes these siderooms were likely a depository of cultic material in the end stages of the use of the sanctuary, although in earlier stages of the complex this may have been the focus of cultic activities (Webb 1999: 45-53). The Kition findings come from a well, street and from bothroi (Reese 2002: 185-186). The latter were buried depositories of used cultic material (Dothan, Drenka 2010: 39).

[49] Reese 2002: 187-188. Three incised scapulae come from a context outside the sanctuary.

[50] Courtois 1971: 274; Reese 2002: 188.

[51] Webb 1999: 102-107.

[52] Reese 2002: 188.

[53] The last strata in Myrtou-Pigadhes have been dated to the Late Cypriot IIC and IIIA periods i.e. the 13th and 12th centuries (Webb 1999: 18).

[54] There is one incised scapula and two other incised bones, which were found from the Late Bronze Age context (Reese 2002: 191). Destruction dating is from Cline 2014: 108.

[55] Reese 2002. There is an incised sheep or goat scapula from the 12th century (ibid.: 192). This may be related to bovine scapulae but is still considerably later than the first finds from Cyprus.

Nevertheless, the small room with a possible baetyl, snake-shaped channels, miniature vessels and a lion-headed cup with a figurine nearby seems to relate to cult rather than a domestic or industrial context.[56] Other scapulae come from various contexts, like domestic and domestic-industrial areas (Ashkelon, Iron II Gath).[57] The scapulae from Southern Levant (outside Philistia) in Tell Akko, Tell Abu Hawam and Tell Dor may be older than in Philistia, but the vague dating and unstratified and unclear contexts leave the issue of date and relation to cult unresolved.[58] The contexts of scapulae from Cyprus and Philistia do not overlap in full: while almost all Cypriot scapulae come from sanctuaries, only a small group from Ekron may be related to a cultic context, but others from Philistia do not.

The comparison of similarities between Cypriot and Philistine scapulae has to be limited to analyzing the species of the animal, the scapulae come from, and the number and nature of incisions on the bone. Although non-bovine incised scapulae exist (for example lamb, sheep or deer), these are not found on Cyprus, where all scapulae (if the species is indicated in the reports) are from bovines.[59] It is possible that when the incised scapulae came to be used in Cyprus, they were associated with bovines (some sanctuaries had ox skulls and altars with „horns of consecration"), but when the items started to be used elsewhere, the association with bovines disappeared, even if the notched scapula itself remained important.[60] Variations in the amount of notches (averaging around 20-30), their length or their placements on the bone do not reveal any general or regional patterns. On the other hand, scapulae with rare features (extra holes, added notches) tend to be unique and thus irrelevant for any comparison.[61]

The function of the scapulae remains unclear although certain hypotheses are less likely than others.[62] The proposed use as part of a warp-weighed loom is problematic because scapulae has an irregular shape and better alternatives were available.[63] The proposal that the bone was a divination aid is equally questionable.[64] While divination would need an input from something not controlled

[56] Dothan, Drenka 2010: 36-38.
[57] Kolska Horwitz et al. 2007: 64-65; Zukerman et al. 2012: 516.
[58] Reese (2002: 194) notes that Tel Dor scapulae are from the Iron Age and Tell Abu Hawam from the Late Bronze or Iron Age while scapula from Tel Akko (Lev-Tov 2018) has not been dated.
[59] Reese 2002.
[60] Ox skulls are known from the Kition and Enkomi sanctuaries (Webb 1999: 113, 222), while "horns of consecration" (bullhorn shaped statue) on large stone stands are known from Kition and Myrtou-Pigadhes (Webb 1999: 176).
[61] For example the scapula from Ashkelon has a hole (King, Stager 2001: 298) and one Ekron scapula has notches on one side and additional lines on a perpendicular side (Dothan, Drenka 2010: 34, 54).
[62] Additionally, it is possible that the purposes changed over time (Zukerman et al. 2012: 524-252.
[63] In addition, the proposal in Zukerman et al. (2012: 521-522) remains vague about which part of loom is meant, because "heddle-bar", "spacer" and "batten" are all mentioned.
[64] Webb 1985: 324-327.

by humans, the act of incising was intentional.[65] Using the scapula as a tallying device or a rasper (musical instrument) is most plausible.[66] Tallying would explain the presence of unincised bones, could be associated with temple administration and would explain the variation in the number of incisions, but more easily inscribeable objects (wood, clay) were available.[67] Scapulae can also be used as musical instruments, although there are a few problems with this hypothesis. The hand would cover a few incisions if the scapula would be used as an instrument and some late scapulae do not show wear in the places that would have had to be rasped against a different object.[68] Both uses would suit a cultic setting and would match the nature of their find-contexts on Cyprus.

Thus, the scapulae were a limited phenomena, with most finds from Cyprus and additional ones from the Southern Levant and Syria. It seems that the question of whether the phenomenon originates from Cyprus can be answered affirmatively, but how it spread, remains unclear. The finding of scapulae in Philistia does seem to reflect a movement of people acquainted with Cypriot customs into Philistia as the objects are not a likely trade item nor technologically advantageous tools. It is unclear, if the scapulae remained a cult-item in Philistia as scapulae were used or discarded in varied contexts including cultic and domestic, in contrast to the sanctuary-related find-spots on Cyprus. Even if scapulae were not used in a cultic context anymore (use in domestic cult cannot be excluded), they indicate that a type of custom using the bones crossed the sea because Cypriots moved to Philistia. Because the scapulae appeared long after the beginning of the 12th century, they also reflect continuous migration or a new „wave" of settlers.

The wheeled cult-stands

Another supposedly Cypriot item found in Philistia is the bronze wheeled cult-stand.[69] They typically have four wheels supporting a cubical superstructure with a horizontally placed ring on top. Stands are often decorated with openwork (or ajouré) decorations on the sides (and sometimes on the ring). Although they were likely stands, it is unclear, if they supported water bowls, fire or

[65] About the definition and description of divination look in Nissinen 2010: 341-342, 346. In China, where scapulae were used for divination, they were exposed to fire, which created cracks. These cracks were not under the control of the diviner and were used to answer questions asked from the act of divination (Shaugnessy 2010: 61-63). No fire traces were found from Cypriot scapulae (Webb 1985: 325).
[66] Karageorghis 1990: 159; Webb 1985: 324.
[67] Webb 1985: 324.
[68] Karageorghis 1990: 159; Zukerman et al. 2012: 521-522. There are historically unrelated parallels for such a use in Mesoamerica, where incised bone instruments were used (Domenici 2016).
[69] Linked to Cyprus by Dothan (2002: 11) and Mazar (2000: 227).

something else.[70] They are associated with Cyprus based on technologies and tehniques used in the island's metalwork and possibly related bronze rectangular stands without wheels and tripods from Cyprus.[71]

However, proving the connection between finds from Philistia and Cyprus presents numerous problems. There are at least 20 wheeled (or potentially wheeled) cult-stands in Early Iron Age Cyprus, Levant (also outside Philistia) and Greece.[72] In addition, there are four similar looking non-wheeled stands.[73] However, the most complete wheeled stands, which are consistently shown as illustrative of this type of object, lack a proper provenance. The relatively well-preserved stand from British Museum, for example, is supposed to have originated from Cyprus, but the museum received it from a private collection.[74] Yet, it is often used in discussions about Cypriot metalwork. The stand from Berlin is noted to have come from Kition (or the Larnaca region), but nothing more is known about the origin of the find.[75] The wheeled stand from the Cyprus Museum is perhaps more likely to have come from Cyprus but again, its provenance is uncertain (Famagusta or Episkopi).[76] An example from the Bible Lands Museum in Jerusalem is claimed to be from Cyprus but I have not found any indication of its more specific provenance.[77] Thus, the most „perfect" examples (some have been visibly restored) are all unprovenanced.

The stands from excavations suffer from another issue: these are extremely fragmentary. Most of the finds are bronze wheels, assumed to belong to the cult-stands, while some are also unprovenanced and others from hoards can only be dated vaguely. A supposed stand fragment from Maa-Palaekastro on Cyprus is a small head of a bird, which could belong to any other object as easily as to a rectangular stand.[78] A few fragments have a double rope pattern (like on the one from the Cape Gelidoniya wreck), common on wheeled stands, but also in other types of stands.[79] The situation is slightly better in regards to non-wheeled rectangular cult stands as one was excavated

[70] Zukerman 2012: 492-493.
[71] Papasavvas 2004.
[72] Based on a database created for my PhD thesis.
[73] In my thesis, I have also discussed cult-wagons, small wheeled platforms with figures of animals and humans on them, but given their different function and the lack of these in Philistia, they are not discussed here. Cult-wagons are found, for example, in Enkomi (Hundt 1971: 368-380). However, the absence of them in Philistia is not certain, as Philistine metal wheels discussed below may belong to artefacts other than cult-stands.
[74] The British Museum collection [*online*]: vessel-stand, stand. Link: https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1946-1017-1, accessed 05.08.2021.
[75] Staatliche Museen zu Berlin collection [*online*]: Inv. nr.: Misc. 8947 kesselwagen. Link: Antikensammlung Berlin: Antike Bronzen in Berlin - Gerät (zetcom.ch), accessed 05.08.2021.
[76] Dothan 2002: 9; Knapp, Voskos 2008: 670-671.
[77] Dothan 2002: 9-10, Papasavvas 2004: 52. Because it is noted as coming from Borowski collection (Dothan 2002: 9-10), which seems to be a private collection.
[78] Karageorghis 1988: 209, Karageorghis 1988b: 253.
[79] Bass 1967: 105, 108; Catling 1964: xxi, plate 36:j; Papasavvas 2004: 43.

from a tomb in Enkomi (although dated vaguely to the Late Bronze or Early Iron Age) and another was found during the Megiddo excavations (although different datings are given).[80] It is clear then that the idea of Cypriot origin of these stands relies mainly on parallels between non-wheeled rectangular stands and tripods and the unprovenanced wheeled stands. Papasavvas has discussed the similarities of technology and iconography and also connected some images with provenanced moulds from the island but the unprovenanced and fragmentary nature of stands presents a problem.[81]

In Philistia only two potential stands have been found. Dothan argues that several pieces in the Ekron Building 350 are part of a wheeled cult-stand with parallels to Cyprus, but the remains consist of only three wheels, a small piece of a possible frame and a pendant from a neighbouring room.[82] Such a reconstruction is feasible but given the fragmented pieces, different types of objects (like miniature wagons) can also be hypothesized.[83] The fragment of a frame consists of a loop for a wheel and a few rods but they are placed in a way that hints to a rectangular superstructure. As no decorations remain, it is not possible to say, if they would have been similar to the provenanced (non-wheeled) stands from Enkomi and Megiddo or the unprovenanced ones. The Ekron pendant is equally unindicative. It is unlikely that the fragmented nature of the finds is due to natural processes and it seem that, instead of a full stand, bronze fragments were deposited in the room. The only other similar find from Philistia is a lead wheel from Tell Qasile, but the fact that it is of a different material makes the connection to bronze stands unlikely.[84] One could compare the wheel sizes from Cyprus and Philistia but because the size of bronze wheels found in the Eastern Mediterranean varied considerably, the wheel size cannot be used to determine a connection between Philistian and Cypriot stands nor that the wheels belonged to stands at all. It cannot be said, whether the contexts differed in Cyprus and Philistia either, because much of the material is unprovenanced and the provenanced objects are limited in number (fragments from Ekron, the non-wheeled stand from the Enkomi tomb, the pendant from Maa-Palaekastro settlement).

The stands may not be related to cult in both areas. Although it is possible that the fragments of the stand in Ekron relate to cult (maybe as votives) given their contexts in possibly cultic rooms and in

[80] Enkomi stand: British Museum collection [*online*]: stand. Link: https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1897-0401-1296, accessed 05.08.2021. The stand is dated here to ca. 1200-1050 but the dating of the tomb in Dalton 2007: 9 also includes the Late Bronze Age. Megiddo stand: the Israel Museum homepage [*online*]: ritual stand (12th century). Link: https://www.imj.org.il/en/collections/370868, accessed 05.08.2021. Dothan (2002: 8) dates it to the 10th century.
[81] Papasavvas 2004.
[82] Dothan 2002: 4-11.
[83] See note about cult-wagons above.
[84] Dothan 2002: 4; Mazar 1986: 11-13.

later periods certain similar stands were used in religious context (a huge wheeled stand mentioned in the Old Testament and tripods in Greece), provenanced find-spots are too little to draw any conclusions about its use.[85] Finding a non-wheeled stand in a tomb shows that at least one function was funerary as opposed to everyday or public cult. Because the wheeled stands were expensive, made out of bronze and considerable technological effort went into making them, they are likely to have been traded. A fragment from the Cape Gelidoniya shipwreck, which may have been part of a stand, suggests that the stands were part of cargo and possibly valued as status goods. As trade is a likely reason to explain the spread of the stands, they are poor indicators of migration

Bimetallic knives

The next category of objects, proposed to have come from Cyprus, are the bimetallic knives.[86] These knives have iron blades, which are attached to handles with bronze rivets. Handles of ivory, wood and bone have been found. The bimetallic knives are related to iron knives with iron rivets or no rivets as the difference is only in the rivet material. Both bimetallic and iron knives were widespread in the Early Iron Age Eastern Mediterranean.[87] I will concentrate on the knives that are bimetallic and possibly bimetallic (iron blades, where no rivets have been preserved) and come from Early Iron Age Cyprus and Levant, but large amounts of knives also originate from the Aegean region and Anatolia.

In total, from ca. 1200-900 BCE, Cyprus has 51 bimetallic knives and 55 iron-bladed knives that could have been bimetallic (along with 35 iron-only knives).[88] Levant has 27 bimetallic knives and 68 possibly bimetallic knives (with 2 purely iron knives). Only 4 bimetallic, 4 possibly bimetallic and one full-iron knife were found in the core Philistine settlements. 11 bimetallic knives are known from the Aegean (along with a group of bimetallic blades), while possibly bimetallic knives are known both from the Aegean (54 single knives + 4 groups) and Anatolia (29 knives + 1 group). Some of these possibly bimetallic Aegean and Anatolian knives are earlier than the ones from Cyprus (and Levant).[89] Additionally, knife handles (without preserved blades) like the ivory handles from Philistia and nearby areas may be related to bimetallic knives, even though the blade and rivet

[85] About wheeled stands see Dothan 2002: 4-6, about tripods see Papalexandreou 2008.
[86] Indicated as from Cyprus by Dothan (2002: 20-22) and Mazar (2000: 227).
[87] See for example tables 1, 6 and 8 in Palermo 2018.
[88] The following is based on the database I have compiled about the knives in the Eastern Mediterranean in a period of ca. 1200-900 (e.g. database deals with a period that is a bit longer than Early Iron Age). The database is based mainly on the tables from Palermo 2018 and Sherratt 1994 with additions.
[89] Palermo 2018 tables 1 and 2.

materials are unknown. The problem with blades (and the reason why I use the term "possibly bimetallic knife") is that well-preserved knives are rare, and blades often lack handles and rivets or are too fragmentary to even assess the blade type or the existence of riveting. There are also terminological questions of distinguishing between knives and daggers (the latter are typically defined as having two sharpened edges) as well as curved knives and sickles.[90] However, differently from cult-stands, the knives are often found in archaeological excavations, which enables contextual comparisons.

One common find-context for knives on Cyprus – tombs – is largely missing in Philistia with an exception of a knife from an Ashdod grave.[91] This does not only relate to knives as lack of funerary contexts in Early Iron Age Philistia is an acknowledged issue (finds are mostly single burials, many of those infant burials).[92] With some exceptions like Hama in Syria, other Levantine finds also tend to come from settlements.[93] Although Cyprus, the Aegean and Anatolia also had knives from settlement contexts, tomb finds are prevalent. In Philistia, more specific settlement contexts are varied with knives from elite, cultic, domestic and industrial contexts. Cult-related contexts, like possible domestic cult rooms in Building 350 in Ekron and a temple yard in Tell Qasile, have some knives and decorated handles.[94] However, knives and handles in Ekron have been found also elsewhere in the settlement.[95] One iron blade was found near a burial of a possibly decapitated (perhaps sacrificed) puppy, but its association with the burial is not certain.[96] Neither are knives exclusively connected to cultic locations in the settlements of Cyprus. Although some find-spots like Kition temple area are cultic, other knives come from more everyday contexts (like large ashlar building in Enkomi).[97] It is clear that a multi-purpose tool like a knife cannot be taken as an exclusively cultic item.

The question is, whether the knives were a Cypriot phenomenon. Given the evidence from the Aegean and Anatolia it becomes apparent that at least iron knives existed elsewhere earlier much earlier.[98] However, bimetallic knives, which started to be made in the 12th century, may be seen as mainly but not exclusively a Cypriot innovation. Of the finds that are definitely bimetallic, Cyprus

[90] Palermo 2018: 169-170, 180-181; Rabinovich 2016: 13-15, 24-25.
[91] Ben-Shlomo 2005: 187; Iacovou 1994: 150-158.
[92] Faerman et al 2011: 29.
[93] Hama knives are predominantly from tombs (Sherratt 1994: 87, 89).
[94] Ben-Shlomo 2019: 3; Dothan 2002: 4-6, 14-16; Dothan, Ben-Shlomo 2016: 476-478; Gitin, Garfinkel, Dothan 2016: 28-31; Mazar 1980: 13-16; Mazar 1985: 6-7.
[95] Dothan 2002: 15-17.
[96] Lev-Tov et al. 2018: 1, 3.
[97] See about Quartier 6W and Ashlar building in Webb 1999: 92-101.
[98] Palermo 2018 tables 1 and 2.

has 51, while the Aegean region only has 11 examples (and an additional group) and Anatolia has none. The Levantine examples tend to be later: the Hama and Sarepta (Phoenicia) knives are from the 12th century but not necessarily earlier than the Cypriot ones.[99] Joanna Palermo proposes that certain blade types are more common on Cyprus than Aegean, based on typological comparisons.[100] I have not yet had a chance to compare many knives from Cyprus and Philistia because of limited access to their images, but the blades from Philistia, which I have seen, are quite varied in regard to their type.[101] It is, however, when we also analyze the preserved handles, that a clearer Cypriot type becomes apparent. The type is composed of iron and bimetallic knives with ivory handles, which are found on Cyprus and in Levant (including Philistia). Only wooden, bone or metal handles are known from the Aegean. However, ivory-handled iron knives have been found in 12th century contexts in both Cyprus (Enkomi) and Levant (Ekron, Tell Qasile) and it is not clear where they were present earlier, although ones from Philistia originate from the late 12th century.[102] The most distinct of these ivory (and sometimes bone handles) is the one with a ring-shaped handle end.[103]

The finds with the specific combination of features characteristic to Cypriot knives – bimetallic knives with ivory handles which have ring-ends – are the strongest indicator of contacts between Philistia and Cyprus. Incomplete finds (rivetless blade, handle) cannot be connected to Cyprus indisputably. However, even though knives show contacts from the end of the 12th century onwards, they are not exclusively cultic items. These multi-functional tools are commonly found in non-cultic contexts (and funerary contexts as on Cyprus and in Ashdod). Knives from industrial and domestic contexts could have had practical everyday uses. Those with ivory handles were exotic and valuable and could have been commonly traded, especially as a status or luxury item. The nature of the knives, then, makes trade a likely alternative to migration to explain how bimetallic knives came to Philistia.

[99] Sherratt 1994: 87.
[100] Palermo 2018: 217.
[101] I have had to rely on Palermo's typological description rather than images of the knives, but it seems that there are matches between some knives from Philistia and Palermo's Cypriot types.
[102] Lev-Tov et al. 2018: 1, 3; Mazar 1980: 10; Sherratt 1994: 86-87.
[103] Dothan 2002: 14-20; Palermo 2018: Table 13. There are proposals that ring-end shape is inspired by Aegean or European metal handles (Dothan 2002: 21). Another handle type – wooden handle with iron knife – is also most common in Cyprus (Palermo 2018: 219-222, 257), but as these are not found in Philistia, they are not discussed here.

Hearths

One last installation from Philistia may be related to both Cyprus and cult: hearths.[104] The type of installations were not in use in the Late Bronze Age Southern Levant, but in the 12th century, they were suddenly being built in Philistia in considerable numbers.[105] Before the Iron Age installations like the Canaanite ovens – tabuns – were used for making fire. In the Aegean, Crete, Cyprus and parts of Anatolia the hearths had been common already in the Bronze Age.[106] The origin of hearths cannot be traced to a specific region at least in the Early Iron Age, but as noted above, I concentrate on possible links between Philistia and Cyprus. Even though the existence of freestanding hearths on Cyprus has been connected to the migration of the Aegean people to the island in the 12th century, it is clear hearths are a much older feature on the island known throughout the Bronze Age.[107]

Even though the term „hearth" is not commonly defined in the reports or articles, it is important to clarify the meaning of the term. I have based my definition on three criteria on a couple of articles that have tried to define the term "hearth".[108] Firstly, hearths are an installation used for making a fire. Secondly, hearths have a permanent construction of some sort (clay, stone, plaster etc.) and are not simple fires made on non-specialized surface. Thirdly, the fire should not be covered by a roof of an installation. Thus, campfires, ovens and fireboxes (covered fireplaces) are not hearths. More exact criteria cannot be given, as the materials and shapes of hearths vary considerably. Even with the criteria above, the question whether an installation is a hearth remains open in many cases, as aspects like the existence of traces of burning or specific construction are not always clearly stated in reports.[109]

The contexts of hearths varies considerably in Philistia and on Cyprus. In Philistia, hearths are found in cultic places (Tell Qasile temple yard) and domestic and elite contexts (Building 350 in

[104] Maeir and Hitchcock have compared Philistia's hearths with the ones on Cyprus and found some similarities, although they do not think them too similar and think that there were multiple influences behind the Philistine hearths (like the Cretan influence) (Maeir, Hitchcock 2011). It has been thought that the Aegean influence is behind hearths both on Cyprus and Philistia (Dikaios 1969: 48; Karageorghis 1998).
[105] Maeir, Hitchcock 2011: 46.
[106] Aja 2009: 425-432, 474-483; Balossi Restelli 2015; Maeir, Hitchcock 2011: 56; Muhly 1984.
[107] Karageorghis 2000: 255, 266. Hitchcock 2011: 56.
[108] Definitions from Preston-Day, Glowacki, Klein 2000: 116 and Shaw 1990: 231. Shaw's definition is quite long, illustrating the fact that hearths come in different forms.
[109] In the database of my dissertation, I have borrowed and modified a system used for example in the works dealing with deciphering of unknown languages (e.g. in Valério 2016: 33). I have added a „?" after the term „hearth", when there is no mention of whether traces of burning were present, and additionally another „?", when it is not clear, if the location of the fire was specifically constructed and when alternative definitions have been proposed e.g. „oven". Also, I have added a „!" sign, if it clearly noted that there are no traces of fire and it is clear that the fire location was not constructed. However, even installations marked with "!" may have been hearths, for example, traces of ash may have disappeared when hearths were partially dismantled.

Ekron, an elite residence in Ashdod) and less certainly in industrial contexts.[110] Similar variety is visible on Cyprus, where not only temples, but also normal households and workshops commonly have hearths.[111] In the Aegean, hearths were also found in more modest domestic and other contexts, in addition to the central hearths in megara.[112] The contexts that the hearths of Anatolia are found in, are not published in adequate detail and the nature of their find-contexts is often unclear. Two aspects are noticeable from the comparison of general contexts: hearths had a history in many places of the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean, except Levant, and contexts varied everywhere. The locations of the hearths in rooms differ, even within one region. For example, while the hearths in Ekron tend not to be adjacent to walls, many hearths in Ashkelon have been found next to walls. A similar diversity exists in Cyprus, but hearths can potentially be placed both outdoors and indoors and next to corners, walls, centrally or between room center and walls in all locations.

The typology of hearths is equally complicated. Traditionally, Philistine hearths have been divided into two main types: Aja notes stone and platform mudbrick hearths, while Mazow distinguishes between rectangular mudbrick platforms and pebble-lined hearths (in Ekron).[113] However, this binary typology is not detailed enough.[114] I have created a typology for my thesis accounting for the differences in fire location (fire surrounded by the hearth or made on top of the hearth), material (stone, pebble, mudbrick, plaster etc.) and shape (rectangular, U-shaped, circular). Based on the typology and excluding those hearths that cannot be typified because of the lack of information, the hearths of Philistia can be divided into more than 10 types and sub-types, with mud-plaster hearths, fieldstone platforms and other types in addition to the ones mentioned by Aja and Mazow. Although I have not yet finished the comparison with Cypriot shapes, it can be noted that while some hearths are known from both Philistia and Cyprus, types like hearths where the fire is surrounded by stone, clay or other material, are rather common on Cyprus (Enkomi, Maa-Palaekastro, Kition) but practically non-existent in Philistia.[115] There are thus some Cypriot type hearths that have not made it to Philistia. If Cyprus is not a location, which inspired the construction

[110] Aja 2009: 343; Mazow 2005: 215-220, 325-327. One phytolith surface was found in the open activity area, where kilns were also located at times (Gitin, Meehl, Dothan 2006: 42) and it may have been a hearth or a drainage. Ash was found but there was no specific construction (only the surface and gravel) and I have marked it in my database as "hearth!" (see above about markings).
[111] Several of the hearths in Kition were found in the workshops connected to the temple area and so may be both cultic and industrial (Webb 1999: 74-76).
[112] Karageorghis 2000: 266; Maeir, Hitchcock 2011: 56, 58.
[113] Aja 2009: 328; Mazow 2005: 215-220.
[114] Aja (2009: 350-351) and Mazow (2005: 214) also mention keyhole hearths, which consist of a firepit next to a platform.
[115] The hearths surrounded by fire were numerous in Enkomi (13), Kition (17) and Maa-Palaekastro (5) while I have only found one from Philistia in Gath (Zukerman, Maeir 2012: 205).

of most of the hearths, then other areas like the Aegean, Crete and Anatolia should be further considered.[116] However, the theory, for example, that the Aegean megara inspired the hearths in Philistia, can also be dismissed.[117] The megaron hearths were circular layered clay installations and placed between four pillars, features that are not found in Philistia. Hence, the question of the inspiration for the hearths remains unsolved.

Somewhat more can be said about the hearths' connection to cult and migration. Hearths are sometimes clearly linked to cult, like hearths from central locations of temples on Cyprus (Kition, Enkomi) and the hearth found in the yard of the Tell Qasile temple in Philistia.[118] However, hearths were also widely used outside cultic contexts, while many structures in Ekron that have been claimed to have been cultic do not contain hearths. The latter include the siderooms of Building 350, where the cult-stand fragments and knife remains were found, and Room 22 with scapulae in Ekron. It would be a mistake to interpret hearths as something that belongs exclusively in a cultic context, as is sometimes done in excavation reports, where hearths (and bathtubs) have been presented as signs of a cultic location.[119] The installations are versatile and domestic ritual or cultic function cannot be excluded (like in Greek antiquity) but it was not the only and probably not the primary function of the hearths.[120] They were rather made for cooking and heating and sometimes possibly to help with industrial processes.[121] The hearths relation to migration from the westerns areas is more clear. Their sudden appearance in the towns of Philistia coincided with other western style objects and new ways of food production.[122] They cannot be transported either, rather the know-how and need for building them came with the people familiar with the hearths and able to construct them.

[116] There is still some work to be done in my thesis on the comparison to Anatolian and Aegean areas, although some regions also have types of hearths not seen in Philistia and Anatolia and some Aegean hearths have not been published in detail or I have not yet had access to necessary reports.
[117] See about the theory and criticism in Aja 2009: 471; Barako 2000: 523; Dikaios 1969: 48; Dothan 1990; Maeir, Hitchcock 2011.
[118] Aja 2009: 343; Webb 1999: 166-169.
[119] Especially in the Ekron reports like when Room 16 is defined as cultic based on the bathtub and the hearth (Gitin, Meehl, Dothan 2006: 34-35).
[120] About Greek hearts and cult see for example Kajava 2004.
[121] Maeir, Hitchcock 2011: 59.
[122] Yasur-Landau 2010: 216-282.

Conclusions: connection to Cyprus, migration and cult

The four types of archaeological material analyzed in this paper should be viewed both in isolation and together to answer three questions: were these connected to Cyprus, are these indicative of migration and do they show the transfer of cultic activities into the Early Iron Age Philistia? It seems that some material (or its types) are better associated with Cyprus than with other regions. Scapulae and cult stands are the clearest examples, although in the case of cult-stands it must be taken into account that the best examples are all unprovenanced and they cannot be conclusively connected to the region, let alone specific locations. The connection between the cult-stands and the island relies on comparisons with other objects (tripods, non-wheeled rectangular stands), their manufacturing tehniques and isolated fragments from excavations. Scapulae, on the other hand, are known first from Cyprus (with a possible single exception from Ugarit) and they clearly represent some sort of use that was part of the island's history for centuries. The bimetallic knives and the iron knives (without bronze rivets) were common both on Cyprus and in the Aegean (although bimetallic ones were more numerous on the island). A certain Cypriot type, which is slightly later found in Philistia and elsewhere in Levant, appears only in relation to ivory handles. Hearths were common enough outside Levant, and the overlap of Cypriot and Levantine hearths is not considerable enough to propose that they originated from Cyprus as opposed to the Aegean, Crete or Anatolia. In summary, only certain types of knives, scapulae and possible pieces of cult stand indicate connections with Cyprus which started in the end of the 12th century.

Whether the items show migration, depends, again, on the specific types of artefacts. Both knives and cult-stands were made of valuable materials (bronze, iron, ivory) and required the work of specialized craftsmen to combine or decorate the materials. This makes them status goods and their presence in Philistia is most probably explained by trade contacts rather than migration. On the other hand, scapulae, a Cypriot item, did not need advanced technologies to manufacture nor seem to have been used as status goods (the material was not rare, for example), although making them required some effort. The scapulae point to migration, given that the Cyprus scapulae seem not to have any technological advantage over local objects (if they were musical instruments or tallying devices) and they were mainly related to cult on Cyprus. Hearths, being installations and part of both elite and more modest households, are similarily best explained by migration of people for whom the technology and the purpose of the installation was clear, necessary and meaningful. Given that most of the finds above (except the hearths) post-date the earliest western settlers, they

are indicative of continued migration or an additional wave of migrants to Philistia during the Early Iron Age.

None of the items discussed above are related solely to cult contexts in Philistia. Scapulae and stands are potentially the most indicative of cultic rituals, but only the first has been found almost exclusively in Cypriot cult places while they are found both in and outside of suspected cult places in Philistia. Drawing any conclusions about the cult stands' typical contexts seems impossible, taking into account the considerable problem of unprovenancd findings. The fragments from excavations are too few and the most obvious Cypriot cult places in Myrtou-Pigadhes, Enkomi and Kition have not revealed any stands. So it is not clear, if the stand was an object related to cult or luxury, or some other, everyday use. Knives and hearths are less clearly related to cult, even though both are found in cultic contexts. Both also are multi-functional and while they may have been used in cultic rituals, they have practical uses (cutting and heating accordingly) and they were not exclusively cultic.

The archaeological material partially illustrates possible cultic rituals or customs that may have originated from Cyprus but only in regards to the scapulae. Other objects, although occasionally found in cult places, are not exclusively cultic and the connection of some of them to Cyprus (as opposed to other regions) is poorly supported. While other objects not discussed in this paper because they relate to other regions (like figurines or Egyptian-style objects) may show that new rituals were imported into Philistia as a result of migration, the possible migration from Cyprus left only a modest trace in the Philistine culture and religion.

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PhD project "Contacts between Early Iron Age Philistia and Cyprus

The paper „Some considerations on the connections between the cult in Cyprus and Philistia" presented for OTSEM 2021 is connected to my PhD thesis "Contacts between Early Iron Age Philistia and Cyprus (from the 12th century to the 10th century)". My dissertation focuses on two related problems connected to interactions between the areas. One is the question of whether the trade between Cyprus and Philistia continued in the early period of the Iron Age (ca. 12th-10th century BCE) and what the nature of this trade was. The second research question is whether there is evidence of the migration of a substantial group of people from Cyprus into Philistia during the same period. To approach these problems, I will investigate a diverse selection of installations and objects: bovine scapulae with incisions, bronze wheeled cult-stands, bimetallic knives, hearths, objects with writing and changes in ceramics. These artefacts and installations have been claimed to have originated from Cyprus and comparing and analyzing them has the potential to reveal the nature of the interactions between Cyprus and Philistia.

Both the continuation of trade and migration are much discussed problems and are yet to be convincingly solved. There are some that claim trade contacts with other areas ceased, because at first glance very few Cypriot or Aegean objects have been found in Philistia, while others think that Philistia remained part of the trade contacts. The question of the origin of the newcomers, who arrived into Philistia in the 12th century BCE, is even more debated. The presence of migrants of western origin is attested by the sudden appearance of foreign-inspired but locally made ceramics, hearths, figurines and the changes in diet. While the most common hypothesis connects the migrants to the Aegean region, other theories propose that the immigrants came from Cyprus, Anatolia or from multiple different locations. I have focused on investigating Cyprus as a potential place of origin, as there are certain types of material (listed above) that hint to the Cypriot roots of some (but not necessarily all) of the newcomers.

Some items, like scapulae, iron knives and wheeled cult-stands, have been previously researched in detail, although they often form only part of the research focus (iron knives as part of the comparison of Aegean and Cypriot metal-working practices) or the scholars rarely investigate Philistia's finds. In other cases, the research has been limited to brief remarks or single articles, where the evidence is not reviewed thoroughly enough. For example, Philistia's hearths are commonly divided into two types by scholars but the closer investigation of data reveals a considerable variation in typology. In my thesis, I compare the six categories of findings from Philistia and Cyprus along with their find-

contexts. The comprehensive analysis of data is followed by a discussion of results and the kind of connections these objects show. By combining detailed analysis and comparison of certain objects and then evaluating these in the light of trade and migration, I aim to create a new model for Cypriot-Philistian interactions in the Early Iron Age and move away from approaches that concentrate on a single region (Cyprus or Philistia).

The paper presented in OTSEM uses the results from chapters I have completed or am close to completing (incised scapulae, wheeled cult-stands, bimetallic knives, hearths) to analyze one possible aspect of migration: the movement of cultic customs, touching upon the topics of trade and migration, which my thesis focuses on. I will discuss four of the six categories of items investigated in the dissertation that have potential links to cult. The analysis in this paper will be quite general, as it has to summarize considerable sections of my thesis and associated databases. It will show the main differences and similarities between the items and their find-contexts in Philistia and Cyprus and outline the problems in researching these items and their meaning. As the paper concludes, only scapulae can be seen as indicators of some sort of ritual behaviour crossing over from Cyprus to Philistia as a result of migration. Items like cult-stands and bimetallic knives were likely to be traded and hearths can hardly be seen as exclusive to the cultic sphere, although they are evidence of the migration of people from other areas (not necessarily only from Cyprus).

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Title of paper: Qohelet and the Summum Bonum

In his Nicomachean Ethics Aristotle defined happiness as the highest good, and similar ideas can be found in Plato as well. In the subsequent Hellenistic philosophy, this eudaimonistic emphasis was even intensified, with a switch from the emphasis on the *polis* to that of the individual. The Hellenistic philosophical schools provided different answers regarding the question how to achieve the *telos*, the highest good.

The book of Qohelet defies consensus on numerous matters, not least concerning its message or even the precise determination of its main theme. Most scholars are ready to agree, however, that the author is strongly occupied with the quest for meaning of human existence, this quest displaying an unmistakably eudaimonistic component. The seemingly unconditional and passionate way Qohelet deals with this question finds resonance in Hellenistic philosophy. As the devaluative function of Qohelet's key concept hebel finds a correspondence in the devaluation of externals in Hellenistic philosophy, we may also discern a *thematic* correspondence between the way the question of the summum bonum is treated in Hellenistic philosophy and Qohelet's intellectual and empirical explorations. Qohelet also shares the individualism of Hellenistic philosophy, but only up to a certain point. Qohelet's understanding of God and the relation between God and man, as well as his understanding of the abilities of man, is quite different from all Hellenistic philosophy. This paper argues, that Qohelet's views are influenced by Hellenistic thinking, as manifested in Hellenistic philosophy, but that his fundamental tenets are much closer to Jewish tradition and indeed construed partly in opposition to Hellenistic strands of thought. However, this critique of 'Hellenism' took place within an already deeply Hellenistic discourse. Recognizing these structures in Qohelet's thinking also helps to explain some of the apparent ambiguities, outright contradictions and strict opinions in Qohelet's presentation.

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Qohelet and the Summum Bonum – Some Observations

Introduction

The book of Qohelet defies neat classifications and presents complex problems for its interpreter. This is verified not least by the diversity of opinions about the book. Commentators have not been able to agree about the message or even about the main theme of the book. This paper addresses both these questions through focusing on the question of the *summum bonum*, the highest good, and its placement in Qohelet's thinking.

This is not the most typical way to approach the complex hermeneutical problems in the book. The impulse here is a comparison with ideas expressed in early Hellenistic philosophy. The presentation of the theory of Hellenistic philosophy is in itself a complex task, not least because of our lack of primary sources, but the basic ideas concerning the highest good can be presented relatively confidently and clearly. This is of course a fundamental theme in Hellenistic philosophy and particularly illuminating as regards the differences between different schools.

I argue that Qohelet is influenced by the discussion of the highest good in Hellenistic philosophy and is reacting to these ideas both affirmatively and negatively. The important question of the exact nature of this influence, whether direct or indirect etc., is here secondary. The main focus will be on thematic and structural correspondences, but I will also provide some tentative answers to the questions on the setting of the book, thus being able to formulate also the question of the nature of this influence more pointedly.

Furthermore, I argue, that Qohelet formulates his own theology to a large extent within this same framework. Despite the thematical similarity between the book of Qohelet and Hellenistic philosophy, here assumed, the presentation of the material is challenging. Firstly, the different themes in the book (as in Hellenistic philosophy) are highly interrelated and hence there will be plenty of overlaps. Qohelet is also a highly self-referential author, who keeps coming back to his own ideas and catchwords with small variations and additional points, sometimes at the expense of internal consistency. Additionally, it is, I think, improbable that Qohelet would have been engaged in a purely systematical and theoretical debate about the veracity of Hellenistic philosophy. His primary audience and interests were elsewhere. A rigorous strictness of the exposition should not even be expected. The peculiarity of Qohelet's language may also be due to the fact that he is struggling to present new philosophical conceptions, not expressed in Hebrew before.

After a short introductory treatment of the theme of the highest good in Hellenistic philosophy, I have, for reasons articulated above, decided to organize the material through themes corresponding more to the internal logic of Qohelet rather than Hellenistic philosophy. An exception is the passage on ataraxia, as here the possible connections seem to me to be less complicated. Concerning the Hellenistic schools, the focus will be on the Stoics and Epicureans. These were the most influential schools, and as far as I can see the systems of these two schools constitute the most important benchmark for Qohelet as well.

Questions for reflection: Is the arrangement of the material, here applied, fit for purpose?

1. The summum bonum in Hellenistic philosophy

Aristotle notes in his Nicomachean Ethics that "every kind of knowing and every choice reach toward some good" (EN 1095a15).

Aristotle asks for the only human good that is desirable for its own sake, an end in itself and never a means towards something else and concludes that happiness is such an end.

> 1. [The Stoics] say that being happy is the end, for the sake of which everything is done, but which is not itself done for the sake of anything. This consists in living in accordance with virtue, in living in agreement with, or, what is the same, in living in accordance with nature. 2. Zeno defined happiness in this way: 'Happiness is a good flow of life'. Cleanthes too has made use of this definition in his writings, as have Chrysippus and all their successors, saying that happiness is no different from the happy life. 3. Yet they say that while happiness is set up as the target, the end is *to obtain* happiness, which is the same as being happy. (Stobaeus 2.77, 16-27 (SVF 3.16)).

In the *Letter to Menoeceus* (128-29) Epicurus identifies pleasure as 'the principle and end of the happy life', the first congenital good, first and connatural', because of its 'appropriate nature'. Different features of the summum bonum of Epicureanism and Stoicism will be treated in due course.

Already in Aristotle eudaimonism is both descriptive and prescriptive, that is, it is not only a description of the human nature, but also something that man *ought* to strive for. This is even more strongly emphasized in Hellenistic philosophy. Aristotle seems to think that the identification of the final good and happiness is generally taken for granted. He also refers to happiness as "living well" (eu zen) and "doing well" (eu prattein). Aristotle remarks however, that people disagree about what happiness is (EN 1095a15-20).

In Hellenistic philosophy we might note two striking features compared to earlier Greek philosophy. The first is an extreme form of individualism. While the ethics of Plato and Aristotle was connected to the affairs of the *polis*, the Hellenistic philosophers almost exclusively took the individual as the starting point for their investigations. A second striking feature is a marked unconditionality. This can be seen in the insistence of the chosen principle in the pursuit to reach the end. Respectively we can note a vehement rejection of everything that was seen as not furthering the end as something indifferent, adiaphora. A list of indifferent things is given by Diogenes Laertius VII.102: life and death, health and illness, pleasure and discomfort, good looks and ugliness, physical strength and weakness, wealth and poverty, good and bad reputation, high and low birth; further in VII.106: natural ability, skill, even moral progress and their opposites. As if not enough, Diogenes Laertius concludes this second list with an additional 'etc'.[1]

1 Qohelet also builds up an impressive list of what can be considered hebel. Seybold notes that the dominant use of hebel in a nominal statement shows that it also for Qohelet serves a purpose of evaluation, or *devaluation*, with critic-polemic intentions. The totality of human activity 1:14, 2:17, Qohelet's own work 2:11, all living things 3:19, the future and youth 11:8,10, striving after wisdom 2:15 (1:17), laughter and pleasure 2:2, the life work of the wise 2:19, 21, 23, 26, energy exerted by the skillful 4:4, wealth 4:8, 5:9, the career of the wise 4:16, zeal 6:9, criticism of the wise, 7:6, decisions by the mighty 8:10, confidence in the law of just retribution 8:14 can all be characterized by hebel. 14 times the expression gam-seh/hu-hebel is repeated 2:1,15,19,21,23,26, 4:4,8,16, 5:9, 6:9,

2. Qohelet and the summum bonum

We will look at the question of the summum bonum for Qohelet from two interrelated angles. Firstly, an analysis of the level of correspondence between Qohelet's thinking and the eudaimonism of Hellenistic philosophy, especially from a thematic and structural viewpoint. Secondly we will try to articulate Qohelet's summum bonum more precisely and how we shall understand its eudaimonistic component. It is my aim to show, that a comparison with the Hellenistic material can help us to perceive Qohelet's theological, and anthropological, conceptions more clearly, what is common and what is not. I argue that we can discern a structural and thematic dependence but a rejection of certain basic tenets simultaneously. I also argue, that precisely this tension can explain and is the source of much of the confusion and some of the apparent contradictions in the text.

What is the main *theme* of the book of Qohelet? The futility or absurdity of life, death, pleasure? More generally one might opt for nothing less than the meaning of life. More specifically, however, some commentators have highlighted the question of the possibility of happiness in human life as the overarching theme. Gordis considers Qohelet disillusioned with the injustice of human affairs and the unattainability of truth. What remains is a certainty that man has an innate desire for happiness. This desire is implanted in mankind by God and accordingly Qohelet recognizes the pursuit of happiness as the goal.[2]

The connection between Qohelet's eudaimonism and the eudaimonism of Hellenistic philosophy is explicitly made in the works of Schwienhorst-Schönberger.[3] Also Schwienhorst-Schönberger considers the question about happiness to be the main theme of the book. According to Schwienhorst-Schönberger, Qohelet does not diverge radically from earlier wisdom tradition or OT eudaimonism, but treats the question of happiness more pointedly, explicitly the role of God and man in achieving happiness. Qohelet understands happiness primarily as the *experience* of happiness (Glückserfahrung), a critical-polemical move against an identification of happiness with wealth, offspring, health and social standing. In this Schwienhorst-Schönberger sees a clear parallel to Hellenistic philosophy. For Qohelet, God is the one who enables this experience, connecting happiness in a forceful way to a theology of creation. Qohelet's eudaimonism is best understood from the perspective of Jewish wisdom theology *and* Hellenistic philosophy.[4]

7:6, 8:10,14. And as if not enough, in 1:2 and 12:8 we are told that 'everything' is hebel. While of course not identical, comparing the lists I think the similarity between what Qohelet targets as hebel and the things that were customarily singled out as adiaphora, particularly in Stoic philosophy, is notable. The respective lists can be seen to comprise the totality of human concern and striving.

2 R.Gordis *Koheleth, the Man and his World*, TSJTSA 19, New York, 1951, 113. In general, Gordis does not rule out a Hellenistic influence on Qohelet's thinking, but he is relatively cautious in this respect and does not make an explicit connection between Qohelet's happiness project and Greek eudaimonism.

3 See L. Schwienhorst-Schönberger, *"Nicht im Menschen gründet das Glück" (Koh 2:24). Kohelet im Spannungsfeld jüdischer Weisheit und Hellenistischer Philosophie*, HBS 2, Freiburg:Herder, 1996, particularly IV-VII, 246, 274-279 and 297-311. Similarly, albeit not so strongly N.Lohfink *Qoheleth. A Continental Commentary.* Transl S.McEvenue. Minneapolis: Fortress Press 2003, 14-15.

Another position is taken by Fox, who claims that Qohelet is not a preacher of happiness and does not even have a word for it. Fox explicitly names pleasure as Qohelet's *summum bonum*, but considers it as making the best of a bad situation, pleasure functions as an anodyne to life's misery or the pain of consciousness. Fox's views spring from his understanding of Qohelet as expressing the absurdity of human existence.[5] In Greek ethical thinking eudaimonism was common and central in most philosophical currents and to most thinkers since Socrates. There were, however, also those that rejected happiness as the end. We may note several Cyrenaic thinkers, who represented variations of hedonistic thinking, different from that of Epicurus. What constitutes the goal of life is rather the bodily pleasure of the moment, and pleasure is limited to its experienced duration. Contrary to Epicurus, a 'pleasure' which is merely remembered or merely anticipated does not count (Diogenes Laertius II.89). The ethical goal, then, is not happiness, in its construal as a long-term state (DL II.87-88).[6] Even if rejecting happiness as the end, it is evident that also the Cyrenaic philosophy can be situated within a completely eudaimonistic framework. Interesting from our point of view is the fact that we may find correspondences to Hellenistic philosophy in vastly different interpretations of the book of Qohelet. Qohelet's position is not identical with that of any Hellenistic school, but thematically close to all of them.

The question of what is good in life is implicit in the whole of Qohelet's exposition. There are also explicit hints pointing to the question, what is *best* for man to do. Qohelet is looking for a "principle" that could serve also as a practical guide for man.[7] In 2:3 Qohelet tries out refreshing himself with wine, but without letting himself of wisdom and not give power to insanity. The purpose of all this is to see *what is best for man to do* during his short life.[8]

In 5:17, the beginning of the crucial passage 5:17-19, we encounter the peculiar expression טֹוב אֲשֶׁר־יָפֶה, which is unattested in any other biblical book. This has naturally drawn the interest of the commentators. Zirkel argued already in 1792, that καλὸς κἀγαθός, a well known expression from Greek philosophy, lay behind tov asher jafeh.[9]

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4 Schwienhorst-Schönberger 1996, especially 274-279.

5 M.Fox *Qohelet and his Contradictions*, JSOTSup 71, Sheffield: Almond, 1989, 53-77 and *passim*. I have presented an extensive critique of some of Fox's conceptions in my article *Qohelet's Reality – Absurd or Not?*, in G.Baltes, L.Bormann & M.Meiser (eds.), *Deviant and Divine. Understanding abnormalities in Biblical Figures*, forthcoming. In *A Time to Tear Down and a Time to Build Up: A Rereading of Ecclesiastes,* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999, 8, Fox perceptively notes that the most significant parallels between Qohelet and Hellenistic philosophy may well be the least provable: affinities in attitude, epistemology, fields of inquiry, questions addressed and types of answers offered (though not necessarily the specific answers themselves). Fox also thinks that Qohelet's particular attitudes need not have an immediate "source" in Greek philosophy in order to have shared some of the preconditions of Hellenistic philosophy. Fox himself does not pursue this investigation very far, however.

6 A.A. Long, *The Socratic Legacy* in *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy*, eds. K.Algra, J.Barnes, J.Mansfeld, M.Schofield, Cambridge University Press 1999, 632-634.

7 We might also here see a correspondence to the practical emphasis of ethical theory in Hellenistic philosophy.

The Stoics argue that only the fine is good, in effect using καλὸς κἀγαθός as an expression for the *summum bonum*.[10] Lohfink remarkably translates as "perfect happiness".[11]

There might be an ironic allusion to the Stoic καλὸς κἀγαθός in 5:17, but there can be no doubt, that Qohelet is here expressing important and central aspects of his thinking.

In 12:13 we find an expression that asserts to sum up the preceding content and offers also very clear-cut practical guidance סוֹף דָּבָר הַכֹּל נִשְׁמָע אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים יְרָא וְאֶת־מִצְוֹתָיו שְׁמֹר כִּי־זֶה כָּל־הָאָדָם.
Fearing God and keeping His commandments is presented as the most important precept for man. Can we make a coherent reading of these verses? I argue, that in 2:3(ff) we find Qohelet testing postulates of Hellenistic philosophy critically and that he in 5:17(-19) and 12:13 expresses in a nutshell the two aspects of his own *summum bonum*.[12]

The way we interpret the book of Qohelet is closely bound to how we understand the key concept . In an earlier paper[13] I have tried to connect hebel to the devaluation of externals in early Hellenistic philosophy, particularly through a connection to the concept adiaphora, indifference.[14] Clinging to adiaphora, like wealth or reputation is prone to obstruct the goal of happiness rather than to further it.

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8 The translation of this verse presents problems and has puzzled commentators. Wine-drinking is of course a subject treated extensively in Greek literature. The question whether the wise man will get drunk seems to have been a specific philosophical topos. Philo treats the phenomenon of drunkenness and mental abnormality extensively. In De Plantatione Noe 143 he differentiates between οἰνοῦσθαι being "under influence" of wine and ληρεῖν ἐν οἴνῳ "becoming mad" from wine. Philo's starting point is the question whether a wise person should ever get drunk (εἰ μεθυσθήσεται ὁ σοφός) Plant 142. Philo refers to "tens of thousands" of treatises on the subject in Plant 173-174. According to Philo, all philosophers reject the option of "becoming mad" from vine. G.Baltes, *Labelling Jesus as 'Glutton and Drunkard': Deviant Behaviour and Social Control in an Intra-Jewish Conflict*, in G.Baltes, L.Bormann & M.Meiser (eds.), *Deviant and Divine. Understanding abnormalities in Biblical Figures*, forthcoming and T.E.Phillips, '*Will the Wise Person Get Drunk?' The Background of the Human Wisdom in Luke 7:35 and Matthew 11:19.," JBL(2008): 385–396*. There is a clear Stoic context e.g. in Plant 172, the virtuous man will get drunk without losing any of his virtue by it. See also Heraclitus fr. 77 & 188 and Plato's *Laws*, books 1 & 2.
Is Qohelet advocating moderate drinking, or is the point ironic? Cf. Ben Sira 31:25-31.

9 G.Zirkel, *Untersuchungen über den Prediger*, Würzburg 1792, 49: "Man sage mir, wie es möglich gewesen sey, טוֹב und יָפֶה für synonym zu erklären, ohne dass der Prediger *kalon* im Sinne gehabt habe."

10 Cicero Ac I 7, 35; Fin. III 27 = SVF III 37; IV 48; Tusc. V 18, 43-5; Plutarch Stoic. rep. 1039c = SVF III 29; Diogenes Laertius VII 100, 101 = SVF III 30.

11Lohfink, 2003, 84.

12 See also 2:24 אֵין־טוֹב בָּאָדָם etc.

13 *Hebel and the Context of Hellenistic* Philosophy, OTSEM 2019.

Leaving aside for a moment the questions relating to the exact meaning(s) and proper translation(s) of this enigmatic word, we may note the predominantly negative connotations this word has for Qohelet.[15] Hebel is like an all-pervasive threat, that somehow seems to signify the loss of meaning of "everything", 1:2, 12;8.[16]

But Qohelet is not willing to comply with a hebel-permeated reality submissively. He sets out to explore reality and the meaning of life empirically, but also through introspection. I will look at Qohelet's project of testing and contesting hebel through the categories of 1. wisdom, 2. pleasure and 3. work – and the accompanying achievements and gain of wealth, particularly as these appear in the royal experiment 1:12ff.

Wisdom

Aristotle's ethics was founded on the assumption that human life had a 'function', which can be specified by reference to the distinctively human attribute of 'living rationally' (NE 1.6). Similarly in Stoicism, virtue is the perfection of reason and thus the end of human nature.[17]

Stoicism was a closed system, where perfect rationality and virtue amount to the same thing. Virtue was also defined as living according to nature, or according to Logos. Logos again is identical with the Stoic pantheistic God. Since reason is man's peculiar good, as opposed to animals and plants, the perfection of reason leads to the attainment of the end of his nature.[18] The wise man's life is always happy.[19]

'Wisdom' as such is not identified as the end in Hellenistic philosophy, but due to the identification of reason and virtue, (absolute) wisdom is a prerequisite for virtue. The Stoics set the standard for the wise man so high, that virtue was practically unattainable, but in principle possible to achieve.

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14 I do not claim an exact correspondence between *hebel* and *adiaphora* in Hellenistic philosophy. Qohelet uses hebel in variegated ways. According to K.Seybold, TDOT 3, 1978, 318, Qohelet uses the word in a way that shows that he is aware of all the possible meanings and connotations it has in the OT. The specific devaluative function of hebel can, however, best be understood in the light of the way adiaphora was used particularly in Stoic philosophy.

15 Seybold 1978.

16 For a discussion about the specific meaning of *ha-kol* in 1:2 and 12:8, see my *Hebel and the Context of Hellenistic* Philosophy, OTSEM 2019 and N.Lohfink, *Koh 1,2, "alles ist Windhauch" – universale oder anthropologische Aussage?* in R.Mosis and L.Ruppert (eds.), *Der Weg zum Menschen: zur philosophischen und theologischen Anthropologie für Alfons Deissler*, Freiberg: Herder, 1989, 201-216.

17 A.A. Long & D.N.Sedley *The Hellenistic Philosophers, vol 1. Translations of the Principal Sources, with Philosophical Commentary*, Cambridge University Press 1987, 400.

18 See e.g. Seneca *Letters* 76.9-10 (SVF 3.200a).

19 See e.g. Cicero *Tusculan disputations* 5.81-82.

In Epicureanism Epicurus was held as the paradigmatic sage, who had revealed the right order of things as well as the correct moral implications of this analysis.[20]

Qohelet treats the theme of wisdom extensively. On the one hand he seems to praise wisdom 7:12, 9:13-18, on the other hand he seems to question its worth altogether, 1:16-18. Wisdom also seems to have a relative value 2:13. As Fox noted, Qohelet's ideas about wisdom seem to be pulling in all directions.[21]

Notably the starting point in the royal experiment is Qohelet's quest for wisdom 1:13-18. We have the first hebel-statement already in 1:14, even if not directly with wisdom as its object. Qohelet/Solomon was greater in wisdom than anyone before him, yet his wisdom failed him and turned out to be a chasing after the wind 1:17. Wisdom and knowledge also bring sorrow and grief 1:18.

As 2:3,9 attests, while trying out pleasure, Qohelet was still guided by wisdom. To no avail, everything turned out to be hebel and a chasing after the wind 2:11 and there was no "gain" יִתְרוֹן under the sun. Even the relative value of wisdom is relativized, the same fate awaits the wise and the fool and both will be forgotten 2:14-16.

Qohelet does not seem to have any highly developed teaching on moral virtue. In 7:16-17 we find strange exhortations not to be overtly righteous אַל־תְּהִי צַדִּיק הַרְבֵּה וְאַל־תִּתְחַכַּם יוֹתֵר or wise or overtly wicked and foolish אַל־תִּרְשַׁע הַרְבֵּה וְאַל־תְּהִי סָכָל. Schwienhorst-Schönberger has proposed that 7:15-18 concerns the right interpretation of the Torah. The reshaim would be a group adverse to the teaching of the Torah, while the tsadikim would denote a group overtly rigoristic in their following of the Torah. Qohelet rejects these both extremes but admonishes the 'fear of God' v. 18.[22]

Schwienhorst-Schönberger has compared the passage 7:15-20 to the Aristotelian teaching about the golden mean.[23] This is not completely unproblematic. For Aristotle, following the golden mean can function as a guide to virtuous action, but the teaching on the golden mean cannot be applied to virtue itself! Aristotle's teaching on the golden mean is far from mechanic, and as he says, it is often closer to one of the extremes than the other. That does not imply, however, that there would be some kind of "optimal" form of virtue between vice and some kind of "hyper-virtue", even if Aristotle certainly was not as rigoristic as the Stoics in his ethical teaching. Schwienhorst-Schönberger's view could be retained, if applied to the *practical application* of the Torah, and this might indeed be his position. However, if connected to Greek philosophical tradition, an anti-Stoic sentiment is the more probable, not least because of the form here used. Qohelet here clearly expresses his opposition against certain ideas.[24] The exhortation not to be overtly righteous is in itself rather strange, and even more so is the exhortation not to be overly wicked. This can be explained through a Stoic context,

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20 Nowhere can this be seen more clearly than in Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*, where Epicurus is hailed almost like a god-like being, especially book 1, e.g. 1:79 (cf Qoh 5:1).

21 Fox 1989, 79.

22 L.Schwienhorst-Schönberger, *Kohelet*, HthKAT, Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder 2004, 384-393. Schwienhorst-Schönberger also extends this idea of the *mediocritas* to Qohelet more generally and considers it in opposition to the "extreme way" that he tried out in 1:12-2:23.

23 Schwienhorst-Schönberger 2004, 393f.

where only absolute virtue or absolute vice were recognized as possible options. Suggestive of a Stoic context is also the juxtaposition of the 'virtuous' and the wise and the wicked and the fool respectively, as from a Stoic textbook (of course compatible with OT theology as well). The assertion that כִּי אָדָם אֵין צַדִּיק בָּאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה־טּוֹב וְלֹא יֶחֱטָא in v. 20 could function as a critique against rigoristic Stoic conceptions about the virtuous man as well.

I fully agree with Schwienhorst-Schönberger, that the immediate context for 7:15 is not Greek philosophy, but an inner-Jewish discussion.[25] We know that the Sadducees, in contrast to the Pharisees, rejected religious stipulations that went beyond the Torah. A similar context might be at hand in 7:15-20.[26]

Be this as it may, it is clear that Qohelet, at least after the royal experiment, has no false pretensions about human wisdom. Complete wisdom is with God. Even determination in the pursuit of wisdom does not bring about a desired result 7;23-24. Even if the wise say they understand, they do not 8:17. God may grant wisdom to the one that pleases Him 2:26 and He has put עֹלָם in the human heart, yet no one can fathom His works completely 3:11.

Pleasure

Pleasure occupies a special place in Qohelet's thinking. Having tested wisdom, starting in 1:13, Qohelet now turns to pleasure in 2:1 to find out what is good רְאֵה בְטוֹב. In 2:3 Qohelet tries out the pleasure of drinking wine, remarking that he nonetheless was guided by wisdom. From the similar statement in 2:9 we might conclude that Qohelet considered himself to be "guided by wisdom" from 2:3 onwards up to 2:11, after which he turns to wisdom again. The verdict about the experiment with pleasure only in 2:1-2 is rash; pleasure שִׂמְחָה is hebel, laughter madness and moreover pleasure does not accomplish anything. However, the experiment testing pleasure guided by wisdom fared no better; Qohelet denied of himself nothing that his eyes desired and refused his heart no pleasure 2:10, but also this he considered hebel and a chasing after the wind, bringing no lasting gain יִתְרוֹן under the sun 2:11.

Alongside these tirades about distress and unfulfillment of pleasure, Qohelet shows also a brighter side, above all in his *carpe diem* -passages, 2:24-26, 3:12-13,22, 5:17-19, 8:15, 9:7-10, 11:9-12:1. It

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24 In my paper *Conceptions of Death in Early Hellenistic Philosophy*, OTSEM 2018, I have connected 7:17 to certain "liberal" Stoic conceptions of suicide. לָמָּה תָמוּת בְּלֹא עִתֶּךָ is often translated as "why should you die before your time". However, a better solution here would be a more literal rendering "not in your (right) time". This might practically mean the same as "before your time", but not necessarily so. According to the Stoics the wise man knew the right time for every action, possibly even the proper time for death, not excluding suicide as an option. Theoretically, to die "not in the right time" could also mean to die too late. In certain situations, suicide was considered preferable also for the wicked.

25 Schwienhorst-Schönberger 2004, 392.

26 L.Schwienhorst-Schönberger*, Qoheleth – Precursor of the Sadducees?*, paper delivered at SBL Rome 2019.

might seem at first sight that Qohelet is sending mixed signals. It is no wonder that commentators have perceived him alternately as a pessimist, an optimist or something in-between. His message has been understood as both inadvertently or deliberately contradictory, in addition to numerous attempts to harmonize his thinking with different means. Those who emphasize the pessimistic traits in the book often consider the exhortations to joy in a kind of resignative way – amid all hardship, grab at least all the small pleasures you may.[27] This understanding of the book can be countered in many ways. Firstly, Qohelet's perception of joy and pleasure is far from undifferentiated. The hedonistic project in the royal experiment, starting in 2:1 clearly was a failure, bringing no desired and sought-after satisfaction. There is a notable concentration of *hebel*-sayings in this section of the book. Qohelet tries to gain pleasure in the same vein as a king might acquire wealth, wives and luxury. Trying to acquire pleasure in life like one acquires a possession is doomed to failure and is subsumed under *hebel*. But not all enjoyment deserves this same verdict. Some relatively clear patterns emerge. We may consider the shift in tone at vs 23/24, where we have a clear break and the start of the first carpe diem passage. Qohelet emphasizes that life with its pleasures is a gift of God. All enjoyment connected to this understanding is favourably looked upon by him.[28] The royal experiment can be considered as an "anthropology without God" and up to 2:23 as essentially a human project.[29] *Hebel* does not infect everything. Making a counterproof, we may conclude that God (and the fear of Him) and His creation are never judged as hebel. Neither is the enjoyment of the creation in the carpe diem -passages, which are all intimately connected to God.

9:7-9 is one of the most central passages in the book expressing Qohelet's zestfulness for enjoyment. The expression כִּי כְבָר רָצָה הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־מַעֲשֶׂיךָ has sometimes been interpreted in a strict deterministic fashion. God has already decided what we are to do, we might as well enjoy life to the full.[30] It is easy to point to similar ideas in Stoic theory, for example the simile about the dog tied to a wagon who can choose either to run with a loose rope or be dragged.[31] However, it is also possible to read *kevar* as referring to that what "God has decreed from the beginning".[32] That is, it is not a question of God preordaining the detailed proceedings in the world, but God's *intention* that his creation is meant to be used and enjoyed in a proper way. Thus, in 9:7-10 it is not a matter of God approving any specific event, but an embracing relation towards creation *in general*. The creation is good, as stated in Gen 1-2. Also the wife was created for the companionship of man Gen 2:24f.

Another interesting verse is 11:9. The conjunction in וְדָע can be translated as 'and' or 'but' depending on the interpretation of the verse. Some consider 11:9b to be an orthodox gloss (cf. 12:14), qualifying

27 Examples of this kind of interpretation are represented e.g. by A. Lauha, *Kohelet*, BKAT XIX, Neukirchen-Vlyun 1978, and Fox 1989.

28 Similarly N.Whybray, *Ecclesiastes*, OTG, JSOT Press 1989, 64-65.

29 Schwienhorst-Schönberger 2004, 459-461.

30 Thus D.Rudman, *Determinism in the Book of Ecclesiastes*, JSOTS 316, Sheffield: Academic Press 2001, 138.

31 SVF II 975.

32 N.Whybray *Ecclesiastes,* NCBC, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1989, 144. Whybray points also to 5:17 'for this is his lot'.

the prescribed enjoyment, along the lines 'but remember that God will bring you into judgement'.[33] Fully in line with Qohelet's thinking, however, is the idea that God disapproves of *not* enjoying His creation.[34] The enjoyment *is* qualified, but in a complimentary, not antithetical way. Like in 9:7-9, enjoyment is not only allowed or recommended, it is *decreed* by God. At the same time man should realize the reality of God, as the giver of the gifts of creation.

The forcefulness of Qohelet¨s exposition could be well explained through an antagonistic setting. Attacked is an interpretation of religion that endorses or even requires overdue ascetism and perhaps even celibacy. Hence the pronounced exhortation to enjoy life with the wife.[35] From Jewish sectarianism not much later than Qohelet we are already quite well aware of such dividing lines. Qohelet attests to an early discussion of these topics.

Work

The purpose of human labor עמל is questioned already in the programmatic question in 1:3. Qohelet ponders what יתרון toil can bring. *yitron* has for Qohelet the meaning of (lasting) gain.[36] The underlying sense seems to be, that Qohelet is searching for some kind of 'objective' and tangible criteria to measure yitron.

The 'intellectual toil' in 1:13-18 has already been dealt with. In 2:4ff Qohelet describes his great buildings projects, his fervent activity and amassing of wealth. Yet, in 2:11, when he looks back on the achievements of his toil, he concluded that everything was hebel and a chasing after the wind. There was no yitron in life.

In 2:17-23 we count no less than four *hebel* statements. Qohelet's problem is that regardless of the fruits of his toil, he will not have any control what will happen to it after his departure.

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33 K.Galling, *Der* Prediger, Tübingen 1969/2, 121, Lauha 1978, 204, 209. See also the discussion in LevR 28.

34 Thus also C-L Seow, *Ecclesiastes*, AB 18C, 1997, 371, who also points to y.Qidd 4:12: "Everyone must give an account before God of all good things one saw in life and did not enjoy." It is sometimes argued, with a somewhat twisted logic, that 12:14 is secondary, because it introduces a "new" element in Qohelet's thinking, and this is then applied to 11:9b, declaring it to be part of that same redaction. The most natural solution is to see both as part of the original composition.

35 Commentators are divided whether אִשָּׁה should be understood as 'wife' or simply (any) 'woman', see A.Schoors *The Preacher Sought to Find Pleasing Words,* vol.2, Leuwen: Peeters 2004, 330-333, for a discussion. I side here with C.Bartholomew *Ecclesiastes*, Baker Academic Press 2009, 304-305: "Once we realize that the *carpe diem* vision is rooted in a theology of creation, then the case for this woman being one's wife is compelling. Thus v. 9a is a positive affirmation of marriage that is to be fully enjoyed in all its dimensions."

36 Not "adequate gain" as Fox 1989, 60-62 gives as one meaning of *yitron*, i.e. a reasonable return for the strain invested, but this cannot be right. Qohelet addresses *yitron* as a qualitative, not quantitative question.

Work in itself, however, is not an evil for Qohelet. Normal, everyday work is looked upon even positively. There is again a break in2:23/24, it *is* possible to find satisfaction in work *itself*, with the *important addition, that this possibility is* מֵעִם הָאֱלֹהִים*. Thus, the statement in 2:10, that "for my* heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil" does not contradict the immediately following *hebel*-statement in the following verse. What Qohelet is critical of, is the pursuit for *yitron*, a lasting gain, through the accumulation of riches, property and excessive experiences. Here we can see a clear connection to the devaluation of externals in Hellenistic philosophy.

Normal work, and even energetic action, see 9:10, is looked upon positively in 3:13,22, 5:17-19, 8:15, 9:9, 11;6. Toil fueled by the envy of another 4:4 or striving for more than one's daily needs 4:6,8, 5:9-16[37], however, is judged hebel and chasing after the wind/toiling for the wind 5:15. The sleep of the laborer is sweet, but the abundance of the rich permits them no sleep 5:11.

3. Ataraxia

What is a happy life? This question is asked and immediately answered by the Stoic Seneca in *Letters* 92.3: peacefulness and constant tranquility. These are reached if "all of truth has been seen, if orderliness, moderation, and seemliness are preserved in actions, and a will which is guiltless and kindly, focused upon reason and never departing from it, as lovable as it is admirable". Seneca sums up: the wise man's mind should be 'such as befits god'.

The notion of ataraxia, untroubledness, is particularly important in Epicureanism. Although freedom from bodily pain and freedom from mental disturbance jointly constitute the Epicurean good, the superiority of mental pleasure, makes freedom from mental disturbance the supreme hallmark of Epicurean happiness.[38]

Also the Epicureans employed conceptions of god-likeness in their description of ataraxia. The Epicurean gods were living a blissful existence, completely unattached to the petty problems of mankind and completely free from pain or mental disturbance.[39]

Qohelet seems to pay special attention to distress. Qohelet does not seem to comment on bodily pains, except perhaps for some psychosomatic symptoms (see below).[40] In 1:3 Qohelet already questions the meaning of human toil and its "gain", yitron. Qohelet gives no immediate answer to this

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37 Cf. Epicurus: "The flesh's cry is not to be hungry or thirsty or cold. For one who is in these states and expects to remain so could rival even Zeus in happiness", Vatican Sayings 33.

38 Long & Sedley 1987, 124, Tranquility was represented as the good also by the sceptic Pyrrho, See also the *Letter to Menoeceus* 127-32. In Stoicism *apatheia*, being free from disturbing passions, was a central concept. I will not deal with this subject in depth here.

39 The Epicureans applied as a practical guide the 'fourfold remedy', usually attributed to later scholars but seen as reflecting the orthodox views of the master himself. 'God is not to be feared, death should cause no apprehension, and the good is easily obtained, the terrible easily endured.' Philodemus, *Against the Sophists* 4.9-14. Qohelet's central exhortation 'fear God' is well known from biblical tradition, but could also be applied as a critical remark against the particular Epicurean tenet not to fear God.

programmatic question, which is clearly connected with the preceding verse which declares "everything" to be *hebel*.

In 1:13 Qohelet complains about the burden of intellectual inquiry. "With my heart/mind I searched and explored with wisdom everything that happens/is made[41] under the heavens. It is a bad business that God has given man to be occupied with."[42] The work done under the sun was hebel and reut ruah, 1:14. With much wisdom comes sorrow and with knowledge grief 1:18.

Pleasure and 'seeing good' brought no good 2:1 but turned out to be hebel. In 2:11 Qohelet concludes that there is no yitron for all his toil. The seeming futility of all his efforts led Qohelet to hate life 2:17. He also hated his toil and the disability to control the further destiny of his possessions 2:18f. In 2:20 his heart begins to despair יאש over his toilsome labor. According to 2:23 man's days are full of nothing but vexation and pain, and their mind finds no rest even at night! In 11:10 Qohelet explicitly admonishes to banish anxiety כעס from the heart and put away 'evil' from the body.

In 4:1 Qohelet laments the fate of the oppressed. Toil and success are based on human envy 4:4. Better is to have little than much with distress and reut ruah. 4;7ff brings to light the unsatiability of the riches of the lonely man. Several more examples of distress could be adduced.

One indication that pursuing after wealth and excessive experiences may cause more distress than peacefulness may be found in Qohelet's use of the expression רְעוּת רוּחַ, closely connected to the key word hebel. This Aramaism is usually translated as 'chasing/striving for wind' or 'shepherding the wind'. There is also a second option 'affliction of the spirit', indicated by some commentators.[43] Chasing after the wind, or that which is hebel, with its clear connotations of unfulfillment, will inevitably lead to an 'affliction of the spirit'. It will never lead to yitron, a lasting gain. There is a portion, heleq, allotted for man 5:17. Trying to reach over the limit of his heleq is like chasing the wind.

The theme of fulfilment/satiability is strongly present in the whole passage 5:9-6:9.[44] In 6:7 וְגַם־הַנֶּפֶשׁ לֹא תִמָּלֵא Qohelet expresses the unsatiability of the nefesh. The translation is dependent on how we

40 Bartholomew 2009, 218-222 wants to play down the Epicurean influence on Qohelet. One of his arguments is that Epicurus valued spiritual over bodily satisfactions, because these are more likely to bring the soul to rest. Bartholomew's understanding of influence seems here to be a bit simplistic and, moreover, not quite to the point.

41 Both are possible translations. The continuation in v. 14 might point to the latter, but this is not certain. Why not explore both nature and the human action in the world?

42 Epictetus *Discourses* 1.6.12-22: "God introduced man as a student of himself and his works, and not merely as a student but also an interpreter of these things". For the Stoics rational endeavor is peculiar to man, as opposed to non-rational animals.

43 E.g. L.Levy *Das Buch* Kohelet, Leipzig 1912, T.Perry *Qohelet's Minimalist Theology,* in A.Schoors (ed.) *Qohelet in the Context of* Wisdom, Leuwen:University Press 1998, 452, Vg *adflictio spiritus*. See Schoors 2004, 439-442 for a discussion.

44 For this delineation of this passage, adopted by most commentators, see especially D.C.Fredericks, *Chiasm and Parallel Structure in Qoheleth 5:9-6:9,* JBL 108, 1989, 17-35.

understand the preceding clause כָּל־עֲמַל הָאָדָם לְפִיהוּ and particularly whether the suffix in lepihu refers to ha-adam or back to מָקוֹם אֶחָד, the meaning of which cannot be another than the netherworld/the realm of death, from the end of the preceding verse 6:6. In this case a translation like "All human labor is for the jaws of death, and its gullet is never satisfied"[45] is both syntactically and thematically possible. The more popular option, however, is to see the suffix referring to kol amal ha-adam: All human toil is for the mouth, but the appetite is never satisfied.[46]

Is this a resignative negation by Qohelet on the possibility of mental tranquilty? I think not. It is a relative rejection, directed against a notion of a possibility of a static fulfilment of the nefesh. There is only a continuous flow of time and events, and man should act accordingly taking into account the time, for every time there is a corresponding right action and vice versa. "Better what the eye sees than the roving of the appetite" 6:9, the hebel/reut ruach -verdict here directed at הַלְּךְ־נָפֶשׁ.[47]

That enjoyment takes place in the present should not obscure the fact, that Qohelet is thinking about life as a whole. Zeno, the founder of Stoicism, had defined happiness as ***εὐροια βίου***., the good flow of life. A similar trajectory can be found in 5:17-19.

17 This is what I have observed to be good: that it is appropriate for a person to eat, to drink and to find satisfaction in their toilsome labor under the sun during the few days of life God has given them —for this is their lot. [18] Moreover, when God gives someone wealth and possessions, and the ability to enjoy them, to accept their lot and be happy in their toil—this is a gift of God. [19]They seldom reflect on the days of their life, because God keeps them occupied with gladness of heart.

This is a crucial and revealing passage in the unit 5:9-6:9 and indeed in the whole book. In his thinking and exposition Qohelet makes predominantly use of a *via negativa* reasoning. In 5:17-19 we find a concentrated account of his thoughts expressed positively. It also highlights the mundane aspects of Qohelet's thinking, Following the good flow of life, according to the 'times' is not necessarily anything dramatic. The ability to enjoy a steady normal everyday is a gift from God.

We should also, again, note the differences. We can also here see a clear pattern which in a fundamental way characterizes Qohelet's relation to ideas expressed in Hellenistic philosophy. It concerns the intellectual, epistemological, emotional and practical limitations of man that he emphasizes, in contrast to the extreme individualism and complete autonomy of the Hellenistic philosophers. While embedded in coherent philosophical systems, this kind of individualism must have appeared to him like an unacceptable form of self-complacency, obliterating or obscuring the boundaries between man and God. For the Hellenistic sage the road was open to be in full control,

45 Lohfink 2003, 86, similarly Lauha 1978. Seow, while advocating the second alternative (see below), nevertheless thinks it important to recognize the mythological background of the text. Seow refers to the portrayal of deified Death as an insatiable monster with opened mouth. Seow notes also biblical examples but emphasizes the use of this imagery as an idiom for rich and oppressive people. 226f.

46 Translation as in R.E.Murphy, *Ecclesiastes,* WBC 23A. Seow 213 notes that nefesh in 6:2,3,9 refers to the insatiable people, noting also Prov 16:26 (interestingly preceded by דַּרְכֵי־מָוֶת in 16:25).

47 Similarly, Krüger *Kohelet,* BKAT 19, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag 2000, *239* "das Glück nur in jeweiligen Gegenwart". Seow 1998, 218, the whole passage 5:7-6:9 "calling for enjoyment in the present". Qohelet is here close to Epicurean conceptions.

not of everything, but his own perfection, endowing him with god-like qualities. Qohelet could adopt these thought patterns only half-way. Realizing the limits of one's understanding can, on the contrary, relieve from undue distress 8:15-17.

Qohelet does not believe in complete undisturbedness, the *ataraxia* that the wise man can, at least in theory, attain. One perfection of ataraxia was exemplified by the Epicurean quasi-gods, living a blissful existence, completely unattached by distress and uninterested in the affairs of the world. But for Qohelet, there will most likely be distress, pain, oppression, economic misery and political unrest in a man's life. Man is not completely immune to all these inconveniences. Qohelet differs from the rigoristic and unconditional image of the Hellenistic sage. However, living in the moment, unattached to that which has no real value, reduces the distress and anxiety that is part of a normal life. 7:14:

בְּיוֹם טוֹבָה֙ הֱיֵ֣ה [a] בְטֹ֔וב וּבְי֥וֹם רָעָ֖ה רְאֵ֑ה גַּ֣ם אֶת־זֶ֔ה לְעֻמַּ֥ת־זֶ֖ה עָשָׂ֣ה הָאֱלֹהִ֑ים

4. Fear of God

The number of passages where Qohelet speaks of the "fear of God" is small, but appear in central places of the composition, 3:14, 5:6, 7:19, 8:12-13, 12:13.

There are two main lines concerning the interpretation of this expression. Either the 'fear' denotes something like being terrified before God, with whom no satisfying form of communication is possible.[48] More in line with normal OT use of fear in connection to God, is to understand 'fear' as something like awe or reverence.[49]

The combination to fear God and to keep the commandments occurs frequently in Deuteronomy, 5:29, 6:2, 8:6, 13:5, 17:19, 31:12. However, for Qohelet most commentators deny this, thinking it is not characteristic for him. Explicitly this connection is made in 12:13.[50] The primary meaning of the "fear of God" for Qohelet may well be a general awe or respect for God. This does in no way exclude, however, also a reference to the commandments, or the Torah.[51] In 3:14 is expressed an idea that in later Judaism is strongly connected to the Torah הוּא יִהְיֶה לְעוֹלָם עָלָיו אֵין לְהוֹסִיף וּמִמֶּנּוּ אֵין לִגְרֹעַ.[52]

48 Fox 1989, Crenshaw, *Ecclesiastes,* OTL, Philadelphia 1987, 30.

49 An overview of the discussion in Schoors 2004, 100-107.

50 This verse, belonging to the epilogue 12:9-14 (or second epilogue vv. 11-14) is usually considered a redactional expansion. I have argued for the unity of the book, including the epilogue, in my paper *What Do We Need the Epiloguists For?*, unpublished. One central argument is that 12:13 in no way contradicts and is fully compatible with Qohelet's theology in general. See also the influential article by M.Fox, *Frame-Narrative and Composition in the Book of Qohelet*, HUCA 48, 1977, 83-106.

51 Notably in Sir 10:19 the fear of God and breaking the commandments are presented as clear antitheses. See also 21:11 , 23:27 and 25:11.

52 We can also note the idea in later Judaism of the close connection and interdependence between the Creation and the Torah.

The enjoyment of creation is a mitzwah. It is the mitzwah that Qohelet focuses on, and we can agree with Schwienhorst-Schönberger that happiness is the main theme of the book. But Qohelet's eudaimonism, partly shaped in opposition to ideas current in Hellenistic philosophy, is unthinkable without the concomitant fear of God. There is no pressing need to interpret "fear of God" a-nomistically (certainly not anti-nomistically).[53]

Conclusions

1. It is difficult to agree with Fox, that Qohelet has no teaching about happiness. Qohelet queries for meaning in life and also the possibilities for man to find satisfaction and happiness. This question clearly governs his whole enterprise. It is also clear that Qohelet addresses life as a whole, not only some isolated moments of pleasure that somehow make existence bearable. This would indeed be a meagre philosophy. Rather it is about the enjoyment of the normal daily life.

2. We can notice a similar suspicion in Qohelet towards the idea of trying to achieve happiness through externals as in Hellenistic philosophy. What is devoid of value is termed hebel and reut/rajon ruah. That which *has* value one should seek and fulfill with all strength that is possible to muster. In general we can sense something of the typical unconditionality of Hellenistic philosophy in Qohelet, albeit in a restricted form. There was for Qohelet no equally straightforward single philosophical principle (virtue, pleasure) to follow or insist on in a strict systematical manner.

3. Qohelet considered and tested postulates connected to the question of the summum bonum in Hellenistic philosophy, particularly in the royal experiment 1:12-2:23. Qohelet tested both perfection of reason and pleasure, at best even simultaneously (2:3)! He may not have tested textbook Stoicism or Epicureanism[54], but the Hellenistic context is unmistakable.

4. Qohelet has an own summum bonum that is both similar and differs from Hellenistic philosophy, but shows a structural affinity with it. Qohelet took part in this discussion without fully sharing its most fundamental premise, that happiness is both an undisputed goal of human endeavor and at the same time functioning as a guideline for right and proper human conduct. The project of Hellenistic philosophy clashed above all with his understanding of a transcendent-immanent God as he had inherited from his Jewish tradition.[55] Qohelet's thinking is a peculiar mix of Hellenistic eudaimonism, containing within it a critique against this very same eudaimonism.[56]

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53 Schwienhorst-Schönberger 1996, 320-324 considers carpe diem and the fear of God to be the main elements of Qohelet's ethics. However, he considers the "fear of God" to be subordinate to the dominating theme of eudaimonism in the book. Schwienhorst-Schönberger also makes a distinction between Qohelet¨s and Ben Sira's more nomistically-oriented use of the expression. I think we should consider seriously, that the difference is mainly one of emphasis.

54 See e.g. Schwienhorst-Schönberger 2004, 464-466, for his excursus on hedonism.

55 For the characterization of Qohelet's God as transcendent-immanent, see Schwienhorst-Schönberger 1996, 100-112.

56 Looking for analogies, in his social philosophy Marx rejected Hegelian idealism, but his thinking nevertheless remained completely dependent on the structures of the Hegelian philosophical system.

Qohelet's eudaimonism concerns the individual but is rooted in God's creation.The ethical thinking of the Hellenistic philosophers, the most central part of their philosophical systems, was based on a clear understanding of how nature is constructed. Nature served as the guide to right conduct. Supposed was a clear implication from *is* to *ought*. For Qohelet the transition from is to ought is more complicated. There is for Qohelet an universal order, that can be said to correspond to the universal natural order of Hellenistic philosophy. The problem is that the full knowledge of this order exists only with God. Man can have only a glimpse of it 3:11. It is a logical step for Qohelet to advocate to fear God and to keep His commandments. Herein lies elements of dogma and revelation, sometimes considered absent from Qohelet's thinking. Enjoyment of creation (carpe diem) and fear of God form the cornerstones of Qohelet's ethics.

Qohelet also shows a marked interest for mental distress and its remedy, showing affinity particularly with Epicurean ideas. However, also here the theological/anthropological differences in outlook are clear.

5. Adopting ideas from Hellenistic philosophy while rejecting others, all the same being structurally dependent on it, it is no wonder Qohelet had problems creating a "philosophy" that was fully coherent. In fact, seeing this tension in the macro-structure of Qohelet's thinking, some of his peculiarities, or even contradictions, fall in their right place. While I have tried to defend Qohelet's "traditionalism", it is clear that Hellenistic modes of thinking does affect his theology. One problem concerns his mixed signals about determinism. In verses like 6:10, 8:8, 9:1 the reader cannot avoid the idea of a predetermined existence. In 2:24-26 even the experience of joy seems to be given directly by God and being outside human control. Commentators have also interpreted 3:1-15 and other passages in a strict deterministic fashion.[57] It is clear, however, that Qohelet does not advocate a strict determinism consistently. The Hellenistic philosophers had promised, that if you truly live like a sage, happiness will follow, no matter what. Qohelet rejects outright such a possibility for man to be in such control of, or alternatively, also to know his destiny (except that he will, eventually, die).[58] Also man cannot, and should not try to manipulate God, who is completely sovereign. Seeing tendencies in Hellenistic thinking, that reduced God, in his view unacceptably, resulted in a reaction that went partly too far. In his rejection of an 'anthropology without God', Qohelet at points went to the other extreme, where human agency and response, which are also important for Qohelet, at first sight seem to be questioned altogether.

6. After all this, it is still difficult to determine the extent of Qohelet's specific knowledge of Hellenistic philosophy or, say, Aristotle's writings. But the thematic structure was there. It strongly influenced his thinking and was, supposedly, intelligible for his contemporary readers. This is also a question about Hellenistic influences in Jewish society in Judea, or at least its literati, in general. The book of Qohelet shows, that deeper structures of Hellenistic thinking were probably at some level internalized, even if considered in certain respects as a 'foreign' component.

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57 E.g. N. Samet, *How Deterministic is Qohelet? A New Reading of the Appendix to the Catalogue of Times*, ZAW 2019. Samet reads also 3:14 deterministically; God *causes* man's fear of Himself!

58 Sometimes commentators reject or downplay Hellenistic influences in Qohelet, claiming that similar ideas can be found in the biblical tradition as well. Maybe we can for once turn this argument around. While a Tun – Ergehen theology is not universal – though of course dominant – in Jewish wisdom literature (see Fox 1989), Hellenistic philosophy presents a paradigmatic example of a Tun – Ergehen philosophy!

7. Qohelet was no great iconoclast. His moderation of a full-fledged individual-based eudaimonism is rather based on traditional Jewish thinking. The foundations of his eudaimonism are deeply rooted in his creation theology.[59]

59 1:4 וְהָאָרֶץ לְעוֹלָם עֹמֶדֶת could function as a critique against Stoic conceptions of *ekpyrosi*s, the great conflagration, where the old world perishes at the beginning of every new world-cycle, as well as against an Epicurean atomism, according to which worlds are regularly formed and dissolved through the constant movement of the atoms. Whether the world was created and/or perishable or not were typical topoi in Greek doxography.

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Summary

Working title of dissertation: **Qohelet and the Challenge of Hellenism. Jewish Wisdom Theology and Underlying Structures of Hellenistic Philosophy.**

The question of Hellenistic influences in Ecclesiastes is still a debated question. Even those assuming an influence have had problems to articulate it more precisely. Commentators have found isolated maxims and traces of Greek philosophical concepts in the peculiar Hebrew of Qohelet as possible indications of an influence. The aim of the dissertation is to show, that the influence goes deeper than this. Qohelet has not only picked up ideas and loose sayings from popular Hellenistic philosophy. His chosen themes and the very structure of his thinking owes to Hellenistic philosophy, even when critical against Hellenistic conceptions. Basic common features of Hellenistic philosophy are analyzed, as well as different schools/traditions, particularly Stoicism and Epicureanism. Exploring connections between Hellenistic philosophy and Qohelet has more than tradition-historical interest. One central aim of the dissertation is to try to show that seeing the connections to Hellenistic thinking can function as an important hermeneutical key to understand the often-enigmatic text of Qohelet. The question of Qohelet's possible particular knowledge of Hellenistic philosophy is addressed, but is here secondary

Title of paper: **Qohelet and the Summum Bonum – Some Observations**

The paper takes up a very overarching theme in Hellenistic philosophy, the question about the *summum bonum,* the highest good, as its starting point. It is argued, that Qohelet is deeply influenced by this discussion, notably in his pronounced eudaimonism. He also shares the mistrust against externals, like wealth, reputation and social standing as means for happiness. He also shows a marked interest for mental distress and its remedy, showing affinity particularly with Epicurean ideas. However, Qohelet is not uncritical towards Hellenistic ideas. He is testing postulates of Hellenistic philosophy, mostly to reach a critical evaluation. Like the Hellenistic philosophers, he takes the individual as the starting point for his ethics. However, he does not share neither the extreme individualism of Hellenistic philosophy, nor its belief in the intellectual and moral capabilities of the individual. Qohelet's eudaimonism is rooted in God's creation. The ethics of Hellenistic philosophy was based on a highly developed understanding of nature, but for Qohelet the grasping of God's creation exceeds man's understanding. Instead, he advocates a 'fear of God', which, besides his eudaimonism – the enjoyment of creation – is the other important component of his ethics. The mixing of two different systems of thought creates tensions that he is not always able to solve successfully. Countering the hybris of Hellenistic individualism, he at times ends up overemphasizing God's agency, at the expense of human agency, which nevertheless constitutes an important aspect of his anthropology. The roots of Qohelet's criticism against Hellenistic conceptions stem from his Jewish tradition and there is no need to perceive him as a great iconoclast or anomaly in the tradition.

The book of Qohelet shows, that Hellenistic modes of thinking must have permeated Jewish society in Judea in the late 3rd century, at least among the literati.

Give her a voice! Victims of violence – a reading of Judges 19

My research aims to study how readers' previous experiences affect their reception of a violent text like Judges 19, especially focused on experiences of gender-based violence.

Making a statement against the traditional Christian patriarchal interpretation, feminist criticism has named Judges 19 as a 'text of terror'[1] and perceives it articulating androcentric power structures during the time of the author/editors. However, research in narrative traumatology has shown that this violent story could also be read as a text of trauma,[2] that could potentially function as a therapeutic and healing text by putting into words the collective experience of gender-based violence and thus providing a narrative to identify with. My research aims to find out which representation of the text the reception of active Bible readers familiar with its narratives with personal experiences of violence follows, by conducting an empirical reading study through written interviews.[3] This reader-response-based approach through qualitative methods could show that an ancient text can function as a #MeToo-text for today's readers; and if not, raises the question of what is needed for it to be read as a text assisting in the survival process of gender-based violence.

[1] Phyllis Trible, *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives*, Overtures to Biblical Theology, 13 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984).
[2] Janelle Stanley, 'Judges 19: Text of Trauma', in *Joshua and Judges*, ed. by Athalya Brenner-Idan and Gale A. Yee, Texts @ Contexts (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), pp. 275–89.
[3] Inspired by Judith Malmes, 'Die Erzählung von Jiftach Und Seiner Tochter (Ri 11,29-40). Eine Empirische Lesestudie', *Protokolle Zur Bibel*, 18.1 (2009), 1–30.

1. Introduction

My research aims to study how readers' previous experiences affect their reception of a violent text like Judges 19, especially focused on experiences of gender-based violence and misogyny. Making a statement against the traditional Christian patriarchal interpretation, feminist criticism has named Judges 19 as a 'text of terror'[1] and perceives it articulating androcentric power structures during the time of the author/editors. However, research in narrative traumatology has shown that this violent story could also be read as a text of trauma,[2] that could potentially function as a therapeutic and healing text by putting into words the collective experience of gender-based violence and misogyny and thus providing a narrative to identify with. My research aims to find out which representation of the text the reception of active Bible readers familiar with its narratives with personal experiences of violence and misogyny follows, by conducting an empirical reading study through written interviews.[3] This reader-response-based approach through qualitative methods could show that an ancient text can function as a #MeToo-text for today's readers; and if not, raises the question of what is needed for it to be read as a text possibly assisting in the survival process of gender-based violence and misogyny.

2. Methodology

The study starts with a literary analysis of Judges 19 and its reception through the years, providing background for the text and how it has been understood in different contexts, times and cultural settings. This part of the research provides a basis of comparison for the reception of the text by the sample group.

Qualitative/quantitative methodology is rooted in the social sciences and can be used as a research method, when the focus of biblical studies shifts from the text to the reader. Qualitative research method is better suited for this research than quantitative, which focuses more on numbers and statistics. Qualitative research focuses on specific experiences and provides tools for an in-depth study of those particular experiences, bringing the research close to the real-life experiences. Qualitative research is not aimed at statistical representativeness but focuses on detail at how some individuals experience the world. It

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[1] Phyllis Trible, *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives*, Overtures to Biblical Theology, 13 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984).

[2] Janelle Stanley, 'Judges 19: Text of Trauma', in *Joshua and Judges*, ed. by Athalya Brenner-Idan and Gale A. Yee, Texts @ Contexts (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), pp. 275–89.

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helps to try to understand the experience behind the reading process instead of just providing statistics.[4] Thus, a qualitative approach such as interviewing would be more suited for this research.

The collection of the data would happen through an empirical reading study, inspired by J. Malmes' 'Empirische Lesestudie'.[5] This could be described as a written interview. In her research, Malmes met with a sample group and read through a biblical text, providing pauses in strategic places of the text for the readers to write down their answers on questions asked by the researcher. This provided the data that the researcher analyzed. In my research I would somewhat similarly like to provide an interview, where the read biblical text would be first read as a whole, and then divided in sections with pauses for the participant to freely answer questions posed by the researcher. This would provide the data to be analyzed. The text would be available for the participants the whole time and they would be allowed to go back to it if they feel necessary. The questions asked would become visible to the participants only after they have initially read the text to give them more space in forming their own impressions of the text without being led to it by questions.

Since the participants are active readers of the Bible, it is possible and even likely that they have read the narrative sometime beforehand unrelated to this research. However, as the text to be studied is one with many open questions, it requires interpretation from any reader trying to make sense of it and thus can function as an ideal text to study the authentic reception of its readers. Perhaps because of its violent and puzzling content, Judges 19 is rarely preached on or studied in devotional material used in churches, leaving it as a text without overly too much dogmatic baggage. Judges 19 has been quite scarcely commented on: while many commentators since the early Jewish and early Christian times remained silent on the text, others who have commented on it have done so in very different ways. Even though the Reformation commentators bring in some very influential interpretations on the text, also these vary from each other and do not follow a united line that would provide a certain exegetical understanding that churches and faith communities singlehandedly follow.[6]

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[4] Svend Brinkmann, *Qualitative Interviewing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 49 <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=603936> [accessed 7 July 2021].

[5] Malmes.

[6] John Lee Thompson, *Writing the Wrongs: Women of the Old Testament among Biblical Commentators from Philo through the Reformation*, Oxford Studies in Historical Theology (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 186–87.

On the contrary, it can be argued, that a text like Judges 19 is very rarely, if at all, read in contemporary protestant faith communities.[7]

The interview would start with an initial questionnaire regarding the background of the participant, especially their gender and possible experiences of misogyny or gender-based violence. After that the text will be read first as a whole and then in sections. The questions posed in the pauses will be connected to the different exegetical questions related to the text. As an example, one question asked after reading the first two verses could be focusing on the motivation of the pilegesh leaving the Levite. In this particular case, though, it would probably be necessary to additionally provide different translations of verse 2 to point out the different possibilities of interpretation.

Pamela Milne in her empirical reading study of Judges 11, has used reflective questions that allow the participants to explain the story in their own words and identify with the characters, and to ask what changes they might make in the text if that was possible.[8] These questions have made it possible to hear the participants thoughts and impressions on the text and to analyze if patterns can be seen in the responses that function as a basis for the hypotheses. Milne even provides a pattern of well thought-through questions, that could function as giving direction to the questions for my research as well.

Milne starts by emphasizing that the interview is not a test and that there are no correct or incorrect answers. She then continues to provide open and reflective questions, many of which could be also suited for this study. Possible questions borrowed from Milne's study relevant to this one could include, for example:

- Tell me in your own words what this story is about.
- What is the central, or main, message of the story?
- Who is the central or most important character in this story?
- If you could be any of the characters in the story, which one would it be?
- Which character would you least like to be?
- Who is the most powerful character in the story?
- Who is the weakest character in the story?

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[7] Brad Embry, 'Narrative Loss, the (Important) Role of Women, and Community in Judges 19', in *Joshua and Judges*, ed. by Athalya Brenner-Idan and Gale A. Yee, Texts @ Contexts (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), pp. 257–73 (pp. 257–58).

[8] Pamela J. Milne, 'From the Margins to the Margins', in *Joshua and Judges*, ed. by Athalya Brenner-Idan and Gale A. Yee, Texts @ Contexts (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), pp. 209–34 (p. 215).

- If you had to evaluate the characters in terms of good and bad which characters would you identify as good (if any) and which characters would you identify as bad (if any)?
- What feelings do you have when you read this story?
- If you could change any part of this story, which part would it be?[9]

These kind of interview questions would give the participants the possibility and space to contemplate on their own reception of the story. Additionally, it would be interesting to ask some questions related to the general meaning of the story inside the whole of the Bible, trying to find out how the participants reason the existence of such a text within the Bible. Why do they think this story is there in the first place? Are they able to make connections between the particular narrative in Judges 19 and the theme of the whole book of Judges? How do they make sense of the narrative within the Old Testament or in connection with other narratives about the story of the Israelites? These reflective and open questions would be asked at the end of the interview, when the more detailed questions regarding specific sections of the text have been answered.

The sample group would consist of individuals, who are already very familiar with the Bible. This could suggest a focus within a specific denomination, which emphasizes more the daily reading of various texts of the Bible. For example, the Seventh-Day Adventist Church reports in its global Church member survey that up to 87 percent of the members of the Church read their Bibles more than once weak.[10] This could indicate a relative familiarity with the Bible and its stories, including Judges 19. The recruiting of participants would happen through the denomination and its local churches in form of an agreed appointment of a written group interview taking place for example at the church premises. On the other hand, though, comparison between different denominations would be highly interesting. This might, however, prove to be too large a study. Qualitative research is usually focused on a smaller group of participants in order to ensure an in-depth analysis of research material, which is quite large. If 20 pages of transcript material per interview is an estimated average,

[9] Milne, pp. 233–34.
[10] David Trim, 'Reaching the World: How Did We Do? The Global Church Member Survey 2018' <https://documents.adventistarchives.org/ArchivesPublications/2018%20Annual%20Council%20-%20Global%20Church%20Member%20Survey%20Data%20Report.pdf> [accessed 23 June 2021].

already 15 participants would provide 300 pages of material to analyze.[11] Perhaps, for this study, it would be wiser to remain within one denomination.

As the research is aimed to find out the reading experience of regular Bible readers, it is also focused on studying if the interpretation and reception of a violent text changes, when the reader has his/her own previous personal experiences of violence. Since the statistics of gender-based violence/victimization are high, it is assumed that a large enough sample group within one denomination will provide enough interviews of people with and without these experiences to allow comparison. To clarify, gender-based violence and sexual victimization can include many forms of violence and abuse, such as exhibitionism, unwanted exposure to pornography, voyeurism, sexual unwanted contact with intimate body parts and penetration[12] and beating, battering, sexual harassment and stalking,[13] to name some. Gender-based violence is not reduced only to excessive violent assaults as rape. Perhaps this in its part clarifies why the statistics on such experiences are so high. This research is interested in the reading experience of readers with and without experiences of the whole range of gender-based violence and sexual victimization. Thus, in order to have these included in the sample group, a large enough take on any denomination or community should suffice.

3. Ethical issues

The main ethical concerns regarding my study are connected with social responsibility and the possible harm caused to the participants. An experience of violence can happen on many levels and not all persons respond to it in alike manner. As the research is associated with possible traumatic experiences of the participants and the participants will be presented with data containing violence, this could run the risk of triggering post-traumatic symptoms and anxiety in some of the participants.

To reduce the risk of harming the participants, the participation to the research needs to be voluntary and stepping out of it at any point can be done without any negative consequences. Prior to agreement of participation the participants must be fully informed of the content of the study, processing of their data, practical conduction of the research and the potential risks connected to it. After receiving this information, the participants need to be

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[11] Brinkmann, p. 59.

[12] Christine A. Gidycz and Erika L. Kelley, 'Rape and Sexual Assault Victimization', in *The Wiley Handbook on the Psychology of Violence*, 2016, pp. 455–81 (p. 455).

[13] Pamela Cooper-White, *The Cry of Tamar: Violence against Women and the Church's Response*, Second Edition (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012).

given adequate time to decide about their participation. All participants need to be over 18-year-old adults.

The reader's familiarity with the Bible would be important from an ethical point of view. Since the text in question is one of extreme violence, it is possible that the reading experience could run the risk of triggering post-traumatic symptoms and anxiety in some of the participants. One part of reducing this risk is to choose the sample group from readers already familiar with the stories of the Bible, including the violent ones. Thus, it can be argued, the biblical text in question would not be completely new or surprising to the participants but a text that they would encounter in their everyday life situations as well. This would minimize the risk of causing mental harm exceeding the limits of daily life. Therefore, the sample group will be chosen from Christians and/or Jews who practice regular and active study of the Bible, and who are familiar with the Bible and its stories. Additionally, it is statistically shown that up to 75% of women have experienced some type of sexual victimization in their life.[14] Thus, it would be logical to deduce, that also a large proportion of regularly Bible reading women have experienced some form of sexual victimization in their lifetime, and are reading their Bibles, including its violent texts like Judges 19, with the background of these experiences already as part of their everyday life. Reading such texts as narratives to identify with as collective experiences of gender-based violence, instead of the traditional patriarchal worldview, can potentially be an empowering and strengthening experience for readers with personal experiences of violence.

In order to decrease the risk of post-traumatic symptoms and anxiety caused by the research, the sample group will be restricted to, in addition to participants without a violent experience, to participants in whose lives significant time has passed between their possible personal traumatic experience and the participation in the research, and whose trauma is not an acute event in the recent past. It would be best to include a healthcare professional specialized in gender-based violence present in the interviews in case of a potential trigger caused by the text. This possibility of contact to a mental healthcare professional must be available to the participants also outside of the times of the interview, and it must be communicated accordingly, in case of a delayed reaction. The collection of the data (the interview situation and questions) must be designed in a way that they cause minimum discomfort to the participant. The planning of this could be done in co-operation with the healthcare professional assisting in the interviews.

[14] Gidycz and Kelley, p. 456.

Some additional ethical issues related to this research are connected to the collection, analyzing and managing the data. The collection of the empirical data (interview setting and questions) and the analyzing of the data needs to be as objective and free from personal bias of the researcher as possible. The research process must be free from any kind of research misconduct such as plagiarism or fabrication and falsification of the data. The anonymity of the participants needs to be guaranteed and this must be communicated to the participants prior to participation. Preserving, opening and publishing the data must be done through services that provide reliable data protection and preserve the anonymity of the participants. The whole research is guided by the fundamental principles of ethical research: reliability, honesty, respect and accountability.

The text to be studied has violent content and the sample group will include persons with previous personal experiences of violence. Therefore, it is imperative, that the issues connected to research ethics are thought through and solved before the actual application of the plans. To ensure that all ethical issues connected to the study have been taken into consideration, the research plan must go through an ethical review by an ethical committee prior to its practical implementation.

My research aims to study how readers' previous experiences affect their reception of a violent text like Judges 19, especially focused on experiences of gender-based violence and misogyny. Making a statement against the traditional Christian patriarchal interpretation, feminist criticism has named Judges 19 as a 'text of terror'[1] and perceives it articulating androcentric power structures during the time of the author/editors. However, research in narrative traumatology has shown that this violent story could also be read as a text of trauma,[2] that could potentially function as a therapeutic and healing text by putting into words the collective experience of gender-based violence and misogyny and thus providing a narrative to identify with. My research aims to find out which representation of the text the reception of active Bible readers familiar with its narratives with personal experiences of violence and misogyny follows, by conducting an empirical reading study through written interviews.[3] This reader-response-based approach through qualitative methods could show that an ancient text can function as a #MeToo-text for today's readers; and if not, raises the question of what is needed for it to be read as a text possibly assisting in the survival process of gender-based violence and misogyny.

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Textual criticism vs. theology in two contemporary Swedish translations of the Old Testament

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OTSEM annual meeting 2021

In this paper, the text-critical principles of two contemporary Swedish translations of the Old Testament are examined from the viewpoint of paratextual elements. The paper focuses on text-critical footnotes, which are seen as a way for translators to communicate matters of textual criticism to the general readers. Usually, translators would have a certain purpose with how they communicate textual criticism through footnotes. One such purpose may be to present their rendering as a religiously authoritative scripture. In other words, the theological positions of the translators may affect their text-critical arguments.

While the theological implications of different ways of translating the Bible are well known, the relationship between textual criticism and theology in biblical translation is quite underexplored. It is at this intersection that this paper is placed. In the paper, the two Swedish translations *Svenska Folkbibeln* (1998/2015) and *Bibel 2000* (1999/2001), are surveyed. The former presents itself as a theologically conservative, evangelical translation, which seeks to render as accurately as possible the Bible as the Word of God. This has clear text-critical implications. This translation emerged as a reaction to *Bibel 2000*, a state-funded translation carried out by a governmental committee, which according to its directives should pay no consideration to the possible religious application or reception of the biblical texts.

In the paper, the incentives behind both translations are described. With the help of articles and publications by their translators, one may assess the basic premises of the translations, including their text-critical arguments. The text-critical footnotes of 1–2 Samuel and Psalms are then investigated as a case study, discussing how the text-critical information conveyed can be connected to any kind of theological bias.

Textual criticism vs. theology in two contemporary Swedish translations of the Old Testament

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1. Introduction

Different contemporary translations of the Bible are based on different texts. Even though we normally refer to 'the Bible' in singular, no two translations represent the exact same textual basis. In this way, modern translations appear as a kind of text-critical, eclectic editions (Tov 2012: 367). After all, it is not source text editions like the BHK, BHS or BHQ that most Bible readers encounter, but biblical translations which are the outcome of certain text-critical choices.

Biblical translation is seldom a neutral endeavour; it has in fact been described as a theological battlefield (Thuesen 1999). The adherents of the King James Only movement (see Hentschel 2017) argue that the reliability of the KJV is not only a matter of how it was translated, but also of its textual base: by being a translation of a certain text, this rendering can claim to be identical with the Word of God. This connects theological bias to the workings of textual criticism in translations of the Bible. There are other much less extreme examples in contemporary biblical translation where the same connection can be made. In such cases, the evaluation of textual evidence during the translation process is made subject to the theological standing of the translators or of the translating institution (in the same way as different kinds of ideological bias can affect the mediation of the texts being translated).

This connection between theology and textual criticism in biblical translation will be investigated in the present paper. Focusing on two contemporary translations, I will primarily examine text-critical principles and arguments, which may be assessed by exploring different paratextual elements of the Bible editions in question. Apart from the main text, most contemporary Bible translations are endowed with a footnote apparatus. Footnotes are a kind of paratextual elements, which "convey [the text] to the reader in some particular way" (Yarchin 2019: 24). As paratextual elements, footnotes have been framed as a way for Bible translators to communicate textual criticism to the general public (Scanlin 1988). Apparently, for a given text or pericope, not all of the potentially relevant text-critical information can be communicated. The general Bible reader is thus presented with a selection of text-critical information. It is reasonable to assume that translators have a certain purpose with such a selection. Hence, it would be interesting to examine not only *how* translators and translations communicate text-critical information, but also *what* information they communicate, and if this can be connected to any specific theological bias.

To achieve this, I will investigate two contemporary translations of the Old Testament into Swedish, *Svenska Folkbibeln* ('the Swedish Folk Bible'), published in two editions in 1998 and 2015, and *Bibel 2000*, published in 1999/2001. The first one presents itself as a theologically conservative, evangelical translation, seeking to render the Bible as the Word of God, while the other presents itself as a rendering of a collection of antique texts with an outstanding historical and cultural value. As we will see, these ways of apprehending the texts being translated have implications for the text-critical procedures of the respective translation and for what text-critical information is communicated to the reader, potentially affecting the perception or interpretation of the biblical texts by the general reader. By juxtaposing two different translations with such different premisses, light can be shed on each of them. Since the former translation, *Svensk Folkbibeln*, is the explicitly 'theological' translation of the two, I will focus on this one, with the other translation, *Bibel 2000*, as a comparative vantage point.

The paper will begin by describing the background of *Bibel 2000*, which is decisive for understanding why *Svenska Folkbibeln* (hereafter: *Folkbibeln*) came to be. The text-critical principles of respective translation are described. Thereafter, the text-critical arguments and information that can be deduced from the footnotes of *Folkbibeln* and *Bibel 2000* are surveyed. A comparative section leads over to a discussion of the theological nature of the way textual criticism is presented and communicated in *Folkbibeln*, and how this contrasts to *Bibel 2000*. Some final words conclude the paper.

2. *Bibel 2000*: A background and an assessment of its text-critical principles

In this section, the background of *Bibel 2000* is described, including the critique it launched against its predecessor, the 1917 Church Bible. This will also clarify why and how *Folkbibeln* emerged as an alternative translation to *Bibel 2000.*

In 1917, a new official translation of the Bible into Swedish was published, the 1917 Church Bible (*1917 års kyrkobibel*). Despite the translation being the outcome of a lengthy process, it did not take long before critique was voiced against it. Most of the arguments were launched at its general style, but it was also noted that in terms of textual criticism, the translation had been very conservative when it came to the Old Testament (see Albrektson 1978). The 1917 translators had sought to follow the Masoretic text (MT) as closely as possible. When criticized for this, one of the translators had responded that the 'pious veneration' (*tillbedjande vördnad*) of the Masoretes vis-à-vis the Hebrew text had safeguarded it from corruption during the transmission; this in fact ensured that later text collections or editions were almost perfectly identical with 'the lost original' (Personne 1917: 7–8; cf. Idestrom 2000: 189–192). This text-critical argument was thus clearly made from a theological position.

In 1961, the first measurements were taken for a new official Bible translation into Swedish, eventually to be named *Bibel 2000*. In 1972, a state-funded governmental

committee was appointed for the task. The committee was named 'The Bible Commission'. As would eventually be clear, the committee rejected any demands from churches and denominations to interpret and translate the biblical texts according to any specific religious or theological framework (Pleijel 2018: 111–114). Quite the opposite: the texts should be translated like any other collection of antique texts. This can be partly explained by the fact that the work was carried out by a state-funded, governmental committee, with the aim of letting all citizens, regardless of faith, gain access to such a culturally and historically important piece of literature as the Bible. As a consequence, the translation was not presented as a rendering of the Bible as the Word of God, or as a particularly sacred or religious scripture. Such an assessment was left to individuals and religious communities (Åsberg 1990). Thus, *Bible 2000* might be characterized as a 'non-theological' translation of the Bible, which in turn is key for understanding the critique that was launched against it by the translators of *Folkbibeln*.

The preparatory investigations, before the actual translation process started, went to some lenght in refuting the text-critical positions of the 1917 Old Testament translation (see Albrektson et al 1974: 40–52). For the new translation, the MT was considered the natural starting-point.[1] However, when the MT was deemed corrupt or unintelligible, different witnesses and variants were to be consulted. In case no extant witness or variant contained an intelligible text, conjectural emendation should be used. As a guiding principle, textual eclecticism (albeit a moderate one) was thus established. Once finished, the translation was to be published in the form of a 'standard edition' (*standardutgåva*), with appendices and footnotes. The footnotes should indicate when the translation deviated from the MT, either by way of conjectural emendation or by following other witnesses, such as the ancient versions. The text-critical principles of the upcoming translation marked a very different approach compared to the 1917 Church Bible. They did not accord any exclusive position to the MT, in the sense that this specific text was to be strictly adhered to. They certainly did not base any text-critical considerations on the notion that the MT was superior because of the way that it had been transmitted. As was noted above, for the 1917 translators this had been connected to the religious perceptions of those who had transmitted the text (the Masoretes). For the committee responsible for the new translation, such an argument would have been untenable, since it introduced a notion that the MT was special simply because it was considered sacred or religious scripture by some groups and communities. In contrast to this, on a text-critical level, the committe clearly held that "the text of the Hebrew Bible should be treated as any other text" (Williamson 2009: 163). As we will see, the unwillingness to let any kind of theological bias mark the translation eventually known as

[1] BHS (1967/77) was used, the last ten years of the work the 4th edition (1990) was consulted. When necessary, the BHK (1937) as well as other text editions were also consulted. See SOU 2000:100:6.

Bibel 2000 would result in heavy criticisms, among others from those responsible for *Folkbibeln*.

3. *Folkbibeln* and its text-critical arguments

3.1 Background

In this section, the background and incentives of *Folkbibeln* are described. Then will follow a presentation of its text-critical arguments, including the way these are presented in the paratextual elements of both the original 1998 and the revised 2015 edition.

The first major publication of the governmental Bible Commission was the translation of the New Testament, which was published in 1981 (hereafter: *NT81*). A number of Christian individuals, representing both conservative Lutheran associations and evangelical free churches, reacted negatively to the *NT81* translation (see Åsberg 1983). One frequent criticism was that 'secular' academic scholarship on the Bible had impacted the translation. Being informed by a methodological atheism or agnosticism (see Porpora 2006), this kind of scholarship failed to grasp the true nature of the Bible as religious scripture. This also meant that the translators of the Bible Commission, whose members represented academic biblical scholarship, lacked the necessary prerequisites for accurately translating the Bible.

As a reaction, an association (*Stiftelsen Bibeltrogen Bibelöversättning*) was formed in 1983 with the mission to eventually present a Bible translation of its own, later to be known as *Folkbibeln*. The work with the translation thus started as a reaction to *Bibel 2000*. In a recent account, one of the main translators explicitly states that an important objective of *Folkbibeln* was to publish their translation before the Bible Commission had finished their work (Erlandsson 2019: 51).[2] The first complete edition of *Folkbibeln* was accordingly published in 1998—one year before *Bibel 2000* was published in 1999.[3] In 2015, a revised edition of *Folkbibeln* was published; it was presented as a more reader-friendly, idiomatic text. The revision was also framed as a way of acheiving a translation 'closer to the source text'.[4] An additional, important objective was to enlarge the footnote apparatus, which was considered a service to the reader. As we will see, on a text-

[2] In order to finish their work before the Bible Commission, the translators needed to force their work with the OT. Therefore, the first complete edition of *Folkbibeln* (1998) was partly a revision of the 1917 translation and partly a retranslation (there is no account for which parts of the OT that have been retranslated and which have only been revised).

[3] *Bibel 2000* was published in two different editions: one in 1999 with only the translated text, and one in 2001 as a complete edition with footnotes, appendices, etc.

[4] According to the pamphlet "Den nya Folkbibeln 2015. Modern och texttrogen" (www.folkbibeln.it/arkiv/SFB15-broschyr-web.pdf), the revision was made to achieve four different objectives: 1) a more modern language; 2) a higher degree of fluency; 3) a translation closer to the source text; and 4) more comprehensive footnotes.

critical level, there are interesting differences between the 1998 and the 2015 editions, not least when it comes to the footnotes.

3.2 The text-critical arguments and principles of Folkbibeln

As already discussed, much of the critique of *Folkbibeln* and its representatives was directed at how secular academic scholarship on the Bible had affected the Bible Commission's work, and thereby the translation itself. The application of literary criticism theories, such as the documentary hypothesis, were criticized and rejected (e.g., Erlandsson 2014). Well-known and long established text-critical procedures were also dismissed. One such procedure, frequently applied by the Bible Commission, was conjectural emendation, which was framed by the representatives of *Folkbibeln* as a way of 'inventing a new text' (Erlandsson 1999: 82; cf. Larsdal 2019). In other words, a translator of the Bible ought to render 'what the source text actually says', and not 'what the source text should contain' (Erlandsson 2014: 10), i.e., according to the presuppositions of the translator. It was suggested that the translator should instead adhere to the 'Hebrew source text at hand' (*den föreliggande hebreiska grundtexten*, Erlandsson 1999: 81). However, in contrast to the 1917 Church Bible, the translators at times also claimed that there are other legitimate source texts than the MT, such as the ancient versions. In the appendix to the 2015 *Folkbibeln* edition, the revision principles that were followed when revising the translation are outlined. One section concerns the updated and expanded footnotes (*Folkbibeln* 2015: 1869–1872). Here, it is said that the texts of the Bible were transmitted 'with great care' by the Masoretes; despite this, 'a few variants' (*enstaka läsvarianter*) eventually evolved (ibid: 1872).[5] It is stated, however, that the differences between these variants are mainly orthographic (ibid).

In an anthology published in 2019, the text-critical principles of *Folkbibeln* are more fully described. What is said here describes a fairly generous position vis-à-vis different texts, witnesses, and variants. Thus, while the MT constitutes the natural starting-point,[6] when this text is unintelligible, the Qumran texts, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Targums, the Peshitta, the LXX, the Vulgate, Masoretic manuscripts, and other witnesses may be consulted (Larsdal 2019; Erlandsson 2019). In the 2015 edition appendix, it is stated that when the LXX reflects a Hebrew text which no longer exists, then the hypothetical Hebrew *Vorlage* of the LXX may be followed (*Folkbibeln* 2015: 1872). This sounds like the text-critical principles of any other biblical translation.

[5] There seems to be no assessment of the process with transmitting the Hebrew Bible texts before the work of the Masoretes.

[6] It is unclear which source text edition used when translating/revising the Old Testament. It is only referred to as 'the Masoretic standard text' (*den masoretiska standardtexten*, Larsdal 2019: 130). What is referred to is likely the BHS in its latest (5th) edition (1997), but it remains unclear if, for example, the BHQ volumes published at the time were being consulted.

However, a couple of details establishes a clear connection between the theological presuppositions of the translation project at large and its text-critical principles.

First, the LXX is assigned a special status. Of course, as a textual witness, it has an important role in virtually any contemporary translation of the Old Testament. However, the argument for the LXX's special status here seems not to be based primarily on the actual textual quality of the LXX, but on the fact that it was 'at times quoted by the apostles themselves' (Larsdal 2019: 130). Second, as has already been noted, the use of conjectural emendation is rejected. Only extant variants or witnesses may be consulted. This is because conjectural emendation represents an attempt to 'recompose a text based on one's own presuppositions regarding what the text should say, instead of departing from what the biblical text we actually have in front of us says' (Larsdal 2019: 130). The argument for such a rejection is based on two New Testament texts: the translator should keep to "that which is written" (1 Cor 4:6), since "the Scripture cannot be annulled" (John 10:35) (Larsdal 2019: 131). The argument for keeping with extant variants is thus clearly theological. In the appendix to the 2015 edition, a general motivation for the use of textual criticism is given: with the help of it, 'we are able to trace the way of the holy Scriptures throughout history and into our time' (*Folkbibeln* 2015: 1875). It is probably not a coincidence that the word 'way' (*väg*) and not, for example, 'development' (*utveckling*) is used, since the latter would imply that the Word of God has in some way changed by way of textual transmission. Indeed, with a quote from Jer 1:12—"I will watch over my word" (*Folkbibeln* 2015: 1875)—it is suggested that God has in some way safeguarded the biblical texts from alteration or corruption during the course of history. This partly resembles the argument of the translators responsible for the 1917 Church Bible translation, suggesting that the Hebrew texts were preserved from corruption as a result of the Masoretes' 'pious veneration' (see above, section 2).

Thus far, the text-critical principles outlined by the translators and representatives of *Folkbibeln* themselves have been described. I will now move to the information that is provided to the reader in the text-critical footnotes of the 1998 and 2015 editions of *Folkbibeln.*

4. Text-critical principles as seen through the foonotes of *Folkbibeln*

It has been argued that in its revised 2015 edition, *Folkbibeln* has become more similar to *Bibel 2000*, since it contains a mugh higher number of footnotes—including text-critical footnotes—than the 1998 edition (see Olsson 2015). These footnotes seemingly account for alternative renderings based on a different text than the MT. Even though there is no substantial difference regarding how the text-critical principles for the 1998 and the 2015 edition, respectively, are described by the translators themselves (see the section above), a higher number of text-critical footnotes should imply that textual criticism has been given a more prominent position in the latter edition. A reader

sympathetic to the 1998 edition and the original incentives of *Folkbibeln* would thus perhaps suspect that 'criticism' against the Bible has now influenced this translation, as it once did influence *Bibel 2000*. In other words, with its 2015 edition, *Folkbibeln* has supposedly become a more mainstream Bible translation. As the following survey will show, the 2015 edition does indeed display a dramatic increase of footnotes. However, they function in a very different way compared to those in *Bibel 2000*.

As in many other translations, the footnote apparatus in *Folkbibeln* is used to communicate and explain aspects of the biblical texts and their *Umwelt* which a contemporary reader has limited knowledge of. This includes historical, religious, cultural, and geographical, but also linguistic and philological, information. A number of these footnotes thus also contain information on aspects of translation, including text-critical issues. This includes information on variants and witnesses which entails a different textual base for the translation than the MT. The subsequent discussion will focus on the text-critical footnotes. As a case study, the footnotes to 1–2 Samuel and Psalms in the 1998 and 2015 editions are surveyed.[7]

4.1 Statistical differences between the 1998 edition and the 2015 edition

In the 1998 edition, 1–2 Samuel and Psalms together contain 69 footnotes, out of which 9 contain text-critical information. In the 2015 edition, however, 1–2 Samuel and Psalms together contain 745 footnotes, out of which 121 contain text-critical information. The following chart summarizes the differences between the two editions:

	Folkbibeln 1998		*Folkbibeln* 2015	
	Footnotes	Text-critical footnotes	Footnotes	Text-critical footnotes
1 Samuel	8	0	175	16
2 Samuel	17	8	154	16
Psalms	44	1	416	89

As is obvious, the 1998 edition contains a limited number of general footnotes, and a very limited number of text-critical footnotes. In the 2015 edition, both the general number of footnotes and the number of specifically text-critical footnotes has greatly increased.

[7] When it comes to the MT, 1–2 Samuel is generally regarded as corrupt (see Tov 2012: 189, 373), while a number of Psalms present textual difficulties, for example in the sense that DSS Psalms scrolls differ greatly from the MT (see Tov 2012: 320–321). This means that when translating these books, the translators are presented with several problems of text-critical nature.

4.2 Contextual differences between the 1998 edition and the 2015 edition

What kind of information is provided in the text-critical footnotes? In the 1998 edition, in Psalms, the only text-critical note (to Ps 145:13b) registers an addition to the MT. This footnote thus marks a (partly) different textual base than the MT. In 1–2 Samuel, all eight text-critical footnotes belong to another category: they supplement the reader with information about an alternative textual base; this textual base has not actually been chosen, but would supposedly have been equally possible to translate as the MT (2 Sam 8:12–13; 14:4; 15:7; 17:25; 21:8; 23:8, 18; 24:13). One example is 2 Sam 15:7, which begins: 'When forty* years had passed, Absalom said to the king […]' (*När fyrtio* år hade gått sade Absalom till kungen* […]). The footnote, corresponding to the asterisk, says: 'Forty: Greek manuscripts and the Peshitta: "four"', indicating that if the Peshitta and the Greek manuscripts referred to would have constituted the textual base, the rendering would have been 'four' instead of 'forty'. In other words, the reader is supplemented with an alternative to what the translators have opted for. In these instances, what the footnotes communicate to the reader is that a different text than the MT could have been translated. From a different viewpoint, what the footnotes also communicate is that the MT in these cases still constitutes an intelligible source text.[8] After all, by simply being there, the text-critical footnotes indicate that there might be some sort of problem with the MT. And yet, the translator may also in these instances safely adhere to the MT.

In the 2015 edition, in 1–2 Samuel and Psalms, one finds the same two different sorts of text-critical footnotes as in the 1998 edition, thus:

1) Footnotes which register hypothetical renderings that would have been supported by a different textual base than the MT.
2) Footnotes which explain that a certain target-text rendering is not a translation of the MT but of a different textual base.

Based on how text-critical footnotes tend to function in other Bible translations, one would be inclined to think that the majority of footnotes would belong to category (2), declaring when the translation has been based on a different text than the MT. However, this is not the case, either in the 1998 or the 2015 edition. In both the 1998 and the 2015

[8] Among the notes referring to 'other manuscripts' as a possible alternative textual base are 2 Sam 23:8 and 18; however, if one consults the BHS (1997), it turns out that what is designated as 'other manuscripts' is in these two instances in fact the MT. Thus, the footnotes in *Folkbibeln* 1998 suggest that it is the MT that has been followed, and that 'other manuscripts' indicate an alternative textual base. It would be tempting to conclude that the translators try to suggest that the MT has been followed when this is in fact not the case. However, as it is not clear which source text edition has actually been followed, it is hard to draw any definitive conclusions.

edition, the majority of footnotes instead contain mere information about textual variants and witnesses. I will shortly return to this point.

What variants and witnesses are referred to in the footnotes? In the 1998 edition, the note to Ps 145:13b refers to the Qumran texts, the LXX, the Vulgate, and the Peshitta, and the note to 2 Sam 15:7 refers to the LXX and the Peshitta. The remaining text-critical footnotes simply refer to 'other manuscripts' (*andra handskrifter*). In this respect, the footnotes in the 2015 edition are more diverse. Here, especially the LXX has a prominent position. The use of witnesses in the 2015 edition is summarized in the following chart, with the percentage number indicating part of the totalt number of witnesses in each biblical book.[9]

	LXX	Peshitta	Qumran	Vulgate	'Other manuscripts'
1 Samuel	13 [81%]	2 [13%]	2 [13%]	0	0
2 Samuel	7 [44%]	1 [6%]	0	1 [6%]	9 [56%]
Psalms	68 [76%]	1 [1%]	1 [1%]	1 [1%]	15 [17%]

The massive increase of text-critical notes in the 2015 edition, and the mere mentioning of a number of different variants and witnesses, suggests that textual criticism is given a new and important role in the translation. This is also likely what the translators seek to communicate to the readers. However, as already noted, it turns out that the 2015 footnotes have basically the same function as the few text-critical footnotes of the 1998 edition. Thus, out of the 2015 edition's 121 text-critical footnotes in 1–2 Samuel and Psalms, only six (5%) register variants or witnesses that have actually been preferred as a textual base over the MT (2 Sam 8:8; 15:7; 22:33; Ps 68:29, 32; 89:51). The other 115 notes (95%) register variants or versions making up an alternative textual base, but in all these cases, the translators have still chosen to adhere to the MT.

An interesting thing that can be noted when it comes to the 2015 edition footnotes is that in a few cases, evidence from the New Testament is used to support alternative renderings. Thus, in the footnote to Ps 31:6, reference is made to Jesus' saying on the cross in Luke 23:46 ("Father, into your hands I commend my spirit", NRSV) to support the alternative rendering 'Into your hands I commend my spirit' (*I dina händer överlämner jag min ande*; the MT has בְּיָדְךָ 'into your hand', while the LXX has εἰς χεῖράς σου 'into your hands').[10] Several footnotes register the LXX translation of a specific verse, quite simply because this translation is quoted in the New Testament (e.g., Ps 19:15, quoted in Rom 10:18; Ps 69:24, quoted in Rom 11:10; and Ps 104:4, quoted in Heb 1:7). In other words, the fact that the LXX is quoted by the apostle Paul (there is no

[9] In the case one footnote refers to several witnesses, each witness is counted separately (i.e., a footnote referring to LXX, Qumran texts and the Vulgate, is registered three times in the count). The percentage is rounded off to the nearest whole number. A half percent is rounded up.
[10] It should be noted, however, that the main body of the text still contains a rendering of the MT ('into your hand').

indication that *Folkbibeln* questions the Pauline authorship of Hebrews) is turned into an argument for assigning this translation a special status as a textual witness. This is apparently a way of defending specific textual witnesses on theological grounds.

5. *Bibel 2000*: Text-critical footnotes

I will now move to a survey of the text-critical information and arguments communicated in the footnotes of *Bibel 2000*. The aim is to provide a comparative vantage point for discussing the connection between theology and textual criticism in *Folkbibeln.*

Like *Folkbibeln*, *Bibel 2000* is endowed with a footnote apparatus. The footnotes contain information on geographical, historical, religious, and cultural aspects of the biblical texts. There are also a number of footnotes with text-critical information. The following chart summarizes the number of footnotes in *Bibel 2000*:

	Footnotes	Text-critical footnotes
1 Samuel	140	21
2 Samuel	161	21
Psalms	527	59

The text-critical footnotes can be divided into four different groups:

1) Footnotes which explain that a certain target text rendering is not a translation of the MT, but of a different variant or version.
2) Footnotes which explain that a certain target text rendering is not a translation of the MT, but of a text which is the result of conjectural emendation.
3) Footnotes that register passages where the MT has been deemed untranslatable and where the text cannot be reconstructed either by way of conjectural emendation or with the help of an extant variant.[11]
4) Footnotes which register hypothetically possible renderings that would have been supported by a certain variant or witness.

The notes belonging to the last category are very few; in 1–2 Samuel and Psalms, there are only three such notes (2 Sam 12:14; Ps 84:7; 116:10). The vast majority of text-critical notes belong to category 1, while the Book of Psalms also contains a number of notes belonging to category 2. Witnesses, variants and conjectural emendations registered in the footnotes are summarized in the following chart:

[11] 1 Sam 13:1; 14:25; 2 Sam 3:12; 7:19; Ps 68:31; 141:5–7. They have been marked [---] in the main body of the text. Not all of them are listed in the footnotes (e.g., Ps 49:15). For a discussion of this specific text-critical procedure in *Bibel 2000*, see Åsberg 2007.

	LXX	Peshitta	Qumran	Vulgate	Targums	Conj. emend.
1 Samuel	17 [81%]	2 [10%]	1 [5%]	0	0	1 [5%]
2 Samuel	13 [62%]	1 [5%]	5 [24%]	0	0	3 [14%]
Psalms	26 [44%]	21 [36%]	3 [5%]	0	4 [7%]	19 [32%]

As can be seen, the LXX has a prominent position. This is most clear in 1 Samuel, to some extent also in 2 Samuel. In Psalms, however, LXX variants make up a minority of text-critical references. Here, the Peshitta has a notable position. By far, Psalms has the highest number of references to conjectural emendations out of the three books. This suggests that in terms of textual criticism, Psalms is the most diverse of these books.

One may also note the language used to communicate text-critical issues in the footnotes of *Bibel 2000*. Thus, the category 3 notes sometimes state that the MT has only been partially translated, or not translated at all, because it is 'incomplete' (1 Sam 13:1). Other footnotes inform the reader that the MT is 'probably damaged' (2 Sam 4:6). Sometimes, it is stated that the MT is 'unintelligible and probably damaged (2 Sam 15:23; Ps 2:11; 32:4). As will be discussed, *Folkbibeln* never uses such text-critical language, which may be connected to its theological position.

6. Comparing the footnotes of *Folkbibeln* 1998, *Folkbibeln* 2015 and *Bibel 2000*

In this section, I will compare and discuss similarities and differences between *Bibel 2000* and *Folkbibeln* in its two editions. In the next section (7), the possible theological implications of the differences will be tentatively discussed.

As was noted above, the 1998 *Folkbibeln* edition has a very limited number of text-critical footnotes: 1–2 Samuel and Psalms together contain 9 such footnotes. In the 2015 edition, they have increased from 9 to 121 text-critical footnotes. In *Bibel 2000*, there are 101 text-critical footnotes. This means that the sheer number of footnotes (both general and text-critical) is similar in *Folkbibeln* 2015 and *Bibel 2000*, whereas *Folkbibeln* 1998 differs greatly from both these. This seems to imply that *Folkbibeln* 2015 as well as *Bibel 2000* strive to present matters of textual criticism to the reader as something fundamentally important in and for the respective translation. However, as has already been suggested, this does not mean that textual criticism functions, or is presented, in the same way in these two translations.

In the 1998 *Folkbibeln* edition, with the exception of Ps 145:13b, the text-critical footnotes suggest that MT has been strictly followed.[12] In other words, they do not register a variant or witness that has actually been preferred as a textual base over the

[12] This is not to say that there are no silent emendations or corrections of the MT in the 1998 or 2015 edition, but this is besides the discussion of this paper.

MT. As it registers an addition to the MT, the footnote to Ps 145:13b seems to suggest that the MT may be expanded, but not altered. However, the 2015 edition arguably indicates something different: by containing six footnotes in 1–2 Samuel and Psalms that register witnesses (ancient versions and 'other manuscripts') which have actually been preferred over the MT, it is suggested that the MT is not the only viable textual base for a translation of the Bible: there are (a few) instances in the MT which are too problematic to constitute a textual base for a translation. However, an interesting pattern starts to emerge when one considers the rest of the 115 text-critical footnotes. Thus, in terms of percentage, it is only 5% of the 2015 *Folkbibeln* footnotes that register instances where a textual base different than the MT has actually been chosen. In *Bibel 2000*, this number is 91%, whereas 6% (6 out of 101) of the footnotes register emendations or corrections that would have been possible, but which for some reason were not carried out. The relation between these two kind of notes is thus basically reversed in *Bibel 2000* compared to *Folkbibeln*, and vice versa. This suggests two completely different principles when it comes to applying and communicating textual criticism: one where a possible text-critical procedure, such as choosing an ancient version over the MT, is merely suggested, leaving the possible application of this insight to the reader (*Folkbibeln*), and one which essentially declares that such an application (of a text-critical deliberation) has been carried out, and what this application entails—primarily in relation to the MT (*Bibel 2000*).

Is there any notable difference between the two *Folkbibeln* editions and *Bibel 2000* when it comes to variants and witnesses consulted and used? The most obvious difference is that *Folkbibeln* rejects conjectural emendation, whereas *Bibel 2000*—especially in Psalms—makes frequent use of and reference to this procedure. Furthermore, as has already been noted, the LXX is the most prominent witness referred to in the 2015 *Folkbibeln* edition. However, in terms of percentage, there is no remarkable difference compared to *Bibel 2000*. In this translation, however, the Peshitta has a much more prominent position. The Qumran texts also have a more accentuated position in *Bibel 2000*, especially in terms of percentage. The Targums are referred to four times (compared to 0 times in both the *Folkbibeln* editions).

7. The intersection between textual criticism and theology: the case of *Folkbibeln*

From the discussion of the text-critical positions of the translators of *Folkbibeln* (see section 3.2, above), it should be apparent that in this translation, there is a connection between theological positions and text-critical principles: the former affects and influences the latter. In this concluding section, I will discuss whether this is also apparent from what is communicated in the text-critical footnotes of *Folkbibeln*, with *Bibel 2000* being used as a comparative vantage point.

In his article ”Theological reflections on the textual criticism of the Bible” (1995), Paul Ellingworth outlines three potential relationships between the practice of textual criticism and the kind of theology associated with “the work of the church” (p. 121): a “dogmatic negative”, a “dogmatic positive”, and a middle position. The first rejects textual criticism in principle because it is a secular, scientific endeavour which regards the Bible as just another piece of antique literature. The second one regards textual criticism as an area of research which might contribute in establishing the earliest attested (attestable) form of the Bible as the Word of God, before it was altered and corrupted by way of transmission. The last one, the middle position, entails using textual criticism as a means for investigating the essentially historical nature of Scripture, tracing its developments through different ages and interpretive communities.[13]

Ellingworth’s taxonomy is interesting, but it is difficult to apply to *Folkbibeln*. This is because on a general level, this translation seems to assume Ellingworth’s first position: it regards biblical criticism with suspicion, and it tends to give ‘criticism’ an outright pejorative meaning. However, the text-critical footnotes in the 2015 edition seems to indicate that textual criticism might be used to ‘trace the way of the holy Scriptures throughout history and into our time’ (quoted above, section 3.2). Still, this position is definitely not the same as Ellingworth’s middle position, which acknowledges the Bible’s historically and contextually contingent nature: through different ages, ‘the Bible’ has consisted of different texts. At a late stage, textual variation has ceased and a canon has been fixed; textual production has been replaced by textual transmission. In contrast to this, what lies behind *Folkbibeln* is a notion of the Bible as a set of texts which has been formed at an early point and then preserved through the ages. This is implied when the 2015 edition’s appendix cites Jer 1:12, “I will watch over my word” (see section 3.2), to indicate what value textual criticism has: to study the written Word (in singular), which indeed has been ‘watched over’ (i.e., preserved), and to determine its earliest attested (attestable) form.

The word *form* denotes extant variants which, importantly, are written texts. This is perfectly in line with the evangelical Lausanne Covenant, quoted on the *Folkbibeln* webpage: the Old and New Testaments are “the only *written* word of God” (emphasis added).[14] This is one of the reasons why conjectural emendation is rejected by *Folkbibeln*. As put by Erlandsson (2014:10), the general Bible reader has the right to

[13] This position resembles that of Angela Kim Harkins, who suggests a similarly historical perspective, which according to her could “illuminate the dynamic qualities and textual pluriformity that characterized Scripture and its interpretations for actual ancient communities defined by faith commitments” (Harkins 2006: 516).

[14] “We affirm the divine inspiration, truthfulness and authority of both Old and New Testament Scriptures in their entirety as the only written word of God, without error in all that it affirms, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice” (from the Lausanne Covenant’s section 2, ”The authority and power of the Bible”, quoted from http://lausanne.org; cf. *Folkbibeln*’s web page, www.folkbibeln.org/lausannedeklarationen, where the section is quoted in Swedish).

know ‘what the source texts actually say’, and it is thus the obligation of the translator to communicate this to the reader. Erlandsson’s representative quote indicates that the Word of God is equated with the (Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek) source texts, and not with any particular target text rendering. In arguments for the Bible’s infallibility, reference is likewise made to the source texts, and not to particular translations. In other words, there is a strong focus on the Bible “as originally given” (Ellingworth 1995: 122). Can this be an explanation of the very cautious use of and reference to the Qumran texts in *Folkbibeln*? As was noted above, there is a very limited use of Qumran texts in this translation (the percentage is markedly higher in *Bibel 2000*, even if the sheer number is not much higher). The ancient versions, which are frequently referred to and used as witnesses, are all translations of a (hypothetical) *Vorlage*. Thus, they are in some way connected to the ’Word of God’, at least if this is equated with a collection of source language texts (in their earliest attested or attestable form). But the Qumran texts are not translations, at least not in the same sense as the ancient versions.[15] They are themselves Hebrew texts, and as such indicating a textual pluriformity of their time (i.e., there was no fixed ’Bible’ at this time; cf. Harkins 2006; Ulrich 2004).[16] But if the Qumran texts attest to such a textual pluriformity, in what way does this impact the concept of the Word (in singular) of God?

Folkbibeln clearly represents a theological concept that the Bible is uniform, coherent and consist, both in terms of textuality and semantics. Of this follows a general notion that the Bible is reliable, which is an explanation why *Folkbibeln* in its footnotes does not employ the same kind of text-critical language as *Bibel 2000* (which frequently states that the MT is ‘incomplete’, ‘damaged’ or ‘unintelligible’). The 1998 edition of *Folkbibeln* is very sparing when it comes to text-critical footnotes; what is thereby communicated to the reader is that textual criticism is not an important issue in biblical translation. This is changed in the 2015 edition, as the text-critical footnotes increase drastically. The new footnotes make reference to a number of different witnesses and variants. The theological implications of this procedure is that the ‘Word of God’ is now represented by, or equated with, a number of different sources, and not one single source (i.e., the MT). With the basic premises of *Folkbibeln*, this may not be wholly unproblematic, at least not for its readers. Thus, if the MT, the LXX, the Peshitta, the Qumran texts, and the Vulgate—witnesses referred to in *Folkbibeln* 2015—together constitute the Word of God, what with the fact that variants at times contradict each other? It should in any case introduce some kind of ambiguity in the definition of concepts such as ‘the Word of God’ or ‘the Bible’ (both in singular). This is of course not a new observation, but it is interesting to note that text-critical information communicated

[15] Inner-biblical exegesis (‘rewritten Bible’) is indeed a form of translation, but not the kind of linguistic translation that is discussed here.
[16] The small number of DSS texts written in Aramaic and Greek does not affect the general picture.

to the readers introduces such an ambiguity, perhaps in contrast to what was intended by the translators.

However, by letting only a small minority of the text-critical footnotes be of the sort that registers actual variants preferred over the MT, while the vast majority only registers possible variants, *Folkbibeln* still gives the reader the impression that the MT is a very stable and reliable textual base. In this way, a notion of textual stability is communicated to the reader (in contrast to *Bibel 2000*, where textual *pluriformity* is communicated through the footnotes). Put differently, variants and witnesses are accounted for in order to show that a number of deviations from the MT is possible, but that the MT may in almost all cases nevertheless be followed, resulting in an intelligible rendering. The connection between the far-reaching preference for the MT and the theological nature of *Folkbibeln* thus seems to confirm the common notion that "a conservative textual approach" is often held for "religious […] reasons" (Williamson 2009: 170). And yet, *Folkbibeln* does account for (some of the) cases where a different textual base than the MT has actually been chosen. In this respect, the 2015 edition seems to represent a less conservative textual approach than the 1998 edition. This suggests that the connection between theology and textual criticism may work in different ways, resulting in different text-critical principles. Textual conservatism is not merely strict adherence to the MT.

Perhaps the use of witnesses and variants in translations such as *Folkbibeln* can be regarded as a way of theologically defending the Word of God, showing how it is characterized by a kind of textual richness (which would not be the same thing as textual pluriformity). After all, such a translation would not seek to undermine the credibility of the Bible by way of textual criticism. Rather, textual criticism may be used to defend the position of this (or any other) particular translation. I would suggest that this is how the function of textual criticism in *Folkbibeln* might be understood, and this is likely what its translators want to communicate. Again, the difference compared to *Bibel 2000* is substantial and striking. Perhaps this difference can be summarized in the following way: whereas *Bibel 2000* wants to *inform* its readers about certain text-critical choices, *Folkbibeln* wants to *communicate* to its readers that textual criticism has a specific function, and that it can be used to defend the credibility of this translation: it is a rendering of the Bible as sacred scripture, and this is a matter of textual base as much as of translation technique.

8. Final words

Is it true, as Parker (2007: 583) has suggested with reference to Origen, that "variant readings are not theologically neutral"? In contemporary research on the ancient versions, it is generally agreed that the transmission and translation of biblical texts, resulting in textual variation, has in many cases been theologically motivated. In some sense, however, textual variation *continues* to be theologically motivated. This is the

case in (some of) contemporary biblical translation. This is because Bible translations are as much a (re)presentation of a certain textual base as a translation of that textual base. As we have seen, this textual base varies, and it occasionally does so for theological reasons. Of course, this is also often *not* the case, but different translations position themselves in relation to other (earlier) translations: *Bibel 2000* rejected the text-critical principles of the previous official translation, the 1917 Church Bible, whereas *Folkbibeln* emerged as a reaction to *Bibel 2000*. This means that juxtaposing different translations against each other is a methodologically fruitful way of understanding each translation's distinctiveness, including their theological distinctiveness and the way it impacts text-critical principles and practice.

In terms of object of study, this paper has been placed at an intersection where textual criticsm and theology frequently meet: biblical translation. Here, versions of the Bible are produced through which people come to interact with the the fruits of textual criticism scholarship. The paper has focused on the way this is being communicated to the Bible reader through footnotes. As a part of virtually any contemporary Bible translation, footnotes in a substantial way frame the perception and interpretation of the biblical texts. This means that it is equally interesting to look at how the actual text has been translated and what text-critical decisions that lay behind it, as it is to look at what translators want to communicate to the reader by way of footnotes. By drawing attention to this aspect, this paper should have indicated the extent to which theology can impact textual criticism in biblical translation and how it is communicated to the general reader. Textual criticism matters, not only for experts or scholars, but also for the ordinary Bible reader, since it deals with the very fabric out of which 'the Bible' is made.

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Textual criticism vs. theology in two contemporary Swedish translations of the Old Testament. Context for the paper presented at OTSEM annual meeting, 2021.

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With two contemporary Swedish translations of the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) as case studies, the present paper seeks to investigate the connection between theology and textual criticism. There is not much written on the subject, especially not concerning the OT/HB. Still, when reading about modern Bible versions and their textual base, one often gets the impression that theology in some way seems to have impacted the choice of which text(s) to translate, and that there are theologically grounded arguments for certain text-critical positions. I think this connection merits more interest, especially in light of the fact that the overwhelming majority of people encounters biblical texts through translations, and that text-critical choices thus impact what Bible they actually read. Questions about biblical translations' textual base however tend be regarded as very technical, which means that they are seldom part of the kind of general debates that often occurs when new Bible translations are launched.

The present paper is one way to, very preliminary, investigate some of these thoughts, applied to the two contemporary Swedish translations *Svenska Folkbibeln* (*Folkbibeln*) and *Bibel 2000*. I have drafted a research project called 'Biblical translation, textual criticism and theology: A comparative and contextual investigation of the textual base of modern Nordic translations of the Bible'. As the title suggests, it would consider of an investigation of the (potential) connection between theology and textual criticism in a number of modern Nordic biblical translations (into Swedish, Norwegian and Danish).

The present paper is a provisional way to test some of the ideas behind the project. The *comparative* approach is inspired by the great study of English Hebrew Bible translations' textual base by S. C. Daley (2019): by comparing and juxtaposing different translations, differences as well as similarities can be assessed. The *contextual* approach is a way of trying to relate text-critical principles and arguments to the broader socio-religious and political contexts that biblical translations inevitably are embedded in. For example, the translation *Folkbibeln* is very clearly a kind of act of defiance against modern academic biblical scholarship, which for its critics represent secularization and a society that is turning away from Christian faith. And this affects the role of textual criticism. There are other clear examples of this in a Nordic context (Holmås 2010). The focus on the role of context would be an attempt to escape a merely textual focus. In this, the project would be inspired by Translation sociology, studying the activity of translation in relation to structures and systems. Of special interest for the project would be Translation sociology research on institutional translation, which is a way to relate

translation, and specifically in this case text-critical positions, to bigger institutional contexts and not primarily to individual translators. It remains to be seen how this can be conceptualized and made feasible in terms of method.

I hope the ideas presented and discussed in the paper may be of some interest, and I look forward to a fruitful discussion and to any kind of questions, comments and suggestions—on the paper as well as on the ideas behind the suggested project.

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Title: "Lest the king be captured in their hands": The Restored Law of Kingship in the Temple Scroll

Abstract

In the Temple Scroll (TS), the section of king's law (56.12-59.21) is one of the most complete and comprehensive statements with regard to the Israelite kingship in the Second Temple literature. This paper focuses on the law of king's guards (Col. 57.5-11) in the expanded composition in the law of kingship, in particular on the legislation that forbids the guard to leave the king alone lest he be captured by foreign nations.

Although there is no direct parallel biblical law identified in the Pentateuch, this paper demonstrates with detailed philological analysis that the law of king's guards reflects strong scriptural influences and presents itself as a continuation of the biblical law. By reflecting upon the methodology of allusion and rewriting, this paper analyzes the TS' hermeneutical techniques and compositional practices of reusing the biblical texts from the book of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles lexically, contextually and conceptually.

This analysis sheds light on the relationship between the scriptural texts and the TS. The law of royal guards embodies a creative literary response to biblical accounts regarding historic moments of crisis for the kingship. It shows the innovativeness of the TS in the context of generating new law as a solution to fix the problem raising by the scriptural texts. Moreover, it creates new statutes by recovering the legal principle from the biblical narrative and aligns it with pre-existing Deuteronomic law as part of the Torah. Therefore, the law of king's guards in the TS is presented as a continuation and restoration of the biblical law based on sources from historical books.

"Lest the king be captured in their hands": The Restored Law of Kingship in the Temple Scroll

Introduction

In the Temple Scroll (TS), the longest legal scroll discovered at Qumran, the section of king's law (56.12-59.21) is one of the most complete and comprehensive statements with regard to the Israelite kingship in the Second Temple literature.[1] Composed based on Deuteronomic legislation of kings (17.14-20) with a lengthy original expansion, this section constitutes the most extensively expanded law in the entire scroll. In this paper, I will focus on the law of king's guards (Col. 57.5-11) in the expanded composition in the law of kingship, in particular on the legislation that forbids the guard to leave the king alone lest he be captured by foreign nations.

Although there is no direct parallel biblical law identified in the Pentateuch, I will demonstrate with detailed philological analysis that the law of king's guards reflects strong scriptural influences and presents itself as a continuation of the biblical law. I will reflect upon the methodology of allusion and rewriting to identify its underlying biblical texts[2]. I will also analyze its hermeneutical techniques and compositional practices of reusing the biblical texts from the book of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles lexically, contextually and conceptually.

[1] Other contemporary literature with the topic of kingship includes *Letter of Aristeas* 190-292 and Philo's *Special laws*, 4.151-192. M. Weinfeld stresses the significance of the king's law in the TS by suggesting that the entire scroll was composed for the king: "The law of the king is the second most important subject in the Scroll next to the Temple regulations. We could explain this phenomenon in light of my assumption that the entire Scroll was intended to be a sort of guide for the king in his carrying out of the laws relating to national life". Weinfeld, Moshe. *Normative and Sectarian Judaism in the Second Temple Period*. London: T & T Clark, 2005, pp. 168.

[2] There is an ongoing debate regarding the uses of the term "biblical" and "bible" in the Second temple period. It is often regarded as anachronistic since the concept of "bible" or canonical texts had not emerged until 4th century CE. See Najman, Hindy. "The Vitality of Scripture Within and Beyond the "Canon"." *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period* 43.4-5, 2012, pp. 497-518. George Brooke claims that "for the modern scholar there should no longer be a clear distinction between biblical and non-biblical in the Second Temple period; rather there is a spectrum of literary compositions related to most of what is emerging as of primary authority in the period". Brooke, George J. "New Perspectives on the Bible and its Interpretation in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Dynamics of Language and Exegesis at Qumran*, ed. D. Dimant and R. G. Kratz; FAT 2/35; Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009, pp. 23. In this paper, the uses of the term 'biblical' do not emphasis the formed notion of authoritative bible as a separated textual unity, but refer to the scriptural passages that later became canonical.

Distinguished from common rewriting techniques that modifying and reformulating scripture verses, the law of royal guards embodies a creative literary response to biblical accounts regarding historic moments of crisis for the kingship. It shows the innovativeness of the TS in the context of generating new law as a solution to fix the problem raising by the scriptural texts. Moreover, it creates the new statutes by recovering the legal principle from the biblical narrative and aligns it with pre-existing Deuteronomic law as part of the Torah. Therefore, instead of regarding the law of king's guards in the TS as a post or non-biblical law, or rewritten scripture that reformulates the existing texts and demonstrates exegesis on the biblical passages, it is rather presented as a continuation and restoration of the biblical law based on sources from historical books.

Identifying Scriptural influences

The law of the king's guard in Col. 57.5-11 commands that the guards should stay with the king all the time: "He shall select for himself from them one thousand each from each tribe to stay with him: twelve thousand men of war who shall never leave him alone so that he is captured by the hand of the nation. And all the chosen ones who are selected shall be men of truth, Godfearing, hating unjust gain, and mighty warriors for the war. They shall stay with him always, day and night, for they shall protect him from any sort of sin and from a foreign nation in order that he shall not be captured."[3]

In this particular law, the guards are repeatedly required not to leave the king alone lest he is captured by other nations. Not only the number of guards is massive - 12,000 men, they are also selected warriors who are truthful, Godfearing, just and mighty, the very virtues of the chiefs chosen by Moses to assist him for judgment (Ex. 18.21). However, their only duty is to protect the king from any sin or threat from other nations. The reinforced phrase יתפש ביד (vv.7, 11) seems to demonstrate the deep fear about the king being left alone and consequently captured.

Scholars tend to relate this passage primarily to contemporary political events and regard it as evidence for dating the law of the king in the Hasmonean period (after 143

[3] 11Q19 57.5-11: וברר לו מהמה אלף אלף מן המטה להיות עמו שנים עשר אלף איש מלחמה אשר לוא יעוזבוהו לבדו ויתפש ביד הגואים. וכול הברורים אשר יבור יהיו אנשי אמת יראי אלוהים שונאי בצע וגבורי חיל למלחמה. והיו עמו תמיד יומם ולילה אשר יהיו שומרים אותו מכול דבר חט ומן גוי נכר אשר לוא יתפש בידמה, See Charlesworth, James H., and Frank Moore Cross. *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Texts with English Translations*. Tübingen, 1994. Dead Sea Scrolls (Princeton Theological Seminary Dead Sea Scrolls Project), Vol.7.

BCE).[4] With regard to its scriptural sources, the idea of a chosen guard accompanying the king has no direct precedent in biblical law. Scholars have identified various sources contributing to the formulation of this new law based on lexical similarities in each verse. However, due to the lack of agreed criteria for the identification of literary dependency, scholars often have different opinions on the identity of scriptural sources.

M. Wise lists a number of sources including 1 Sam. 8.16, 2 Sam. 17,1, Num. 31.4-5, 1 Kgs. 10.26, Ex. 18.21, 25, Song. 3.7-8, and 2 Kgs. 11.8 that influences the formulation of the law. He also adds several biblical episodes that describe the kings sinned because the guards failed to prevent them, such as 2 Sam 11.1 (David took Bathsheba while his servants went for the war), 1 Sam 24.1-7, 1 Sam 26.6-12 (David approached unprotected Saul), and 2 Kgs 14.1-4 (Amaziah was captured by Israel).[5] D. Swanson identifies Num. 31.4-5, Deut. 17.19 as the main base text, with various keyword links with other scriptural sources.[6] H. Stegemann associates with the passages where the kings of Israel and Judah were captured or murdered by pagans, including Ahab I Kings 22:34, Hoshea 2 Kings 17:4, Jehoachaz 2Kings 23:33, Josiah II Kings 23:29, Jehoiachin II Kings 24: 15, and Zedekiah II Kings 25:6.[7]

According to the lists above, only a few scriptural sources are identified more than once. M. Zahn observes the methodological challenge posed by scholarly disagreement on the number of identities of scriptural sources. She criticises that "the process of identification

[4] This episode is considered to be composed after the political assassination of the Hasmonean high priest Jonathan by Seleucid Trypho, as recorded in 1 *Macc*. 12.39-13.24, *Ant.* 13.187-212 and *Wars.* 1.48-50. According to these accounts, due to the dismissal of all the army and guards before visiting Trypho, Jonathan was captured, paraded and subsequently killed. Y. Yadin pays specific attention to this section of guards and explains its source as deriving from contemporary political event: "…John Hyrcanus was the first Hasmonaean monarch to surround himself with a mercenary force. The commands of the scroll on this subject are marked by their obvious polemical strain" (Yadin, Yigael. *The Temple Scroll*. Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1983. Vol.I, pp. 389). See C. D. Elledge, *The statutes of the king: The Temple scroll's legislation on kingship (11Q19 LVI 12-LIX 21)*, Paris: Gabalda, 2004; Schiffman, Lawrence H., and Florentino. García Martínez. *The Courtyards of the House of the Lord: Studies on the Temple Scroll*. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2008, "The elaborate arrangements for the royal guard presented in the Law of the King can only be understood against the background of the last days of Jonathan the Hasmonean", pp. 496. Cf. M. Weinfeld draws upon parallels in a description of the Egyptian royal guard written by Diodorus Siculus and takes it as evidence for a late Hasmonean date for the section of king's law in the TS, "The Royal Guard According to the Temple Scroll," RB 87 (1980): 394-96.

[5] Wise, Michael Owen. *A Critical Study of the Temple Scroll from Qumran Cave 11*. Chicago, Ill: Oriental Institute of the U of Chicago, 1990, pp. 106.

[6] Swanson, Dwight D. *The Temple Scroll and the Bible: The Methodology of 11QT. Leiden: Brill, 1995*. Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah, v. 14, pp. 161.

[7] Stegemann, H. "The Institutions of Israel in the Temple Scroll", in Dimant/Rappaport 1992, pp. 156–185.

of TS's source texts has been marked by a lack of methodological rigor"[8]. Based on this, drawing criteria from studies on scriptural allusion in the Hebrew bible proves to be essential for identifying reuse in the scripture. In the studies of allusion and reuse[9], scholars argue several principles for identifying literary dependency. B. Sommer suggests that not all shared language constitutes allusion since it is also possible to use independently the common words or less common words in similar contexts. But the likelihood of literary dependence "increases as the quantity and distinctiveness of the shared language increases"[10]. J. Leonard systematically develops eight principles including the quantity and rarity of shared language (especially shared phrases), and shared language from a similar context. In respect of identifying deliberate reuse in the scripture, W. Tooman provides the criteria including "uniqueness, distinctiveness, multiplicity, thematic correspondence and inversion"[11]. These criteria serve as valuable standards to evaluate the literary evidences of overlapping language in the following passages.

In addition to reflecting upon the theory of allusion, Zahn also separates the conceptual and lexical, syntactical difference. She claims that some sources only influenced TS's author conceptually while others influenced its formulation directly. Thus, we need to carefully distinguish the two types of sources since sometimes they do not overlap. This observation also applies to the law of king's guards since scholars tend to mix the two categories and consider the scattered pieces of overlapping scriptural language as the source of composing the new law. Particularly in the "new" texts where the scriptural base could not be directly identified, the conceptual influence usually constitutes the dominant aspect to explain the etiology of the new law.

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[8] Zahn, Molly M. "The Levites, the Royal Council, and the Relationship between Chronicles and the Temple Scroll," in *Law, Literature, and Society in Legal Texts from Qumran: Papers from the Ninth Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies*, Leuven 2016, ed. Jutta Jokiranta and Molly M. Zahn, STDJ 128, Leiden: Brill, 2019, pp. 254.

[9] Sommer, Benjamin D. *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40–66*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998; "Exegesis, Allusion and Intertextuality in the Hebrew Bible: A Response to Lyle Eslinger," VT 46, 1996, pp. 479–89. Leonard, Jeffery M. "Identifying Inner-Biblical Allusions: Psalm 78 as a Test Case," JBL 127, 2008, pp. 241–65.

[10] Moreover, Sommer claims that "the case for dependence is stronger if there is a good reason to expect that an author would allude to the text in question". Sommer, Benjamin D. "Exegesis, Allusion and Intertextuality in the Hebrew Bible: A Response to Lyle Eslinger," VT 46, 1996, pp. 479–89

[11] Tooman, William A. *Gog of Magog: Reuse of Scripture and Compositional Technique in Ezekiel 38–39*, FAT 52, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011, pp. 27.

Therefore, the separation of the conceptual and linguistic aspects when identifying the scriptural sources is of vital methodological significance. Moreover, the sources that contain both conceptual and linguistic similarities provide convincing evidences of literary borrowing and allusion. In the following passages, by building upon the theory of scriptural allusion, I will identify the conceptual influences of the biblical texts by looking for the similar theme of the law in the scroll, and then corroborates the influences by the literary evidence of overlapping words and phrases.

2 Kings 25: Babylonian captivity of King Zedekiah

Among the biblical accounts, one of the most direct and closest connections to our passage in the TS is in 2 Kgs. 25, the historical event of Jerusalem's fall, marking the end of the monarchy and the starting point of exile.[12] Zedekiah, the last king of Judah before the destruction of the kingdom by King Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon, was captured and tortured. 2 Kgs. 25.4 depicts the critical scene when a breach was made in the city and created chaos: "Then a breach was made in the city wall; the king with all the soldiers (fled) by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, by the king's garden, though the Chaldeans were all around the city. They went in the direction of the Arabah." [13] This short verse depicts the picture of how the king was left alone by his guards and subsequently captured by the Babylonians, but with several hermeneutical problems.

First, in the MT version, the first half of the verse lacks a verb: וַתִּבָּקַע הָעִיר וְכָל־אַנְשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה ׀ הַלַּיְלָה דֶּרֶךְ שַׁעַר ׀ בֵּין הַחֹמֹתַיִם אֲשֶׁר עַל־גַּן הַמֶּלֶךְ, translating literally as "and the city was breached, and all the men of war the night by way of gate between the walls that upon the garden of the king". The LXX uses the aorist plural verb ἐξῆλθον, equal to יָצְאוּ (they came forth) in biblical Hebrew to express the men of war fleeing away.[14] In its retelling in Jer. 52.4[15], MT adds וַיֵּצְאוּ מֵהָעִיר יִבְרְחוּ[16] to indicate that all the men of war ran away and went out

[12] Swanson suggests the similarities of vocabulary between this biblical passage and the TS.
[13] NRSV translates as follows: Then a breach was made in the city wall; the king with all the soldiers fled by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, by the king's garden, though the Chaldeans were all around the city. They went in the direction of the Arabah (2Kgs. 25:4).
[14] LXX renders as καὶ ἐρράγη ἡ πόλις, καὶ πάντες οἱ ἄνδρες τοῦ πολέμου ἐξῆλθον νυκτὸς ὁδὸν πύλης τῆς ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν τειχέων, αὕτη ἥ ἐστιν τοῦ κήπου τοῦ βασιλέως, "And the city was breached, and all the men of war went out by night by way of gate between the walls, that this is the garden of the king".
[15] Regarding the relationship between the two chapters, the majority of scholars agree that Jer. 52 is derived from 2 Kgs. 25, but alternative views suggest the uses of a common source. A few scholars assume that 2 Kgs. 25 is dependent upon Jer. 40:7–41:18 and 52. See Waard, H. de. *Jeremiah 52 in the Context of the Book of Jeremiah, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum*, 2020, pp.32.
[16] The apparatus of BHS suggests to read it as wayyiqtol: ויברחו.

of the city. In either version, this verse depicts a scenario that the king did not lead the army or his guards, instead, all the men of war ran away without proper order or command.

Second, the verb וַיֵּלֶךְ is lack of a specific subject. Although the verse does not mention the king who is the object of the ensuing chase in vv.5, commonly English translations put וַיֵּלֶךְ as the verb modifying both the men of war and the king. Nevertheless, even though it is common in the Bible that a plural subject takes a singular verb, all examples of 'men of war' found in the Bible, except for this verse, consistently take a plural verb[17]. This contextual incongruence suggests that the verb וַיֵּלֶךְ does not apply to the men of war. The LXX version faithfully renders the singular subject: "and he went by way of the Araba"[18]. Both MT and LXX read the subject as the king alone. Therefore, different from the English versions that indicate the king led the men of war to ran away together from the city, MT and LXX suggest that after the Babylonians broke into the city, the men of war ran away first and left the king alone.

2 Kgs. 25.5 further suggests that it is the king alone whom the enemy was chasing: וַיִּרְדְּפוּ חֵיל־כַּשְׂדִּים אַחַר הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיַּשִּׂגוּ אֹתוֹ בְּעַרְבֹת יְרֵחוֹ וְכָל־חֵילוֹ נָפְצוּ מֵעָלָיו, "the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king and overtook him in the plains of Jericho, and all his army was scattered from him"[19]. The enemy chased the king and captured him alone.[20] Furthermore, there are eight wayyiqtol verbs in verse 4-6 including: וַיִּתְּפָשֻׂהוּ, וַיַּשִּׂגוּ, וַיִּרְדְּפוּ, וַיֵּלֶךְ, וַיֵּצְאוּ, וַתִּבָּקַע, וַיַּעֲלוּ and וַיְדַבְּרוּ. They denote that the fleeing of the guards, the king's running away and being captured take place in succession. The only qatal verb in these verses is וְכָל־חֵילוֹ נָפְצוּ, "all his army scattered". The change of the subject and use of qatal suggest that this could be read either as an antecedent circumstantial clause, meaning "now that all his army has scattered from him\since his army had scattered from him", or as a contrastive clause that compares the army with the king (or the Chaldean army), "while his army scattered from him". Therefore,

[17] Num. 31:28, Deut. 2:16, Josh. 5:4\6, 10.24, 2Kgs 25.19, Jer. 38.4, 49.26, 51.32, 52.7, Joel 4.9.
[18] LXX: καὶ ἐρράγη ἡ πόλις, καὶ πάντες οἱ ἄνδρες τοῦ πολέμου ἐξῆλθον νυκτὸς ὁδὸν πύλης τῆς ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν τειχέων, αὕτη ἥ ἐστιν τοῦ κήπου τοῦ βασιλέως, καὶ οἱ Χαλδαῖοι ἐπὶ τὴν πόλιν κύκλῳ. καὶ ἐπορεύθη ὁδὸν τὴν Αραβα. "And the city was breached, and all the men of war went out by night by way of the gate between the walls; this is the one of the garden of the king, and the Chaldeans were at the city all around. And he went by way of the Araba".
[19] Cf. Jer. 39.4-5.
[20] Cf. 2 Kgs 24.15 where Babylonians took Jehoiachin the king, and his mother, wives, officials and chief men of the land to captivity.

the message in the biblical account is that precisely because the men of war had gone away and fled from the king, the king is left alone, captured and tortured.[21]

Therefore, this theme of capturing the king by the foreign nation due to the lack of protection of king's guards constitutes an important conceptual source that explains the etiology of the law of king's guard in the scroll. Moreover, the thematic relation is also found in the connection between sin and failure. According to the law of king's guards, the guards have the responsibility to protect the king not only from being captured by other nations, but also from כול דבר חט (57.10), any sinful thing.[22] Ultimately it is the sin that led the king to go astray and to be punished by God.[23] The cause and effect relationship between the sin and the king's being captured is also reflected in the biblical text.

According to the biblical account, the event of the Babylonian king's conquest was explained as a direct result of king Zedekiah's evil conduct, as shown in 2 Kgs. 24:19-20. Zedekiah did what is evil in the sight of God, consequently the anger of God was so great that he drove the people out of his presence (הִשְׁלִכָו אֹתָם מֵעַל פָּנָיו).[24] Similarly, in the prophetic literature, Israel was captured by Babylon mainly because of its sin: "Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because you have made your guilt to be remembered, in that your transgressions are uncovered, so that in all your deeds your sins (חַטֹּאותֵיכֶם) appear—because you have come to remembrance, you shall be captured in hand (בַּכַּף תִּתָּפֵשׂוּ)"(Ezek. 21:29). The divine oracle in

[21] This action of running away corresponds to the law in the TS that the royal guards should be "mighty warriors for the war". Cf. Josephus depicts the scene when the guards ran away from the king to save their own lives: "when the friends and officers of Sacchias who had fled with him saw the enemy close upon them, they abandoned him and scattered in different directions, each one determined to save himself." So Sacchias was left with only a few men round him, and the enemy captured him alive and brought him with his children and wives to the king." (*Ant*. 10, 136-138).

[22] Yadin notes that the phrase אשר לוא יתפש בידמה (57.11) refers to both the hand of sin and the hand of enemies. Wise points out another episode with regard to the cause and effect relationship between absence of guards and the king's sinful actions: the event of David and Bathsheba. In 2 Sam. 11, David sent Joab, his servants and all Israel to the battle without leading it in person: "but David remained at Jerusalem" (2 Sam 11.1). Wise suggests that the term עֲבָדָיו signifies "the foreign corps of mercenaries who served as David's bodyguard". David was left alone by his guards and subsequently committed the sin. He subsequently acknowledged his sin: "I have sinned against Yahweh" (2 Sam. 12.13). It could influence the scroll to replace the more common expression כול דבר רע with כול דבר חט.

[23] The punishment in turn renders the king alone without any support: "And all the pick of his troops shall fall by the sword, and the survivors shall be scattered to every wind, and you shall know that I am the LORD; I have spoken" (Ezek. 17:21).

[24] Zedekiah's sin also includes the rebellion against Babylonian King (Jer. 27.1-15, Ezek. 17.19-21). See Greenberg, Moshe, and Dafna Mach. *Ezechiel 21-37*. Freiburg Im Breisgau, Herders Theologischer Kommentar Zum Alten Testament, 2005, pp. 432.

Ezek. shows that God punished Israelites and left them in the hands of the Babylonians due to their sin (חַטָּאוֹתֵיכֶם).

In the following verse the oracle prophecies the fate of "prince of Israel", "And you, O profane wicked one, prince of Israel (נְשִׂיא יִשְׂרָאֵל), whose day has come, the time of your final punishment" (Ezek. 21:30). It further suggests that the people were taken captive(תִּתָּפֶשׂוּ) because of the iniquity of the ruler of Israel, Zedekiah. Therefore, king Zedekiah would be deposed and punished through the hands of Babylonians. Verse 28 also stresses the direct link between sin and captivity: "he brings their iniquity to remembrance, that they may be captured (לְהִתָּפֵשׂ)". Even though the divination Babylonian king employed was considered to be false in the eyes of the Israelites, it reminded their sin and led to their captivity.

These conceptual links established by the TS based on the biblical account suggest the influence of 2 Kgs. 25 upon constructing the new legal clause of kingship in the scroll.[25] The similarities in vocabulary also corroborate this claim. First of all, the phrase אַנְשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה, the men of war in 25.4 also appears in the TS 57.6 (וברר לו מהמה אלף אלף מן המטה להיות עמו שנים עשר אלף איש מלחמה). Although אַנְשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה appear dozens of times in the Bible referring to the warriors, the similar contextual usage suggests that the overlapping of איש מלחמה seems hardly coincidental. According to the biblical account, the men of war fled from the city immediately as soon as the city was invaded. The absence of mentioning the king suggests that the men of war abandoned their basic duty of protecting the king. The implicit cowardice and irresponsibility of the guards could prompt the TS to prescribe the characteristics of איש מלחמה: "and all the selected ones whom he shall choose shall be trustworthy men, God-fearers, hating unjust gain, and mighty warriors for the war" (vv. 7-9). Moreover, the guards were commanded to stay with the king יומם ולילה- "day and night" (57.10), resonating with the fact that all the men of war fled by night (וְכָל־אַנְשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה הַלַּיְלָה).

[25] Both noted by Yadin II, p.257 and Wise, p. 105. Wise points out another interesting episode with regard to the cause and effect relationship between absence of guards and the king's sinful actions: the event of David and Bathsheba in 2 Sam 11. It is worth noting that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel to the battle without leading it personally: "But David remained at Jerusalem" (2 Sam 11.1). Wise suggests that since the term עֶבֶד "signifies the foreign corps of mercenaries who served as David's bodyguard", the implying message is that David was left alone by his guards and subsequently committed the sin. As David admitted, "I have sinned against Yahweh" (2 Sam 12.13). It could be another underlying biblical text that influenced TS to replaces the more common expression כול דבר רע with כול דבר חט. However, according to Zahn's criteria, this influence is merely conceptual rather than lexical or syntactic.

Most importantly, the verb וַיִּתְפְּשׂוּ (2 Kgs. 25.5) corresponds to ויתפש ביד הגואים (vv.7) and לוא יתפש בידמה (vv.11). Although תפש is a common word in the Hebrew Bible, meaning "laying hold of" or "seizing with the hand", the only instance where a king was seized by a foreign nation is in this context of the Babylonian conquest.[26] Moreover, the verb תפש is also repeated in the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel to indicate this incidence: "'thus says the LORD: Behold, I am giving this city into the hand of the king of Babylon (בְּיַד מֶלֶךְ־בָּבֶל), and he shall burn it with fire. You shall not escape from his hand but shall surely be captured and delivered into his hand (תָּפֹשׂ תִּתָּפֵשׂ וּבְיָדוֹ)" (Jer. 34:2-3).[27] The nifal form of תפש in Jeremiah (as well as in Ezek. 21.29) is identical to the scroll's usage.[28] Also, the repeated uses of בְּיַד in both verse 2 and 3 are parallel with the repeated phrases of יתפש ביד in verse 7 and 11 in the TS. Therefore, the expression in the TS that the king should be protected from being captured by a foreign nation's hands, seems to specifically refer to the incident of the capture of king Zedekiah by the Babylonians.

In the conceptual analysis above, the correspondences of motifs of "king's being captured by the foreign nation due to the guards' abandonment" and "king's being captured ultimately due to sin" in the biblical thought and the scroll meet the criterion of "thematic correspondence" to identify the literary allusion. Moreover, the conceptual links are corroborated by linguistic evidences. The usages of איש מלחמה and ולילה demonstrate the shared terms in a similar context and ויתפש also shows the rarity and uniqueness of the shared context. Therefore, the incidence of King Zedekiah's being captured in 2 Kgs. 25 has a close connection with the scroll's legal formulation and conceptual construction. This analysis also contributes to a new principle of scriptural allusion, *that the possibility of allusion increases when the conceptual sources of the text also have lexical and syntactical connections*.

2 Chr. 25: King Amaziah captured by Israel

2 Kgs. 14 and its rewriting in 2 Chr. 25 suggest that the incident of the king being abandoned by his guards is not uncommon in Jewish history and often leads to disastrous results. Wise notices that 2 Kgs. 14 is one of the texts that influences the TS's formulation of law. However, by comparison, its rewritten text in 2 Chr. 25 gives fuller details and has more

[26] Yadin has noted that the verb is used regularly in the bible in reference to kings taken captive.
[27] Cf. Jer. 38:23.
[28] Some metaphors in Ezekiel also employ the nifal form of תפש, describing how Israel is captured by Babylon (Ezek. 19:8, Ezek. 12:13).

correspondences with the scroll.[29] According to the biblical accounts, Amaziah, the king of Judah, was defeated by Israel: "And Judah was defeated by Israel, and every man fled to his home" (2 Kgs.14:12, 2 Chr. 25:22). Subsequently, the king alone is captured: "And Joash king of Israel captured (תָּפַשׂ) Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Joash, son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh" (2 Chr. 25.23).

In the biblical account, all the men have left and fled back home, leaving the king alone to be seized. The abandonment of the king's army in Jerusalem and further conspiracy against him in Samaria left the king in total isolation and resulted in his subsequent death. The verb תָּפַשׂ is used in this context of the king's being captured, which is parallel to the verb יתפש in the TS. Although the context is slightly different since the TS stresses foreign nations' invasion, the similar picture of the king's being captured and the fleeing of the king's guards implies the conceptual link.

Although the law of king's guards does not directly reuse phrases and expressions from the account of Amaziah, the contextual and lexical connections between this biblical chapter and the law of kingship in the TS suggest the influence of this particular chapter upon the literary composition of the law's royal guards. First of all, Amaziah killed the servants who had murdered his father when he succeeded to reign. But he did not put the murderers' children to death for כַּכָּתוּב בַּתּוֹרָה בְּסֵפֶר מֹשֶׁה, "according to the book of law of Moses" (2 Kgs 14.6, 2 Chr. 25:4). In the TS, following the law of Moses is of the foremost significance for the king, as can be seen from column 56 verse 20-21.

Secondly, when Amaziah decided to battle against Edomites, "Amaziah assembled the men of Judah and set them by fathers' houses under commanders of thousands and of hundreds for all Judah and Benjamin. He mustered those twenty years old and upward…" (2 Chr. 25:5). Similarly, the law in the TS commands that "on the day when they made him

[29] The relationship between the book of Chronicles and the TS is debatable. Some scholars support that the Chronicles influences the TS's formulation, such as Swanson, 238. Brooke, George J. "The Books of Chronicles and the Scrolls from Qumran," in *Reflection and Refraction: Studies in Biblical Historiography in Honour of A. Graeme Auld*, ed. Robert Rezetko, Timothy H. Lim, and W. Brian Aucker, VTSup 113, Leiden: Brill, 2007, pp. 44. Others are against this view and argue that there is no sufficient evidence to prove this claim. See Stegemann, Hartmut "The Literary Composition of the Temple Scroll and Its Status at Qumran," in *Temple Scroll Studies*, ed. George J. Brooke, JSPSup 7, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989. Zahn, Molly M. "The Levites, the Royal Council, and the Relationship between Chronicles and the Temple Scroll," in *Law, Literature, and Society in Legal Texts from Qumran: Papers from the Ninth Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies*, Leuven 2016, ed. Jutta Jokiranta and Molly M. Zahn, STDJ 128, Leiden: Brill, 2019, pp. 253–69.

king, they shall take a census of the children of Israel from twenty to sixty years old, according to their divisions. He shall appoint at their head commanders of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens in all their cities." (57.2-5). These two verses have striking resemblances.

Scholars often consider the first half of the verse as the mixture of Num. 26.2-4 which requires the census of ones that are over twenty and admitted to the war, and Lev. 27.3 on the valuation for making a vow.[30] For the latter half, scholars tend to identify 2 Sam. 18.1[31], where David counted the people and set up commanders before the war. However, in comparison with the sources above, 2 Chr. 25 is the only instance in the Bible that combines the king's appointment of commanders and counting the men above twenty. Therefore, the biblical account in 2 Chr. 25 presents a more comprehensive account and undoubtedly indicates a closer connection with the scroll.

Furthermore, the TS' legal framework follows the sequence of 2 Chr. 25's narrative line. When Amaziah reigned, the first thing was to follow the instruction of Torah, corresponding to the law in TS 56.18, which requires the king to copy and observe the law. Then, the king Amaziah assembled the men, set commanders and mustered people above twenty. The slight reverse of the sequence in TS 57.2-5, that the king shall muster people first and set commanders, fits the criterion of inversion brought up by Tooman when identifying allusion.[32] The TS clearly alludes to and borrows the account from 2 Chr. 25. In addition, the following biblical verse (2 Chr. 25.6) indicates that Amaziah also hired 100,000 גִּבֹּור חָיִל, "mighty warriors", a term in the plural form in 57.9 to describe the characteristics of the king's guards (57.5-11) in the section following after the king's obligation to muster an army (57.1-5).

[30] It is a common tradition in the Bible that men from twenty and upwards is numbered in the census or selected for military or priestly service (Ex. 30:14, Num. 1:3, Num. 26:2).
[31] If this law is composed based on 2 Sam. 18.1 and 2 Chr. 25.5, then the current reconstruction of TS 57.2 could be adapted. In most of the versions of reconstruction (Qimron, Schiffman) the plural verb יפ[קדו ו] is employed. However, in both accounts of 2 Sam. 18.1 and 2 Chr. 25.5, it is the king who counted the number of the people. Moreover, in TS 57.3, the verb ופקד is singular, suggesting that the king shall set up the commanders. It seems to be incongruent for the people count themselves while the king sets up commanders. Therefore, it is also plausible to reconstruct the verb in the singular form.
[32] Tooman suggests that in some cases a number of connected elements in one text may be inverted in the borrowing text. William A. Tooman, *Gog of Magog: Reuse of Scripture and Compositional Technique in Ezekiel 38–39*, FAT 52 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 27.

The following accounts in the 2 Chr. 25 also correspond to the next section of the king's council in TS 57.11-15. In the Chronicles, before the battle Amaziah followed the instruction of the man of God and dismissed the Israelites (2Chr. 25:7). But after the victory he worshipped the gods of the men of Seir and rebuked the prophet sent by God, asking rhetorically: "have we made you a royal counsellor (הַלְיוֹעֵץ לַמֶּלֶךְ נְתַנּוּךָ)?" (2Chr. 25:16). Correspondently, the TS stresses the importance of the king's counsel (עצה) and commands that the king must follow the instructions of the counsel strictly.

In the biblical accounts, king Amaziah appears to make all the military decisions by himself. Whenever his action and behaviour were rebellious, God would send prophets to him to provide him with divine instructions. In verse 17, the reader is informed that " וַיִּוָּעַץ אֲמַצְיָהוּ מֶלֶךְ". Since the verb וַיִּוָּעַץ is not followed with a direct accusative, it implies that the king considered and made decisions alone, rather than "consult together or exchange counsel with advisers"[33]. In response, the TS stipulates that "twelve princes of his people shall be with him, and also twelve priests and twelve Levites who shall sit together with him for judgement and for Law" (57.11-13).

After of the battle, it is recorded that Amaziah grew prideful after his victories. His behaviour incurs the criticism of Joash, the king of Israel: "your heart has lifted you up in boastfulness (וּנְשָׂאַךְ לִבְּךָ לְהַכְבִּיד)" (25.19). To avoid the king becoming boastful, the TS uses the similar expression to highlight that the heart of the king shall never rise above his counsel: "and his heart shall not exalt above them (ולוא ירום לבבו מהמה) or do anything according to any counsel apart from them" (57.14-15).[34] This law, again, appears in the section of king's council, following the verses mentioned above. The TS reinforces that the king should always follow the decisions made by the counsel rather than his own will.

In the Chronicles, as a result, God gave Amaziah into the enemy's hand, "But Amaziah would not listen, for it was of God, in order that he might give them into the hand (בְּיָד) of their enemies" (2 Chr. 25:20). The word בְּיָד also finds its parallel in the TS: ויתפש ביד הגואים (57.7) and לוא יתפש בידמה (vv.11). At the end, Chronicles explains the doomed fate of

[33] Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*. Minooka, Illinois, 2010, 3289.

[34] Wise points out the connection between 2 Chr. 25 and the scroll: "An intriguing aspect of this episode is its verbal connection with Deut. 17:20 and TM 57:14, both of which warn against the king "lifting up his heart." Wise, Michael Owen. *A Critical Study of the Temple Scroll from Qumran Cave 11*. Chicago, Ill: Oriental Institute of the U of Chicago, 1990, pp. 106.

the king as a result of his faithlessness to God: סָר אֲמַצְיָהוּ מֵאַחֲרֵי יְהוָה, "Amaziah turned aside from the Lord". Thus, he was abandoned and betrayed. The phraseology is similar to ולוא יסירו לבבו מאחרי in the TS 56.18-19. It is worth noting that the term מאחרי "from me" was added by the TS to the original MT base text from Deuteronomy וְלֹא יָסוּר לְבָבֶו. The insertion of מאחרי that is parallel to 2 Chr. 25 further corroborates connections between the story of king Amaziah and the TS.

As shown above, the law of king's guards does not directly reuse passages from 2 Chr.25 for legal formulation. Since there are no enough links in phraseology between the two passages, scholars usually do not consider 2 Chr. 25 as one of the underlying scriptural base texts. But contextually, the law of kingship as a whole is influenced greatly by the account in 2 Chr. 25. The construction of the law of kingship even follows closely the narrative framework of 2 Chr. 25. Hence, it is plausible that 2 Chr. 25 constitutes the major conceptual influence upon the law of king's guards. Through this analysis, two more rules of allusion could be added: (1) *the extent of allusion does not directly depend on the quantity of overlapping language. Even without much similar phraseology, one text could have a great conceptual influence upon the other and thereby becomes the major source;* (2) *the conceptual influence is more possible when the larger context shows literary connections*.

2 Sam. 17: a Good Plan to Murder the King

Another biblical account that emphasizes the importance of the guards accompanying the king is in 2 Sam 17, when Ahithophel came up with a scheme to kill David: "Let me choose (אֶבְחֲרָה) twelve thousand men (שְׁנֵים־עָשָׂר אֶלֶף אִישׁ), and I will arise and pursue David tonight (הַלָּיְלָה). I will come upon him while he is weary and discouraged and throw him into a panic, and all the people who are with him will flee. I will strike down the king alone (לְבַדּוֹ)" (2Sam. 17:2). However, Ahithophel's counsel was replaced by Hushai's plan, which failed since God decided to לְהָפֵר אֶת־עֲצַת אֲחִיתֹפֶל הַטּוֹבָה, "defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel" (2Sam. 17:14). It indicates that if Ahithophel's counsel were adopted by Absalom and others, the "good" plan would have succeeded and led David to be killed.

This plan has many echoes in the scroll. First of all, Ahithophel proposed to gather 12000 men to pursue David (2 Sam. 17:1), which is the exact number of the king's guards in the scroll. The commonly identified sources of 12000 men are derived from the combination of Num. 31.5 where one thousand armed men (חֲלוּצֵי צָבָא) from each tribe were gathered for

war, and 1 Kgs 10.26, which depicts Solomon's exceeding wealth including his standing guards: 12000 horsemen (פָּרָשִׁים).[35] Both sources indicate the influential biblical idea that the king has the army accompany him for his safety and for war.[36] Nevertheless, 2 Sam. 17 demonstrates a closer connection with TS in its phraseology. Neither of the biblical sources mentions איש מלחמה as in the scroll, while 2 Sam. 17 has a closer term: אִישׁ. Regarding the verb, the scroll employs וברר לו, "he shall select for himself" and 2 Sam. 17 uses its synonym בחר, while neither of the two verses in Numbers and Kings expresses the meaning of "choosing, selecting".[37] Moreover, different from the MT version of אֶבְחֲרָה נָּא, the LXX inserts ἐμαυτῷ afterward: "let me now choose for myself", which resembles the phrase of וברר לו, "he shall choose for himself" in the scroll. In sum, the sentence "I will now select for myself 12000 men" has strikingly similar phraseology with "he shall select for himself 12000 men of war" in the scroll.

Secondly, in the imagined scenario of capturing David, he could be tired and in fear, and all the people who were with him would leave him. Then Ahithophel could strike David לְבַדּוֹ, on his own while he is alone without the accompany of his guards. The term לְבַדּוֹ parallels with the command that the guards should לוא יעוזבוהו לבדו, "never leave the king alone" (57.7). With regard to this expression, there are no related scriptural sources found in the bible. G. Brooke and Swanson suggest that לבדו in the scroll is inserted from Exod. 18.25 based on the expansion in 4QpaleoExod^{m} with fuller details in Deut. 1.9-18.[38] In 4QpaleoExod^{m}, the word לבד is repeated twice. However, the context in Ex. 25.18 does not directly relate to the scroll: Ex. 25.18 emphasizes that Moses should not take the burden of judgment on his own, while TS stresses that the guards shall not leave the king alone lest he be killed. By comparison, 2 Sam. 17.2 provides the only place in the bible where לבד is used in the context of murdering the king alone. Therefore, the conceptual and lexical influence of 2 Sam. 17.2 on the composition of TS 57.7 seems to be likely.

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[35] The stress of עִם־הַמֶּלֶךְ reinforces the notion that the standing army should accompany the king. They are differentiated from the citizen army that gathered only in the time of war, as recorded in Col.58 in the TS.
[36] The custom of selecting 1000 men each from each tribe is recorded in Num. 31, when Moses led Israelites to battle with Midianites: אֶלֶף לַמַּטֶּה אֶלֶף לַמַּטֶּה לְכֹל מַטּוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּשְׁלְחוּ לַצָּבָא, "You shall send a thousand from each of the tribes of Israel to the war".
[37] The verb ברר both mean purify and choose. The meaning of "choose, select" only appears in participle form in the Chronicles: valiant men 1 Ch 7:40; porters 1 Ch 9:22; musicians 1 Ch 16:41. It seems to corroborate the close relations between the Chronicles and the TS.
[38] Brooke, G. "The Textual Tradition of the Temple Scroll and Recently Published Manuscripts of the Pentateuch", *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Forty Years of Research*. Edited by D. Dimant and U, Rappaport. Leiden: E J Brill, 1992.

Thirdly, Ahithophel specified the time of the attack-during הַלָּיְלָה, "the night". The possibility that the king faces danger during the night leads the law of guards in the TS to command that guards should protect the king all the time, including יומם ולילה, "day and night". Fourthly, the scroll commands twice that the guards should stay with the king: להיות עמו (vv. 6), והיו עמו תמיד (vv. 9). The word "with him" repeatedly appears in 2 Sam. 17 to describe David's army: כָּל־הָעָם אֲשֶׁר־אִתּוֹ, "all the people that are with him" (vv. 2, 10, 12, 22). Being with the king is one of the main characteristics of the guards, as stressed in the TS.

In addition, a few of common words applied in the context of war appear both in the biblical passage and the scroll. In 2 Sam 17, David is described as אִישׁ מִלְחָמָה, "a man of war", a phrase occurring in the scroll to refer to the guards-שנים עשר אלף איש מלחמה , "12,000 men of war" (57.6). Furthermore, the scroll indicates one of the characteristics of the king's guards asגבורי חיל למלחמה , "mighty warriors for war" (57.9). This expression is a harmonization of Hushai's descriptions of the people who were with David: גִּבֹּרִים, mighty men (17.8) as well as בְּנֵי־חַיִל, "men of strength" (17.10). it is clear that David's guards are גבורי חיל , "mighty warriors". This biblical episode both linguistically and conceptually indicates the high possibility that David would be captured and killed, if his warriors who were with him had fled at night and left him alone, as planned by Ahithophel.[39] However, the "good plan" of Ahithophel never carried out since God had ordained to punish Absalom and protect David.

Conclusion

It is often difficult to determine which scriptural sources the TS uses and the extent to which the biblical text has influenced its composition. Generally, the more verbal, syntactic, conceptual similarities are discerned, the more possible intentional reuse and literary dependency are to be identified.[40] By employing and refining the methodology of identifying scriptural allusion, it could be drawn that the events of king's being captured due to the lack of guards' protection in 2 Kgs. 25, 2 Chr. 25 and 2 Sam. 17 have conceptual influences on the aetiology of the law of king's guards in the TS, as well as lexical, syntactic and contextual connections with its legal formulation. It proves that when no ostensible biblical texts

[39] Another similar scenario is in Judg. 3:20 when the judge Ehud successfully dismissed the guards of Eglon king of Moab (וַיֵּצְאוּ מֶעָלָיו כָּל־הָעֹמְדִים עָלָיו) and killed him when he was alone (וְהוּא־יָשַׁב בַּעֲלִיַּת הַמְקֵרָה אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ לְבַדּוֹ).

[40] Zahn, M. "Identifying Reuse of Scripture in the Temple Scroll: Some Methodological Reflections", VanderKam, J. C., & Mason, E. F. (2012). *A teacher for all generations: essays in honor of James C. Vanderkam*. Leiden; Boston.

underlying the composition of new texts in the TS could be properly identified, primarily searching for its conceptual origin in the bible could be useful in examining the relations between the scroll and the biblical texts.

The analysis also contributes to the development of methodology of scriptural allusion. Three other principles could be added: (1) *the possibility of allusion increases when the conceptual sources of the text also have lexical and syntactical connections*; (2) *the extent of allusion does not directly depend on the quantity of overlapping language. Even without much similar phraseology, one text could have a great conceptual influence upon the other and thereby becomes the major source;* (3) *the conceptual influence is more probable when the larger context shows literary connections*.

Moreover, the compositional practices of the TS reflect contemporaneous conceptions towards the scripture and law. In the TS, the law is not merely confined to the legal codes in the Pentateuch, but continues to play a role in other biblical books as a dynamic and generating force. By taking the bible as a unity and breaking boundaries between genres of law, narrative and prophecy, the law of kingship in the TS freely incorporates and integrates these elements. It is influenced by the concept from biblical narrative regarding the crisis of kingship, composed in light of the several biblical passages that strongly influence the formulation of the law, and responds to the events in the book of Kings and Chronicles to restore the biblical law.

Furthermore, this research helps shed new light on the relationship between the biblical law and the legal texts of the TS. The law of king's guards does not rewrite the biblical law to add its interpretation as a legal development. Rather, through recovering the underlying legal principles in the biblical narrative, the TS forms a dialogue with the biblical texts and enacts new laws to solve the legal issues in the bible. The compositional technique of restoration through interpretation is consistent with its self-presentation as the Torah directly revealed by the divine speech. Not only its language and concepts are derived from biblical passages, but also its mode of legal evolution is already developed in the Hebrew Bible.[41]

[41] For example, four famous priestly stories in the Pentateuch: the blasphemer (Lev. 24:10–23); the second Passover (Num. 9:1–14); the man who collected firewood on the Sabbath (Num. 15:32–36); and the daughters of Zelophehad (Num. 27:1–11) are witnesses of the birth of new laws.

As G. Kratz observes in his study: "the Temple Scroll continues the literary and conceptual development of law and narrative in Deuteronomy more or less consistently."[42] Brooke also points out that "The Temple Scroll is in the tradition of the composition of the Pentateuch itself, updating, supplementing and improving it"[43]. The exegetical process and creative composition suggest that the law of the kingship in the TS should be regarded as a continuation of biblical law that both rewrites the Deuteronomic law and restores the law in response to biblical narratives, historical accounts, previous traditions, and cultural memories.

[42] Kratz, Reinhard G. "Law and Narrative in Deuteronomy and the Temple Scroll", *The Reception of Biblical War Legislation in Narrative Contexts*, edited by Christoph Berner and Harald Samuel, Berlin, München, Boston: De Gruyter, 2015, pp. 109-122.
[43] Brooke, G. "The Textual Tradition of the Temple Scroll and Recently Published Manuscripts of the Pentateuch", *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Forty Years of Research*. Edited by D. Dimant and U, Rappaport. Leiden: E J Brill, 1992. d

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OTSEM Summary

Summary of the Project: Legal Restoration in the Scriptural Production

My DPhil project focuses on the place of legal hermeneutics and exegetical motivations in the process of creative scriptural production and legal development in the Second temple legal texts (including the Temple Scroll, the Book of Jubilees, the Damascus Document and 4QReworked Pentateuch) that claim authoritative origins.

I will use the diachronic method to compare the inner-legal exegesis within the biblical texts and the legal hermeneutics in the Second temple texts to examine the development of exegetical techniques and how the model of inner-legal exegesis and scriptural formation has influenced the composition of the Second Temple legal texts. Meanwhile, the synchronic analysis of the legal hermeneutical system across various texts helps illuminate the broader picture of methods of legal scriptural production in the Second Temple period.

The connected question is how this development reflects the idea of the authority of legal scripture in the Second Temple period and whether or to what extent the hermeneutical techniques are consistent with the texts' self-presentation as authoritative texts. This study will help break the anachronistic canonical boundaries of biblical and non-biblical, inner-biblical and post-biblical, scriptural and pseudepigraphic in the Second Temple period when the scripture was still in the making. The legal scriptural production shows the continuation and restoration of the previous authoritative tradition. The new legal scripture thus inherently achieves authoritative status in itself.

Through the studies on the relations between tradition and transmission, interpretation and innovation in the rewritten law in the Second Temple texts, this project will illuminate the conceptions in these texts towards the legal scripture. It will reveal its paradoxical nature, including its immutability and vitality, eternity and performativity, fixity and multiplicity. It will further reflect upon how legal hermeneutics solve the contradictory nature of legal development in the process of legal scriptural production.

Summary of the paper: "Lest the king be captured in their hands": The Restored Law of Kingship in the Temple Scroll

In this paper, I explore the section of the law of king's guards (Col. 57.5-11) in the Temple Scroll, in particular on the legislation that forbids the guards to leave the king alone lest he be captured by foreign nations. Since there is no direct parallel biblical law identified in the Pentateuch, this legal commandment as well as the whole section of the law of kingship is considered to be an innovative expansion based on the law of the king in

Deuteronomy 17. With detailed philological analysis, I reveal its deeper connection with various biblical texts in historical books, and reconstruct the compositional and reading practices of this passage to explain the etiology of this law.

Methodologically, I build upon the theory of scriptural allusion and reuse to identify scriptural influences and literary dependency. In the analysis, I distinguish the different aspects of scriptural influences: conceptually, contextually and linguistically, so as to better demonstrate how legal scriptural production in the TS is based upon legal hermeneutics and interpretation on various biblical passages.

In the main parts, there are three biblical texts that influences upon the law of king's guards in the TS: 2 Kgs. 25, 2 Chr. 25 and 2 Sam. 17. 2 Kgs. 25 records the event of the captured King Zedekiah. In 2 Sam. 17, Ahithophel proposes a good plan to murder the king David while he is left alone. In both passages the conceptual link and lexical correspondences prove the scriptural influences on the law of king's guards. The event of the king Amaziah being captured by Israel in 2 Chr. 25 reflects the similar concept of the king being left alone and subsequently captured. The multiple connections between the broader law of kingship in the TS and the whole chapter reflect that 2 Chr. 25 also serves as one of the prototypes of kingship for composing the section of the law of kingship.

In conclusion, this paper on the law of king's guards in the TS focuses on its creative legal production along the lines of the biblical conceptual framework. The dynamic relationship between the biblical texts and the TS is more than interpretation or rewriting, but rather the appropriation and scripturalization of legal principles restored in the biblical historical books. Through recovering the underlying legal principles in the biblical narrative, the TS forms a dialogue with the biblical texts and recovers the biblical law to solve the legal issues in the Bible. The compositional technique of restoration through interpretation suggest that the law of the kingship in the TS should be regarded as a continuation of biblical law that both rewrites the Deuteronomic law and restores the law in response to biblical narratives, historical accounts, previous traditions, and cultural memories.

OTSEM ABSTRACT

The Hebrew Bible attests to the use of perfumes, incense and other aromatic products not only as cosmetics (Songs 4:10, 16; 5:13; Esth 2:12; Isa 3:24) but also for religious functions (Exodus 30:7, 34-35; Psalm 41:2); for their medicinal properties (Jer 8:22; 46:11; 51:8); and as part of funerary practice and burials (2 Chr 16:14). The complex meanings and identities encoded in scent are manipulated through the use of perfumes. Thus, the cosmetic use of scents is necessarily an impression management technique. The complex messages communicated by the use of perfume and culturally significant import of perfume can only fully be understood when contextualised in the entire process of labour-intensive production, distribution through trading routes across the eastern Mediterranean and Levant and finally consumption in its social settings. This paper explores the function and significance of perfume in the Hebrew Bible by bringing these texts into dialogue with the material culture, as viewed through the lens of sensory archaeology, and research on the anthropology of the sense of smell. This paper answers the call to modern exegetes to read 'not only with our eyes but with the other senses alert' (Levin 1979: 85) and proposes that by re-centring on and reading through smell, new exegetical possibilities are opened to us.

Introduction

On 1st April 1965, the BBC announced the invention of a new system called smell-o-vision which would allow viewers to experience the aromas produced in the television studio. The BBC was inundated by calls from viewers responding to this April Fools' prank, who were convinced they had smelt the chopped onions and freshly brewed coffee through their television sets (Bradley 2015: 1). This humorous anecdote illustrates some of the difficulties of a scholarly study of scent, it is not only difficult to control, define and describe but, in the deodorized modern West, it is also perceived as a less tangible and perhaps even illusory sense. As such, smell is relegated to an underutilized and often overlooked sense which is perceived as secondary to sight and hearing. This devaluation and denigration of smell is deep-rooted in Western, intellectual traditions and so it does not seem an exaggeration to say that '…in spite of its importance to our emotional and sensory lives, smell is probably the most undervalued sense in the modern West' (Classen, Howes and Synnott 2003: 3).[1]

[1] The idea that scent is a lesser sense arguably originates from Plato and later his student Aristotle (Synnott 1991: 63). It is, however, reiterated and consolidated throughout the Enlightenment period, perhaps compounded by the growing emphasis on the importance of sight and observation as part of the scientific method. The French Enlightenment thinker Étienne Bonnot de Condillac claimed that '…of all the senses it [smell] is the one which appears to contribute least to the cognitions of the human mind' (Condillac 1930 [1754]: xxxi). Immanuel Kant deemed the sense of smell to be 'dispensable' (Kant 2006 [1798]: 50-1). Charles Darwin saw scent as a vestigial sense; a quirk of evolution that is 'of extremely slight service' to humankind (Darwin 1981 [1871]: 24). Darwin does note however that the sense of smell is more developed in 'savages' (Darwin 1981 [1871]: 24). It is both interesting and uncomfortable to observe the tendency amongst those who subscribe to a hierarchy of senses to associate a particular emphasis and development of the "lower" senses amongst groups such as women, children, people of colour and the working classes who are all perceived as distanced from the rationality of white men (Classen, Howes and Synnott 2003: 4).

Undoubtedly influenced by this cultural intellectual heritage, the subordination of scent to sight and hearing is repeatedly re-iterated in the field of biblical studies. This is perhaps bolstered by the Hebrew Bible's frequent injunctions to hear (Deut 6:4; Josh 3:9; Isa 48:1; 1 Sam 8:7-9 etc.) and see (Gen 13:14; Zech 5:5).[2] Yael Avrahami argues that scent has largely been consigned to the footnotes in biblical studies of the senses because of 'the small number of biblical verses that mention smell, scents, or any other words linked to olfaction' (Avrahami 2012: 103).

However, this claim is belied by the 'wealth of olfactory imagery' in the Hebrew Bible (Ritchie 2000: 59).[3] The Hebrew Bible is replete with descriptions of perfumes, incense and other aromatic products not only as cosmetics (Songs 4:10, 16; 5:13; Esth 2:12; Isa 3:24) but also for religious functions (Exod 30:7, 34–35; Psalm 41:2); for their medicinal properties (Jer 8:22; 46:11; 51:8); and as part of funerary practice and burials (2 Chr 16:14). Indeed, Saul Levin has suggested that the sensory deficit lies not with the text, but rather with its modern readers and interpreters. He issues a call to interpreters to read 'not only with our eyes but with the other senses alert' (Levin 1979: 85) and proposes that by re-centring on and reading through other senses such as smell, new exegetical possibilities are opened up to us.[4]

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[2] There is an ongoing debate as to whether sight or hearing is the dominant sense in biblical epistemology with some promoting hearing (Boman 1960: 206; Meshorer 1996; Wolff 1974: 75) and others advocating for sight (Carasik 2006: 219; Avrahami 2012: 276) as the pinnacle of the pentasensory hierarchy.

[3] Ritchie particularly focuses on the aroma of sacrifice (2000). This topic has also been masterfully discussed by Anne de Gudme (2014; 2018).

[4] This is a call which has decisively been answered by Deborah Green in her incredibly insightful monograph on scent in biblical and rabbinic texts (2011); Dominika Kurek-Chomycz's PhD thesis on cultic scents in the Hebrew Bible and how they inform the understanding of olfactory metaphor in Pauline texts (2008); and Susan Ashbrook Harvey's exploration of smell in early Christianity and the role of scent in the developing religious epistemology

This paper seeks to answer Levin's call and, more specifically, explores the complex messages communicated by the use of perfume.[5] Much like the study of smells and scent, there is the tendency in Biblical Studies to overlook cosmetics as an avenue for serious critical scholarship; tending instead to focus on questions surrounding incense, cultic anointing oil and sacrifice.[6] This paper endeavours to act as a corrective to this oversight.

Certain cultural values, or symbolic capital, permeate the process of obtaining and applying perfume. Perfumes were not only expensive, luxury goods but, as I will demonstrate, they were inextricably linked with power, military strength and political

(2006). Robert Middeke-Conlin gives a helpful overview of a similar movement within scholarship of the ancient Near East (2014). This re-evaluation and criticism of the privileging of certain senses over others is mirrored in several other fields including sociology, anthropology and history (Corbin 1986; Classen 1993; Classen, Howes and Synnott 2003; Reinarz 2014).

[5] A number of overlapping terms are used in a diffuse and uncritical manner to describe and discuss the cosmetic products used to mask or add to or adapt the odour of the body with a variety of terms used including incense, perfume, fragrance, scents, aromatics and aftershave. I have opted to use the term "perfume" in this thesis because it captures both the notion of burnt incense products but also aromatic liquids and fat-based unguents. It is first and foremost a cosmetic term, whereas "incense" carries more religious connotations. I opt for the term perfume instead of fragrance or scent since these can both be used as generic terms to describe odours as well as specific cosmetic products. I also reject the use of the term aftershave because of its inherently gendered nature.

[6] There are a few notable exceptions, see for example the work of Laura Quick (2019a; 2019b; 2021: 151–180) and Francesca Stavrakopoulou (2013). For studies which treat incense and anointing oil see works by Kjeld Nielsen (1986); C. Houtman (1992); and Paul Heger (2011) and for discussions of the aroma of sacrifice Saul Levin (1979); and more recently the wok of Anne de Hemmer Gudme (2014; 2018). Although excluded from consideration here, these provide a helpful framework and model of how scent might be explored fruitfully within the context of Biblical Studies.

intrigue.[7] It is only against this political landscape that the significance of perfumes can be fully understood.

In order to show how perfumes were employed as kind of multi-sensory propaganda, I draw extensively on the insights of sensory archaeology. Sensory archaeology refocuses on the sensory and emotional responses elicited by material objects both in the contemporary observer and those in the past who originally used and interacted with the objects (Day 2013: 286-7). Central to this approach is the notion that any interaction between a person and a thing is mediated through the human body and specifically via the senses (Day 2013: 286).

Powerful Perfumes

In relation to the study of perfumes, the sensory archaeology methodology is perhaps best exemplified by Joanne Murphy's work on the perfume industry at the Mycenaean palace of Pylos (Murphy 2013), on whose work I draw extensively. Murphy argues that perfume in Pylian society acted as a 'sensory metaphor for power, a social communication device, and an integral perceptual element of wealth finance and commensal activities' (Murphy 2013: 244). Drawing on research on the role of scents in constructing social groups and delineating social

[7] This approach is significantly influenced by the work of Yannis Hamilakis (1999) on oil and wine consumption in Bronze Age Crete. Hamilakis argues that 'food is culturally defined and acquires immense significance in all societies because it involves the human body. It is (through consumption) an act of incorporation involving senses, feelings and emotions' (Hamilakis 1999: 38). For Hamilakis, 'the sensory feelings and emotions generated and exchanged in contexts such as funerary feasts or the other social gatherings and celebrations taking place in the plentiful courts of the palatial centres, would have constituted the political economy of the body and bodily memory on the basis of which power dynamics, competition and negotiation of social roles operated' (Hamilakis 1999: 49). I would contend that a similar phenomenon is operative in the use of cosmetics and particularly perfume in ancient Israel and Judah.

boundaries, Murphy contends that the pervasive way in which the scent would permeate the area surrounding the palace at Pylos which would have had important social implications:

> Although the smell of the perfume during its manufacture would have been available to all who live in and around the palace or even visited it, the finished, refined perfume was only accessible to a limited few; the smell of perfume, therefore, simultaneously united the people of Pylos and emphasized their separation into socio-political groups (Murphy 2013: 244).[8]

The association of perfumes with elite, political groups is also prominent in the Hebrew Bible. As Anne de Hemmer Gudme points out, many of the texts which discuss perfumes 'are also to a large extent texts about royalty and an important part of royal privilege and power in the Hebrew Bible is linked with luxurious spices' (de Hemmer Gudme 2018: 18). Spices and aromatic products were held in royal treasuries (2 Kgs 20:13; Isa 39:2; 2 Chr 32:27) and given as gifts between visiting dignitaries and royalty (1 Kgs 10:25; 2 Chr 9:24). The king's robes are described as being perfumed with myrrh, aloes and cassia (Ps 45:9) and kings were anointed, possibly with fragrant oil (1 Sam 10:1). However, the use of perfume is not merely a way of ostentatiously demonstrating an individual's wealth. Rather, as I will argue below, perfumes communicated that a ruler was politically astute and capable of exerting military strength.

The Perfume Trade and Political Machinations

Access to these prestige goods in part resulted from control of the complex trade networks were required to transport both the raw exotic ingredients and finished perfumes (Jer 8:22; Ezek 27:17, 19, 22; Gen 37:25). The South Arabian caravan trade is of particular

[8] What unites a society is perhaps a political and philosophical question which falls beyond the scope of this project. However, by emphasizing the labour intensive production process and the permeating nature of smells, Murphy highlights the cultural import of perfumes beyond the consumption phase which is chiefly associated with powerful elites.

significance given its role in transporting frankincense and myrrh (Hepper 1992: 136–9; Crone 1987; Van Beek 1958; Elat 1979: 533). There have been numerous attempts to date the emergence and origins of this trade to a variety of different periods: the end of the Late Bronze Age (Artzy 1994; Jasmin 2005a); the early Iron Age (Finkelstein 1988); 10th century BCE (Liverani 1992; Holladay 2009; Master 2014: 89); or the 7th and 6th centuries BCE (Retsö 1991; Crone 1987).[9] Although the South Arabian caravan trade may have operated earlier, by the 8th century BCE the trade was a significant component of the socioeconomic landscape of the southern Levant (Tebes 2007: 619). It would continue to shape and drive Judahite policy as Judah sought to exploit the trade route from this period until the end of Judah itself (Master 2010: 511).

The spice trade is elusive in the archaeological record. Indeed, Faust and Weiss have argued that there are no direct archaeological evidence of the spice trade in the Negev (Faust and Weiss 2005: 74). However, the limited nature of the archaeological evidence should perhaps not surprise us. Nor should the fragmentary evidence available to us, be taken as evidence of absence; the goods primarily associated with the spice trade are 'archaeologically invisible items' (Knapp 1991: 21). Caravans are, by their nature, transitory and nomadic. Although the origin and extent of this trade remains a largely unanswered question, the

[9] A key bone of contention is the date of the domestication of the camel. Albright was among the first to observe that transporting goods across the Arabian desert would have been impossible without camels (Albright 1960). The domestication of camels is typically dated to c. 1100 BCE although this is not uncontentious and, as Richard Bulliet (1990) points out, there is likely a distinction between the domestication of camels for household products such as milk, meat and wool and using them as a long-distance beast of burden. For further discussions of this, see Retsö (1991); Grigson (2012); Sapir-Hen and Ben-Yosef (2013). For an overview of the history of scholarship on the emergence of the spice trade see, Jasmin (2005b).

caravan trade has left some imprints on their routes largely in the form of the infrastructure and way stations built to make such long-distance trade possible.[10]

Moreover, several finds point to contact between Judah and southern Arabia. In particular, a number of cuboid altars depicting dromedaries were discovered at Beersheba, these iconographic representations may have been inspired by the camels used to transport the very south Arabian spices which were then burnt on the altar (Singer-Avitz and Eshet 1999: 52). A number of stone stoppers were also found at Beersheba which were likely intended to seal small alabaster and stone bottles, which themselves may have contained perfumes or cosmetics. These toppers are characteristic of those found at Hajar bin-Humid (Singer-Avitz and Eshet 1999: 52).

Similarly, a number of ostraca, seals and seal impressions featuring either Arabian signs or Arabian or Arabizing names written in local script have variously been taken as evidence of contact and exchange between the southern Levant and the Arabian Peninsula.

[10] Yfirat Thareani-Sussely has identified a number of criteria for identifying sites as caravanserai including, but not limited to, their proximity to trade routes; separation from the local population; the presence of sleeping accommodation as well as food preparation and consumption areas; pens to hold animals; security posts or fortresses; evidence of trade centres or goods for commercial exchange and the proximity of water supply systems (Thareani-Sussely 2007a: 128). In addition to these possible remains of trade network infrastructure, these sites are all associated with the Arabian spice trade because the pottery assemblages indicate Assyrian, Arabian, Phoenician and Edomite pottery in addition to the Judahite examples (Finkelstein and Silberman 2002: 268; Halpern 1991: 61–3). As a result, a number of sites which seem to meet these criteria, have been identified as possible stopping points for caravans. These possible desert way-stations include Tel Masos (Finkelstein 1988; Fritz 2011), Aroer (Thareani-Sussely 2007a) and Kuntillet ‘Ajrud (Beck 1982: 61; Hadley 1993; Na’aman 1993: 233; Keel, Uehlinger and Trapp 1998: 247; Dijkstra 2001: 17–21).

This Arabian epigraphic evidence has been discovered at a number of sites.[11] Perhaps most relevant for the discussion of perfume production, however, are those found at Aroer, Beersheba and Ein-Gedi.

At Aroer, a site identified as a possible desert way-station (Thareani-Sussely 2007a), two sherds which are incised with South Arabian signs were discovered in the strata which date to the late 7th – early 6th century (Thareani, Ilan and Taxel 2011: 228). The sherds themselves, appear to have been taken from local Judean vessels (Thareani, Ilan and Taxel 2011: 228). Similarly, a rectangular block of local limestone was discovered in a courtyard at Beersheba with three, or perhaps four, South Arabian letters incised in it (Singer-Avitz and Eshet 1999: 50–1; van der Veen and Bron 2014: 205). This arguably increases the likelihood that Aroer and Beersheba may have functioned as a caravanserai and gateway to the South Arabian trade network.

The enviable revenue stream generated by the Arabian spice trade undoubtedly attracted the attention of the Assyrians and it is likely that, at least in part, Tiglath-Pileser III's campaigns in Philistia and the southern Levant were motivated by a desire to profit from the Arabian caravan trade (Finkelstein 1992: 159; Tebes 2007; Holladay 2006: 327). In the words of Israel Finkelstein, 'controlling the gateways of the Arabian trade must have been one of the Assyrians main goals, if not the most important one' (Finkelstein 1992: 159). The Assyrians provided security, administration and political stability which in turn stimulated the trade systems (Lipschits, Sergi and Koch 2011: 14; Singer-Avitz and Eshet 1999: 55; Thareani-Sussely 2007b: 74). The Assyrians, in turn, exacted taxes and tributes. Indeed, it has

[11] For a comprehensive discussion see, (van der Veen and Bron 2014).

been noted that tributary payments during this period 'largely consisted of extrinsic objects from the Arabian trade' (Byrne 2003: 12 n.3).

Holladay posits that the extravagant tribute Hezekiah was able to pay Sennacherib (2 Kgs 18:13-16) is a testament to the riches accumulated by Judah as a result of controlling the spice trade and levying transit duties on caravans which passed through their lands (Holladay 2006). The consequences of 701 BCE likely reduced the Judahite hold on the southern trade networks. Indeed the decline of *lmlk* jar handles and their limited distribution in the mid-7th century BCE suggests that Sennacherib retained control of the Arabian spice trade, operated by local elite as intermediaries and in accordance with Assyrian interests (Lipschits, Sergi and Koch 2011: 19–20). The evidence of the distribution of *lmlk* jar handles suggests that the Judahite administrative system did not return in the area until the late 7th century BCE (Koch and Lipschits 2013: 67).

Nor was this conflict over control of the spice trade limited to hostilities with Assyria; there also appears to have been wrangling for control between Judah and Edom (Master 2010: 506). Arad Ostracon 24 contains orders to Judahite troops to travel from Arad to Ramat Negev 'lest anything should happen to the city' and 'lest Edom should come there' (Aharoni 1981: 46). This may reflect an anticipated attack on a trade caravan or town as a result of competition for control of the spice trade (Bienkowski and Van Der Steen 2001: 37). This interpretation is strengthened if the proposed identification of Ramat Negev with one of the sites in the Beersheba Valley associated with the Arabian spice trade route, Tel Ira, proves correct (Lemaire 1977: 191–2; Na'aman 1980: 146; Herzog et al. 1984: 29).

Thus, the evidence of the Arabian spice trade suggests that the demand for exotic perfumes supported a trade network which could be incredibly lucrative for those operating the routes. The resulting political machinations to control the distribution networks and the

use of aromatic substances to pay tributes to overlords suggests that perfumes were not only expensive, luxury goods but that they may also have been inextricably linked with power, military strength and political intrigue. These connotations are undoubtedly significant when attempting to unpack the social significance of perfume in ancient Israel and Judah.

Royal Perfume Production

Once the aromatic resins had been transported, they needed to be manufactured into perfumes. The main characteristics used to identify a perfume production site are installations, particularly those including some form of crushing station; a shallow basin or other form of container which might be used to soak aromatic substances in water for short periods; larger or deeper contains which could be used to store the essences and ovens or hearths used to distil the liquid or the boiling of sap itself (Hirschfeld 2004: 64).

A number of these characteristics are identifiable in the earliest layers at Ein-Gedi. The excavations of these early layers focused on Tel Goren, the earliest layer of which is stratum V which dates to 630-582 BCE (Mazar 1993: 400). The emergence of this settlement is contemporaneous with the expansion in the Beersheba Valley and the Negev in the 7th century BCE. A number of buildings in this layer (207, 211, 216) had courtyards with large barrel shaped pithoi sunken into the ground and arranged into tightly-spaced rows (Mazar 1993: 401; Stern and Matskevich 2007: 80–5). These barrel like pithoi were surrounded by copious pottery artefacts characteristic of the late 7th and early 6th century BCE, including jars, jugs, juglets, decanters, bowls, cooking pots and lamps, as well as a basalt mortar (Mazar 1993: 401). A similar group of buildings were excavated on the northern slope of the mound (Mazar 1993: 401). On this basis, it has been conjectured that Ein-Gedi represents an industrial complex which was used to produce perfume (Stern et al. 2007: 25, 361; Mazar 1993: 401; Jacob 2011: 241–266).

The agricultural riches of the Ein-Gedi site do seem to have been a large part of the reason for the occupation of the area (Stern and Matskevich 2007: 361) and it has repeatedly been noted since the first excavations of the Ein-Gedi region that '…the climatic conditions which favour tropical vegetation, together with an abundance of spring-water, made possible the cultivation of the lands of the oasis with the help of irrigation methods especially suited to growing plants with aromatic and medicinal properties' (Mazar, Dothan and Dunayevsky 1966: 7). The excavators argue that the settlement of Ein-Gedi may, at least in part, be attributed to 'the expansion of the perfume trade that passed through Edom and southern Judah to the west' (Stern and Matskevich 2007: 361).

This understanding of the site is arguably bolstered by the evidence of contact with Arabia. A unique, royal-style jar handle has also been unearthed in Stratum V at Ein-Gedi, contemporaneous the proposed perfume manufacturing instillations (Mazar, Dothan and Dunayevsky 1966: 34–5; van der Veen and Bron 2014: 215). This stamped handle differs from the other *lmlk* jar handles and features a sun disc with two-wings and a personal name which is often interpreted as Arabian in origin (van der Veen and Bron 2014: 216). Tentatively, it is possible to suggest that this jar handle found in the industrial quarter may represent a connection between southwestern Arabia as a result of the perfume production at Ein-Gedi (van der Veen and Bron 2014: 215–7).

It has also been suggested that the workshops at Tel Goren, were likely employed in the royal service (Stern and Matskevich 2007: 25). The high number of royal seals stamped on jar handles as well as the inscribed shekel weights and seals of officials unearthed at Tel Goren have been taken as evidence that the site was administered as a royal estate (Stern et al. 2007: 361). If the excavators are right to suggest that Ein-Gedi's perfume production was under royal control, this may suggest that perfumes were associated not only with the exertion of an

effective foreign policy and military dominance, but also an affective domestic rule and economic prosperity. Indeed, it has been argued that the process of expansion in the Negev in the 7th century and the comparative prosperity of the fringe areas of Judah is a product of the caravan trade (Na'aman 1995; Master 2010: 511; Holladay 2006).[12] Perfumes might therefore act as a reminder of the successful expansion into these regions.

This identification of Ein-Gedi as a perfume manufacturing site is not uncontroversial. Gideon Hadas, followed by Rebekah Welton (Hadas 2004; Welton 2020: 106), argues that these large pithoi do not represent perfume production but rather beer barrels. Hadas contends that '…it is quite exaggerated to believe that every structure having grinding vessels, basins and cooking installations is a perfume factory. These are elementary implements that were in every dwelling in ancient times' (Hadas 2007). Indeed, it is notoriously difficult to distinguish between receptacles used to hold fermented beverages and perfume containers.[13] Given the lack of residue analysis, it is impossible to determine the function of these vessels with any certainty. However, the association of the site with perfume production in later periods (Dayagi-Mendels 1989: 109–112; Hadas 2007), as well as its proximity to the spice trade

[12] Building on the work of Finkelstein, (Finkelstein 1994: 177–8), Avraham Faust and Ehud Weiss challenge this. They contend that there is very little evidence of a spice trade in the Negev and argue that it is very unlikely that small-scale cargoes, regardless of their value, could account in their entirety for the rapid and dramatic expansion of the settlement patterns in the area which include a number of towns (Faust and Weiss 2005: 74–5). Instead they suggest that the agricultural specialization and the use of the region to grow and produce grain account for the unique settlement patterns (Faust 2008: 171–2). However, as Oded Lipschits, Omer Sergi and Ido Koch have convincingly shown, the limited rainfall and capacity for agriculture in this region make this proposal seem highly implausible (Lipschits, Sergi and Koch 2011: 14, n.6; 27–8).

[13] See, for instance, the discussion of the purpose of Cypriot and Chalcolithic and Bronze Age vessels (Chovanec 2016: 209)..

suggests that, although far from certain, the identification of Ein-Gedi as a site of perfume production is not wholly implausible either.

Indeed, a great deal of attention has been devoted to the possibility of a thriving perfume industry in the Dead Sea region during later periods from the early Roman period and into the Byzantine period. The association is so deep-rooted that one area of the site has been termed 'Perfume Street' by excavators (Hadas 2008: 1720). Josephus records that the balsam grown in Judea produces some of the finest perfumes (*Ant.* 14:54) whilst Pliny the Elder suggests that Judean balsam was the best material for making perfumes (*Nat. Hist.* 12:54).[14] Until the Great Revolt (67 or 68 to 73 CE) and possibly even after, Judea appears to have been the sole producer of balsam within the empire, and consequently it was both a costly, rare and much coveted perfume (Green 2011: 32). Joan Taylor goes so far as to argue that the Roman conquest of Jericho and Ein-Gedi was, at least in part, motivated by a desire to control the trade routes which transported these luxurious perfumes (Taylor 2006: 145–6). Strikingly, Pliny records that the sale of trimmings from the balsam plants grown in Judea alone raised 800,000 sesterces to the Roman treasury (*Nat. Hist.* 12:54:118). The growing, and ultimately vindicated, concern about the possibility of a Roman invasion is perhaps what led the owner of the Herodian juglet to hide it in a cave in the vicinity of Qumran after carefully wrapping it in palm fibres designed to protect it from damage (Patrich and Aarubas 1989: 49-50). This is perhaps testament to the cyclical nature of history and eerily echoes the Assyrian conquest and domination of the spice network several centuries earlier.

The scant archaeological evidence and the frequently incomplete and fragmentary nature of the extant material makes it difficult to make assertions about the production,

[14] For a more detailed discussion of the Greco-Roman sources which discuss balsam grown in Judea see (Patrich 2006: 241–2)

distribution and consumption of perfume with any certainty. Nevertheless, when considered in toto, a chain of both direct and indirect evidence spanning many centuries begins to emerge. Although this picture is incomplete, it seems plausible that exotic spices were traded from the Arabian peninsula, travelling on trade routes through the Negev which may account for the expansion of settlements in the region during the 7th century BCE and the emergence of desert way-stations. There was likely some form of perfume instillation which manufactured these raw ingredients into perfume, possibly at installations like the 7th century BCE example discovered at Ein-Gedi. The region surrounding Ein-Gedi may have been suitable for cultivating indigenous aromatic plants such as balsam which perhaps explains its deep-seated connections and associations with the perfume industry in ancient sources. It is likely, that the wealth generated by the perfume trade attracted the attention of imperial powers, first the Assyrians and later the Romans, who sought to monopolize it for their own financial gain. It is against this backdrop in which perfumed scents carried connotations of effective military and political leadership that we should understand the adoption of the rosette *lmlk* stamps.

Rosette Stamps as Royal Iconography

The rosette stamped *lmlk* impressions are visual emblems which are typically associated with royalty and royal administrative systems. Although there are variations within the typology (Cahill 1995: 231–40; Koch and Lipschits 2013: 61–2), broadly speaking these stamps are a floral motif with an inner circular core with tear-shaped petals surrounding it.[15]

[15] Given the evidence of royal control over the spice trade and perfume production instillations, it is possible that the rosette stamped jars may have contained floral perfumes, much like plastic tomatoes are filled with ketchup in a modern context or, in an ancient context, poppy shaped Cypriot base ring juglets contained opium (Day 2013: 296), without more residue analysis on the jars in question this is impossible to determine with any certainty.

The rosette stamps represent a sub-group of jar handle stamps which include early and late *lmlk* impressions, concentric incisions and rosette stamps (Lipschits, Sergi and Koch 2011). The distribution of the rosette stamps in the archaeological record is most dense at sites in and around Jerusalem, Ramat Rahel and the Lowlands, however there is a not insignificant number of deposits in the Beersheba Valley and at Ein-Gedi (Koch and Lipschits 2013: 60), areas which we have already seen are associated with the Arabian spice trade and perfume production.

There is a reasonable consensus that these rosette stamps emerged during the 7th century BCE (Na'aman 1991: 31–33, 2016: 117; Ji 2001: 14; Koch and Lipschits 2013: 60–63), roughly contemporary with the emergence of a number of desert waystations in the Negev to facilitate the spice trade as well as Ein-Gedi's perfume instillation.[16] The systematic use of the rosette and other seal impressions on large storage jars is typically understood as some form of administrative system either to mark the products produced by royal estates or as a taxation system.[17] The various different seal impressions, including the rosette motif, are usually described as 'royal emblems' (Lipschits, Sergi and Koch 2010: 9, 28).[18]

[16] Finkelstein agrees with a 7th century dating but suggests that the rosette impression emerged slightly earlier during the reign of Manasseh (Finkelstein 2012). For Finkelstein, this coheres better with his theory concerning the archaeology of the Days of Manasseh (Finkelstein 1994; Thareani-Sussely 2007b). Several other attempts have been made to pin the rosette stamp to the reign of Josiah (Yadin 1961: 12; Mazar, Dothan and Dunayevsky 1966: 34; Na'aman 2016: 122) or to a later date, such as the reign of Jehoiakim (Cahill 1995: 244–8).

[17] For a discussion of a number of different theories see, (Lipschits 2012; Koch and Lipschits 2013: 55–6).

[18] Although the royal explanation is the prevailing interpretation of the rosette stamps, there have been some notable detractors. It has been suggested, for instance, that they may represent a potter's mark or evidence of a pottery guild (Mendelsohn 1940: 21). Whilst not finding the pottery guild or potter's mark explanation satisfactory, Raz Kletter notes that the royal explanation is not wholly cogent either. In Assyria and the Hittite empire, the rosette motif is related to gods and individual people. There is a marked lack of evidence of this

There have been several attempts to unpack the iconographic significance of the choice of imagery on the different *lmlk* stamps. For example, Chang-Ho Ji argues that the concentric circle stamp was a 'symbol of a heavenly circle' (Ji 2001: 13–4) whilst Nadav Na'aman argues that the four- and two-winged stamps were royal emblems which express royal ownership as a form of iconographic royal propaganda (Na'aman 2016: 114-5). Na'aman then goes on to argue that the emergence of the rosette stamp to replace these winged stamps should be understood as a decision made by King Josiah, given his religious reforms (2 Kgs 23:24; 2 Chr 34:6-7) and documented aversion to iconographic symbols and (Na'aman 2016: 122). Whilst details of Na'aman's analysis, particularly his attempt to attribute the rosette stamp to a specific king, are unconvincing, the impetus to question the significance of the iconography of the rosette and its emergence in the 7th century BCE is well-placed.

The rosette is a popular motif in Assyrian art and is often connected to gods, in particular Ishtar (Van Buren 1939; Black, Rickards and Green 1992: 156–7; Dalley 1991: 125; Frankfort 1969: 19). The rosette motif is depicted in Assyrian reliefs decorating clothes and textiles (Oppenheim 1949; Dalley 1991) as well as items of adornment such as wrist straps (Black, Rickards and Green 1992: 157) and headbands (Frankfort 1969: 184) worn by both gods and royalty. We also find examples of the rosette motif on Assyrian seals belonging to private individuals (Kletter 1999: 36). Ido Koch convincingly argues that the emergence of the rosette stamp during the 7th century BCE in Judah may reflect an appropriation and transformation of a former Assyrian iconographic image and a statement of

motif used in Hebrew seals dating to the 7th century BCE, with only one example. The 7th century BCE is a period during the Iron Age in which literacy was at it highest, it is therefore perhaps surprising that the royal administration would adopt a purely iconographic symbol instead of the epigraphic *lmlk* stamp and the large number and spread of finds may signify a varied rather than centrally organised use (Kletter 1999: 37).

the reclaimed Judahite power following the waning and ultimate disintegration of the Assyrian empire (Koch 2019).

However, drawing on this concept of synaesthetic material culture, it is possible that the use of the rosette iconography was not only visually significant but also olfactorily consequential. The rosette perhaps evoked the connotations of aromatic perfumes such as wealth, status and power. As I have noted above, spices and aromatic products were held in royal treasuries (2 Kgs 20:13; Isa 39:2; 2 Chr 32:27) and given as gifts between visiting dignitaries and royalty (1 Kgs 10:25; 2 Chr 9:24). The king's robes are described as being perfumed with myrrh, aloes and cassia (Ps 45:9). Indeed given that myrrh and other aromatic products were likely paid as tributes to Assyria (Byrne 2003: 12 n.3; Holladay 2006: 318) and various facets of the perfume production and distribution process were flashpoints between Judah and the Assyrian empire, the appropriation of rosette motif from Assyria likely has some olfactory import in this context also.

Although images and decorative motifs tend to be interpreted as symbolic, immaterial concepts, there is a growing recognition that pictorial subjects can have a cross-sensory impact on the body.[19] Put simply, an object which is primarily experienced using sight can also have an impact on other senses. As the victims of the BBC smell-o-vision prank in 1965 discovered, individuals can sometimes experience visually-induced aromas. Similarly, although depictions of flowers on stone or ceramic do not physically exude a scent, the image

[19] See particularly the work by Stephen Houston and Karl Taube on ancient Mesoamerican material culture and its synaesthetic effect (Houston and Taube 2000: 263), which has been particularly influential for this study.

draws on bodily and emotional memory.[20] It is noteworthy, therefore, that this floral shape was adopted as a royal emblem in the 7th century BCE, at a time when there were expansions into the Negev, the establishment of a perfume instillation at Ein-Gedi and re-establishment of Judahite control of the South Arabian spice trade. An individual looking at the floral, rosette *lmlk* stamp might experience the perfumed aromas which were so closely associated not only with royalty and wealth, but effective rulership.

Conclusions

Far from being an illusory, lesser sense, the sense of smell and the use of perfumes is invested with rich meaning. Perfumes were consumed particularly in elite, royal circles not merely as an overt display of wealth but as a form of multisensory propaganda. Access to perfume likely signalled military strength and the ability to be politically adept in order to maintain control of the spice trade network. It may also have signified the expansion into new territories in the Negev and the ability to maintain and ensure the political stability and economic prosperity required for the long-term success of perfume manufacture. It is no coincidence that the floral shaped rosette was adopted as a royal emblem in the 7th century BCE. These rosette stamps conceivably evoked these connotations for the viewer and possibly even simulated visually-induced aromas. This suggests that good kingship was closely associated with the perfumed scents.

[20] This concept has been fruitfully explored by Jo Day in relation to the floral motifs on Minoan ceramics. Day argues that the floral decoration and forms used on Minoan vessels were intended to enhance real aroma and imagined olfactory response, particularly in a banqueting setting (Day 2013).

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My doctoral project aims to present a comprehensive study of the varying functions of cosmetics in the Hebrew Bible and the archaeological record of Israel and Judah. I have identified two essential properties for a product to be cosmetic. Firstly, they must be temporary or removable as this is the difference between cosmetic pigments used to colour the eyes, cheeks or complexion and permanent uses of colour such as tattooing. Secondly, cosmetics alter properties of the body such as skin colour or scent. This stands in contrast to items of clothing or jewellery which are better described as an ornament or embellishment to the body underneath. I therefore define cosmetics as any removable or temporary product which are applied to any part of the human body with the intention of altering the perception of a property of that body.

I have structured my thesis so that it opens with an introduction and methodology followed by four chapters each devoted to a different cosmetic product. There is a chapter on the cosmetic use of oil; another on the role perfume plays; a third on the significance of eye-paints; and a fourth on colorants applied to change the complexion of the skin and/or hair. The distinctions I have made between these four cosmetic products are, by their nature, artificial. The categories are not as distinct or clear-cut as the structure of these chapters might suggest. For instance, malachite was mixed with oil to form a paste used as eye-paint (Jacob 2011: 56). This represents a cosmetic use of oil, it is an eye-paint and it is a colorant which is applied to the body. Nevertheless, I have chosen to use this structure as each of these products affect the body in a slightly different way and interact with the senses in a unique manner.

Archaeological, inscriptional and socio-scientific evidence external to the Hebrew Bible indicates that cosmetics were used more frequently than the Hebrew Bible itself might suggest (Jacob 2011; Dayagi-Mendels 1989; King and Stager 2001: 280–5; Quick 2019a: 356–7). Indeed, as Quick and Philip King and Lawrence Stager note (Quick 2019a: 360; King and Stager 2001: 281), women's use of eye paints in particular, but also perfumes and oils are frequently associated with prostitution and moral corruption (Isa 3:16-24; Jer 4:30; Ezek 16:15-18; 23:40-42; Amos 6:6; Eccl 7:1; Prov 6:25). Thus, one of the aims of this study is to reconstruct the likely reality of cosmetic practices in ancient Israel and Judah. It is anticipated that the historical reality may in places differ from the anti-cosmetic rhetoric and the portrayal of those who wear cosmetics as Othered.

Cosmetics are imbued with culturally symbolic import but these can only be fully understood in the context of the whole process from production to distribution and use. Certain cultural values, or symbolic capital, permeate the process of obtaining and applying cosmetics. As such, I will consider production phases (planting, cultivating, pressing) and aspects (products and waste products, labour force, technology, quantities and qualities produced); distribution types (within unit of production, gift, reciprocal exchange market, obligatory transfer) and aspects (technologies of storage and transport); preparation phases (washing); and consumption phases (application, assembling

participants and the social contexts in which cosmetics were used such as feasting or instillation ceremonies). By contextualising cosmetics as part of a total process of production, distribution and consumption, we can begin to understand the complex network which informs the significance and shapes the meaning of these cosmetics when applied to the body. The heart of this approach is the premise that cosmetic practices cannot be understood as isolated symbols but rather exist as part of complex networks of both objects and agents.

The evidence we have of cosmetic practices in the ancient world reflects a widespread, culturally diffuse phenomenon that resists being pinned down. Although any models of cultural influence are highly speculative and to some extent unreconstructible, we do know that there were connections between Israel and its other ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean neighbours through imperialism, diplomacy and trade. There were points of historical contact between these different cultures and their cosmetic practices and instances of cultural contact and cosmetics can be traced through the trade routes and tributes used to purchase and gift cosmetic items. For example, we know that kohl is often described as coming from Elam and was also given as tribute by Hezekiah to Sennacherib (Kramer 1977: 65; OIP 2 34:42). Similarly, products such as frankincense and myrrh came from Somalia and Southern Arabia (Lucas 1930: 49; King and Stager 2001: 280; Manniche 1999: 26). Something which the Hebrew Bible itself acknowledges in Jeremiah 6:20. These demonstrable points of contact between cultures, form a basis from which to compare cultures within the same historical stream. As such, I cautiously use comparative evidence drawn from the ancient Near East and Mediterranean to help to reconstruct in order to construct a likely historical reality.

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"Which of us do you seek to be ruled by?"
Some observations on the question of human choice in 4QVisions of Amram

Abstract

The Aramaic composition known as Visions of Amram (4Q543–547) claims to contain the final words of Amram (father of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam). In his farewell address, Amram seemingly recounts a vision that he saw earlier in his life. A particularly intriguing portion of the vision (partially preserved in 4Q543–544 and 4Q547) describes two beings who argue over Amram and engage in a great dispute over him. They tell Amram that they rule over all mankind and they seem to present him with a choice: "Which of us do you seek to be ruled by?" Even though the actual text is quite fragmentary and the crucial words are in fact missing, much has been made of this passage in discussions regarding determinism and the question of free will and personal choice. In addition, it has been claimed that this part of Amram's vision bears a striking resemblance to one of the Avestan Gathas, Yasna 30.

This paper investigates the passage from the following angles: 1) What does the text actually say? Is the usual reconstruction plausible? Does anything else in the immediate context support the notion of "free choice"? 2) What does the rest of Visions of Amram have to say about determinism and personal choice? In this connection, the possible inclusion of 4Q542 (Testament of Qahat) and 4Q548–549 as part of the composition will be considered. 3) How does the passage compare with other texts that treat the question of divine determinism and human choice in Qumran and the canonical Old Testament? Specifically, the paper focuses on the notion of choice and determinism in relation to Deut 30. 4) Finally, the paper offers a brief evaluation of the supposed Iranian connection and the resemblance between Visions of Amram and Yasna 30.

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Proposed focal points of the discussion: The alternative reconstructions mentioned in section 1—are any of them plausible, are there other possible suggestions? The possibly deterministic passages in VA—how do we assess them? The general question of texts containing both deterministic and "free choice" passages—how do we make sense of such cases, and should we?

0. An introduction to Visions of Amram

The Aramaic composition known as Visions of Amram (VA) has been preserved in at least five copies found among the Dead Sea Scrolls (4Q543–547).[1] The beginning of the composition, including what must be considered the title, is attested in 4Q543 and 4Q545:]ר עמרם בר חזות מלי כתב פרשגן (4Q543 1, 1). In 4Q545 1a i, 1, the initial words before Amram's name are more or less lost. The genealogical information, on the other hand, is partially legible: ת עמרם בר קהת בר לוי חזו]ת מלי כתב פרשג[ן. Thus, what we have here is a "copy of the writing" called "the words of the vision (or visions) of Amram, son of Qahat, son of Levi."[2] Amram, the father of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, is mentioned only briefly in the canonical Old Testament, in Exod 6:18, 20 (twice); Num 3:19; 26:58, 59 (twice); 1 Chr

[1] The *editio princeps* was published by Émile Puech in *Qumrân grotte 4.XXII: Textes araméens, première partie: 4Q529–549*, DJD 31 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001), 283–405. In addition to 4Q543–47, Puech also assigned 4Q548 and 4Q549 to the composition. However, he marked 549 with a question mark (4QVisions de ʿAmram^{g}? ar) and even though the designation given to 548 is simply 4QVisions de ʿAmram^{f} ar, in his discussion of the identification of the fragments he asks whether it would be preferable to use a question mark (p. 392). As will be discussed in section 2 below, several scholars have argued against the inclusion of 548 and 549 in VA. Conversely, Machiela recently argued that 4Q542 (Testament of Qahat) should in fact be considered a part of VA, Daniel Machiela, "Is the Testament of Qahat Part of the Visions of Amram? Material and Literary Considerations of 4Q542 and 4Q547," *JSJ* 52 (2021): 27–38. This, too, will be discussed in section 2. Prior to Puech's work, parts of the fragments had been available in an article by Józef T. Milik, "4QVisions de 'Amram et une citation d'Origine," *RB* 79.1 (1972): 77–97, and in Klaus Beyer's *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer samt den Inschriften aus Palästina, dem Testament Levis aus der Kairoer Genisa, der Fastenrolle und den alten talmudischen Zitaten* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984), 210–214; see also the *Ergänzungsband* from 1994 (pp. 85–92) and *Band 2* from 2004 (pp. 117–125). Puech's edition presents the manuscripts individually, indicating overlaps by various means, while Beyer's earlier edition presents one synthetic text put together from the various manuscripts. The same method is used by Duke in his eclectic edition, Robert R. Duke, *The Social Location of the Visions of Amram (4Q543–547)*, StBibLit 135 (New York: Peter Lang, 2010). Unless otherwise noted, I cite the text from Puech's edition.

[2] On what constitutes the title, cf. Henryk Drawnel, "The Initial Narrative of the Visions of Amram and Its Literary Characteristics," *RevQ* 24.4/96 (2010): 517–554 (527). On the question of חזות being singular or plural, see p. 529 in the same article, as well as the comment in Puech, *Qumrân grotte 4.XXII*, 283. Due to the fragmentary state of the text, it is difficult to decide whether Amram experiences only one vision/dream, whether several visions were part of one dream, or whether he had more than one dream. Milik ("4QVisions de 'Amram et une citation d'Origine," 85) refers to 4Q544 1, 8–9 as the "début du même songe (ou bien dans un songe précédent)." In 4Q547 9, 8, we are told that Amram awoke from his sleep and wrote the vision (חזוא). In contrast to the feminine noun used in the incipit (whose *t*-ending is interpretable as either singular or plural), the masculine noun used here is clearly singular.

5:28, 29; 6:3; 23:12, 13; 24:20 (in Exod 2:1 he is introduced without his name being mentioned). In VA, he plays the leading role.

Scholars have noted the importance of the very first word of the composition. פרשגן (Masoretic פַּרְשֶׁגֶן) is an Iranian loanword also found in the Aramaic part of the Book of Ezra (Ezra 4:11, 23; 5:6) and, in Hebrew (in the form פַּתְשֶׁגֶן), in the Book of Esther (Esth 3:14; 4:8; 8:13; in the Hebrew part of Ezra, in 7:11, the *r*-form occurs once). The form with *-t-* seems to be closer to the original Iranian word.[3] Jurgens suggests that פרשגן signifies the "permanent authoritative value" of a writing so designated and, in the case of VA, the use of the word shows that the content was presented as "inherited from the original, sacred words of Amram, providing the reader exclusive access to secret wisdom derived from the exceptional experiences and vision of this particular ancient."[4] Similarly, Perrin states that פרשגן as used here and elsewhere, as well as the corresponding Greek word ἀντίγραφον (often found in the incipits of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs), "frames the work or section thereof as a 'copy' of an authoritative record, be it a royal edict or alleged patriarchal discourse."[5] The use of incipits of the type attested in VA should be seen, according to Perrin, as "authorial attempts to capture not only a pseudepigraphic voice, but authenticity and some degree of authority for their literary products."[6]

The following words further explicate the contents of the work. It includes "everything that he (Amram) told (אחוי) his sons and that he commanded (פקד) them on the day of his death" (4Q543 1, 1–2 and 545 1a i, 1–2). The verbs clearly indicate a didactic and instructional purpose,[7] and they

[3] Harald Samuel, "Contact between Old Persian and Hebrew? A Rejoinder to A. Wilson-Wright," *VT* 70 (2020): 298–315 (305), gives **patičagniya-* as the reconstructed Iranian basis for the word. Cf. also Johnny Cheung, *Etymological Dictionary of the Iranian Verb*, IEED 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 31–32.

[4] Blake Alan Jurgens, "Reassessing the Dream-Vision of Amram (4Q543–547)," *JSP* 24.1 (2014): 3–42 (9).

[5] Andrew B. Perrin, "Capturing the Voices of Pseudepigraphic Personae: On the Form and Function of Incipits in the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls," *DSD* 20 (2013): 98–123 (105). Note the official, authoritative character of all the writings called פרשגן or פתשגן in Ezra and Esther.

[6] Perrin, "Capturing," 119. Cf. also Mladen Popović, "Pseudepigraphy and a Scribal Sense of the Past in the Ancient Mediterranean: A Copy of the Book of the Words of the Vision of Amram," in *Is There a Text in This Cave? Studies in the Textuality of the Dead Sea Scrolls in Honour of George J. Brooke*, ed. Ariel Feldman, Maria Cioată, and Charlotte Hempel, STDJ 119 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 308–318 (309): "From the context of its use it becomes clear that the term could take on the added sense of signalling authoritative value."

[7] Cf. Drawnel, "The Initial Narrative," 531.

emphasize the authoritative claims that seem to be inherent in the first part of the incipit. The testamentary setting ("on the day of his death") and the final passage of the incipit indicating the precise year of Amram's death in relation to the exile of Israel in Egypt also point in the same direction.[8]

Even though the manuscripts are fragmentary, the general structure of the composition seems to be reasonably clear. Before his death, Amram arranges for his daughter Miriam to be married to his younger brother Uzziel. After a brief description of the wedding feast (4Q543 1; 4Q545 1a i; 4Q546 1), we hear that Amram summons his sons (4Q545 1a i, 8–9).[9] This introductory part presents Amram in the third person but in the rest of the text, Amram seems to be the speaker. The first short passage after the end of the introduction appears to present the future deeds of Moses and/or Aaron (4Q543 2; 4Q545 1a i).[10] Then Amram relates the events surrounding a journey he undertook earlier in his life to Canaan, as participant in (or leader of)[11] an expedition to bury the bones of the forefathers (4Q543 3–4; 4Q544 1; 4Q545 1a–b ii; 4Q546 2; 4Q547 1–2). Amram's stay in Canaan had to be extended for 41 years, because of war and border closure. During this forced stay, Amram had a vision which is detailed in the final part of the work, including various predictions about the future

[8] Drawnel ("The Initial Narrative," especially pp. 543–544) questions the designation of VA as a testament, based on a comparison with the Greek Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. However, his observations hardly exclude VA from being described as a testament-like work, cf. Liora Goldman, "The Burial of the Fathers in the *Visions of Amram* from Qumran," in *Rewriting and Interpreting the Hebrew Bible: The Biblical Patriarchs in the Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Devorah Dimant and Reinhard G. Kratz, BZAW 439 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2013), 231–249 (231, n. 1).

[9] First Amram calls on Aaron and tells him to call on "Mal'akyahu, your brother" (מלאכיה אחוכה). This is Duke's reading of the text, which seems to make better sense than the one presented by Puech ("les messagers, vos frères," reading אחיכון rather than אחוכה). According to Duke, Mal'akyahu is Moses' Hebrew name, which is also known in partially similar forms from later traditions. See Duke, *The Social Location*, 69–79, and Duke's article on the same subject, Robert R. Duke, "Moses' Hebrew Name: The Evidence of the *Vision of Amram*," *DSD* 14.1 (2007): 34–48. Miriam is not mentioned in the extant text at this point, but it seems possible that she would have been present to hear Amram's final words along with her brothers. The incipit ("everything that he told his sons") uses the word בנוהי, which may refer to "children" rather than "sons" specifically.

[10] On the relationship between Moses and Aaron in VA, see Liora Goldman, "Between Aaron and Moses in 4QVisions of Amram," in *Vision, Narrative, and Wisdom in the Aramaic Texts from Qumran: Essays from the Copenhagen Symposium, 14–15 August, 2017*, ed. Mette Bundvad and Kasper Siegismund, STDJ 131 (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 101–118.

[11] According to Goldman, "The Burial," 232. The passage that she uses as an argument for this position is not quite clear (4Q546 2, 1: שׁנת רישׁי ברשו[תי]). Goldman's translation is "in the first year of [my] authority." Puech (*Qumrân grotte 4.XXII*, 355) has "Au cours de]l'année de mes débuts, avec [mon] approbation," and Duke (*The Social Location*, 17) renders the words as follows: "[In] year one, with my permiss[ion." Cook has "in the inaugural year of the authority of [*x*]" (reading ברשו[ת with no suffix), Edward M. Cook, *Dictionary of Qumran Aramaic* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2015), 223 (s.v. רישי) and 225 (s.v. רשו).

life of his sons, including the events of the exodus (4Q543 5–9; 4Q544 1; 4Q547 1–2; several other fragments whose precise placement is uncertain).[12]

As noted above, the title of the composition includes the word "vision" (or "visions") and seems to point to the vision account as the central concern of the work. Furthermore, the centrality of the vision account is emphasized in the passage preserved in 4Q547 9, 8, according to which Amram awoke from his dream (מן שנת עיני, "from the sleep of my eyes") and immediately wrote down what he had experienced (וחזוא כתבֿ[ת). In the next line of the same fragment, we are informed that what Amram had been told in the vision came to pass (והוא לי כדי אמרֿ[, lit. "and it was/became for me according to what he had said"). As Perrin has noted, "authority and authenticity derive principally from the claim that the text is a record" of this vision.[13] Accordingly, much scholarship has centered on the contents and meaning of the vision.

In the vision, Amram sees two beings. They have usually been described as angels or "watchers" (עירין), even though the text itself never uses that term.[14] The preserved fragment (4Q544 1, 10) merely says that Amram saw תרין דאנין עלי, "two (who were) arguing over me." Further on in the passage, the two beings describe themselves as the rulers of all mankind (4Q544 1, 12 combined with 4Q543 5–9, 2–3 and 4Q547 1–2, 11), and the appearance of each is described. One of them is sinister and dark, the other smiling (4Q543 5–9, 4–8; 4Q544 1, 13–15; 4Q547 1–2, 13).[15] Amram seems to

[12] See also Duke's presentation of the text in four episodes: episode one, Amram and his children; episode two, Amram's charge to Moses; episode three, Amram's sojourn in Canaan; episode four, Amram's vision (Duke, *The Social Location*, 12–27). In addition, he lists many fragments with uncertain episode placement on pp. 27–35.

[13] Perrin, "Capturing," 110. He emphasizes the "centrality of the dream-vision to the composition as a whole" (p. 111).

[14] Cf. Jurgens, "Reassessing," 23 (n. 43). Puech reconstructs [ומשתכל הוית במלאכין/עירין] in 4Q544 1, 9 and in 4Q547 1–2, 9 ("[*et je contemplai les anges/veilleurs*]") and דן [עירא in 4Q544 2, 12 (but translates as "cet [ange]-ci"). The latter reading may be supported by 4Q546 22, 1 where the word "watcher" seems to be partially preserved (דן אָ[עי, "ce [veil]leur"), but see the cautious remarks by Jörg Frey, "Different Patterns of Dualistic Thought in the Qumran Library: Reflections on Their Background and History," in *Legal Texts and Legal Issues: Proceedings of the Second Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies Cambridge 1995. Published in Honour of Joseph M. Baumgarten*, ed. Moshe Bernstein, Florentino García Martínez, and John Kampen, STDJ 23 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 275–335 (320, n.175).

[15] The precise meaning of the fragmentary description of the beings is contested. Milik, Puech, and others see a reference to a serpent in the description of the first being (reading the word תן[כפ] in 4Q544 1, 13), but other scholars have proposed other readings. See especially Andrew B. Perrin, "Another Look at Dualism in 4QVisions of Amram," *Hen* 36.1 (2014): 106–117 (112–116), who argues for reading this and the preceding word as תן[ואימ]ל[י]תֿחֿדֿ ("dre[ad]ful[and terrify]ing"). Milik ("4QVisions de 'Amram et une citation d'Origine," 80 and 82) interpreted both parts of the description as concerning the same being with the word אחרנה meaning "again." However, Puech (*Qumrân grotte 4.XXII*, 299) notes that the word should be understood as "the other," marking a shift from the description of the first to the second being, who is "smiling" (problematically spelled חעבון in 4Q543 5–9, 7 and העבן in 4Q544 1, 14). Cf. Beyer's 1984-edition (*Die aramäischen Texte*, 212) and Florentino García Martínez, "4Q'Amram[b] 1, 14: ¿Melki-reša' o Melki-sedeq?," *RevQ* 12.1/45 (1985): 111–114. The sinister being is seemingly called מלכי רשע in 5Q544 2, 13. This, along with the mention of "three

continue the conversation with one of them, who describes himself as being associated with light and having authority over all that is light, while the other being is associated with darkness and has authority over everything that is dark (4Q544 2).

The focus of the rest of the present paper is the initial interaction between Amram and the two beings and specifically an intriguing passage that seems to indicate that Amram is allowed to choose his own place in the dualistic division of the world described by the beings.[16] "Which of us do you seek to be ruled by?" or a similar expression is the usual rendering of the question that the beings appear to put before Amram—a question that seems to imply a view of the fundamental relation between human and divine control quite unlike the more or less explicit determinism found in many other Qumran texts. Consequently, much has been made of this passage in discussions regarding determinism and human choice. For instance, Goldman states that Amram's future is not predestined but "dependent upon his free will and personal choice."[17] The text, however, is not very well preserved and the crucial words are the result of scholarly reconstruction.

Sections 1–4 will investigate the passage from the following angles: 1) What does the text actually say? Is the usual reconstruction plausible? Does anything else in the immediate context support the notion of "free choice"? 2) What does the rest of VA have to say about determinism and personal choice? In this connection, the possible inclusion of 4Q542 (Testament of Qahat) and 4Q548–549 as part of the composition will be briefly considered. 3) How does the passage compare with other texts that treat the question of divine determinism and human choice in Qumran and the canonical Old Testament? 4) Finally, the paper offers a brief evaluation of the claim that this part of Amram's vision bears a striking resemblance to one of the Avestan Gathas, Yasna 30.

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names" in fragment 3, 2 of the same manuscript, has given rise to the view that each of the beings had three names, reflecting their opposite domains: מלכי רשע, בליעל, and שר חשוכא for the being associated with darkness, and מלכי צדק, מיכאל, and שר נהורא for the being associated with light—in spite of the fact that only one of these names is actually attested in the fragments. On the whole question, see particularly Paul J. Kobelski, *Melchizedek and Melchireša'*, CBQMS 10 (Washington, DC: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1981).

[16] On "dualistic" and "dualism," see, for instance, Frey, "Different Patterns," and "Apocalyptic Dualism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature*, ed. John J. Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 271–294.

[17] Liora Goldman, "Dualism in the *Visions of Amram*," *RevQ* 24.3/95 (2010): 421–432 (426). A relevant question would be whether the supposed choice is an opportunity for every human being or only for Amram. The preserved fragments do not provide an answer, cf. Miryam T. Brand, *Evil Within and Without: The Source of Sin and Its Nature as Portrayed in Second Temple Literature*, JAJSup 9 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 263.

1. The preserved text, the reconstruction, and the immediate context

The question that the two beings ask Amram has been preserved in its most complete form in 4Q544 1, 12, introduced by ואמרו לי ("and they said to me"):]במן מננא אנתת.[18] These words must be interpreted as the preposition ב, the interrogative pronoun ("who"), the preposition מן with a first plural suffix ("of/from/among us"), and a nearly illegible second singular masculine personal pronoun. So far, nothing indicates any kind of free choice. Milik, however, not only reconstructed the ending of the second person pronoun but also a following word: ה בחר].[19] The reason for this particular reconstruction (with the verb "choose") is not clear from the article, although Perrin suggests that Milik could have got the verb from his reading of 4Q547 1–2, 12, which seems to preserve a tiny part of the same passage.[20] Kobelski added the infinitive לאשתלטה (שלט *ithpeel*) to Milik's reconstruction, giving the translation "By which of us do yo[u choose to be ruled?"—even though he stated that the whole idea of "choosing" is unexpected in the setting as he sees it.[21] The fragment from 4Q547 mentioned above indeed seems to belong to the same passage, but as noted by Puech, the verb must be a form of the root בעי ("seek," "ask," "want") instead of בחר.[22] Puech reads תה בעה[אנ, arguing that ה is to be preferred as the final letter of the verb rather than א.[23] This reading, with Kobelski's infinitive, is the basis for the usual interpretation that Amram is allowed to seek to be ruled by either of the two beings and for the widespread view that VA stands for human choice or "free will" as opposed to divinely controlled determinism. Perrin notes the uncertain character of the reconstruction, and—concerning the fragment from 4Q547—he states that even "a quick glance at PAM 43.567 shows that the smudged block of text at this point in fragment 2 is nearly illegible, rendering both proposals [i.e., the verbs בחר or בעה] speculative."[24] However, the infrared image available now is more helpful.[25]

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[18] See planche XVIII in Puech, *Qumrân grotte 4.XXII*. The fragment (with a fragment number differing from the one in Puech's edition) is available at The Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library, https://www.deadseascrolls.org.il/explore-the-archive/image/B-370881 (end of the third line from the bottom). A tiny piece including the last of the introductory words and the first part of the question is also attested in 4Q543 5–9, 3:]לי במ. The words are found at the top of fragment 5 and at the bottom of fragment 7 on planche XVI in Puech, *Qumrân grotte 4.XXII*. They can be seen here (with different fragment numbers): https://www.deadseascrolls.org.il/explore-the-archive/image/B-361895 and .../B-361813.

[19] Milik, "Visions de 'Amram et une citation d'Origine," 79. For an overview of the history of the reconstruction of the passage, see Perrin, "Another Look," 109–112.

[20] Perrin, "Another Look," 110.

[21] Kobelski, *Melchizedek and Melchireša'*, 26–27 and 29–30. On Kobelski's interpretation of the setting, see n. 37 below.

[22] Puech, *Qumrân grotte 4.XXII*, 381.

[23] Ibid., 379–380.

[24] Perrin, "Another Look," 111. Cf. Jurgens, "Reassessing," 24, n. 46. The image is on planche XXI in Puech, *Qumrân grotte 4.XXII*.

[25] See https://www.deadseascrolls.org.il/explore-the-archive/image/B-295539 (the fragment number again differs from the one in Puech's edition).

It is possible to see the end of the personal pronoun and even though the first letter of the verb is not very clear, ע and א (rather than ה?) are discernible. Hence, while Perrin's cautious remarks should be taken seriously, some kind of "seeking," "asking, or "wanting" on the part of Amram does seem to be implied.

But what about the infinitive לאשתלטה proposed by Kobelski? This word is pure conjecture—and from a syntactic point of view, it may be problematic. In the phrase במן ממנא אנתא בעא לאשתלטה, the first ב must indicate the agent of the passive infinitive ("which of us do you seek to be ruled by"). The problem is that ב seems to be quite rare in this function, and passive constructions with clear expression of agent are in fact generally quite rare. Carmignac notes a few occurrences in Qumran Aramaic, with ב and other prepositions, but they are not really convincing as examples of the expression of real agents in passive constructions.[26] Cook explicitly states that the complement of ב "is never the agent of the action."[27] Hence, it might be worthwhile to consider other possible verbs that could follow בעא and correlate with the preposition ב, keeping in mind that we are in the realm of more or less pure speculation: מלל,[28] שמע,[29] ידע,[30] סכל,[31] רחץ,[32] תקף,[33] or אחד.[34]

Each of these suggestions seems possible, but none of them is entirely convincing in the context. In fact, the setting in which the question is asked may support the reconstruction with לאשתלטה. As mentioned above, the vision begins with Amram's statement that the two beings were דאנין עלי (4Q544 1, 10). The verb דין (or דון) can have the meaning "judge," but with the preposition על, the meaning seems to be "debate about" or "argue over."[35] In the next line, the beings are said to begin a great תגר over Amram. The noun תגר occurs in documentary sources (contracts) with the meaning

[26] Jean Carmignac, "Le complément d'agent après un verbe passif dans l'hébreu et l'araméen de Qumrân," *RevQ* 9.3/35 (1978): 409–427 (424–426). See also Takamitsu Murakoa, *A Grammar of Qumran Aramaic*, ANESSup 38 (Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 173.

[27] Cook, *Dictionary of Qumran Aramaic*, 28 (s.v. ב).

[28] "With whom of us do you seek to speak?" We would probably expect the preposition עם rather than ב (but a possible counterexample may be found in 4Q197 4 ii, 3).

[29] "Listen to, heed, obey." Not often with ב, but see 11QtgJob XXXVIII, 2.

[30] "Know about." See 4Q196 2, 1, 4Q204 4, 4 and 4Q204 5 ii, 26.

[31] "Consider, look at" (*hithpaal*). See 11QtgJob XXIX, 5.

[32] "Trust" (*hithpeel*). See 11QtgJob XXXII, 10.

[33] "Hold on to" (*aphel*). See 4Q542 1 i, 8 and 1QapGen VI, 6.

[34] "Hold on to." See 4Q542 1 i, 7 and 9 and 1QapGen VI, 6.

[35] Cook, *Dictionary of Qumran Aramaic*, 53 (s.v. דין, דון). Perrin ("Another Look," 107) gives the translation "judging," with a direct object, and he states that Amram "seemingly walks into his own trial."

"strife" or "dispute."[36] The context, then, does seem to indicate that at the time of the vision nothing has been settled with regard to Amram's future.[37] At least, there seems to be no indication of the determinism known from other Qumran texts (most notably 1QS with the so-called Treatise on the Two Spirits), and it is possible that Amram is allowed some kind of say with regard to his position relative to the dualistic divide. However, Perrin is surely correct in stressing the lack of "certain evidence for a free choice form of dualism."[38] And the question is, how should this kind of choice—if that is what it is—be interpreted in light of the composition as a whole?

2. Determinism in VA, in 4Q548–549, and in 4Q542?

If the vision narrated in VA seems to leave Amram's future open and allow him a degree of control over his relation to the heavenly realm, it will be of interest to take a look at the rest of the preserved parts of the composition in order to ascertain how the question of personal choice or determinism is treated elsewhere. The fragmentary state of the text and the fact that the question is not discussed

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[36] The word occurs in combination with חרר, which has more or less the same meaning, see Michael Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Judean Aramaic* (Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 2003), 86 (s.v. תגר) and 50 (s.v. חרר, with references to attestations). A verb from the same root תגר may be attested in 1QapGen XX, 10 (כדי הוית מתגר על דילהא), which Muraoka (*A Grammar of Qumran Aramaic*, 262, n. 151) interprets as a *hithpaal* participle from תגר, translating the passage as "when I was negotiating about her affair." Others have understood the verb as deriving from a separate root with the meaning "gain profit," e.g. Cook, *Dictionary of Qumran Aramaic*, 250 (s.v. תגר). Cook derives the noun תגר from a root גרי (ibid.).

[37] According to some scholars, the vision refers to the time of Amram's death. Berger, for instance, compared the passage with other traditions concerning the struggle of angels over the soul of a deceased person, Klaus Berger, "Der Streit des guten und des bösen Engels um die Seele," *JSJ* 4.1 (1973): 1–18. Kobelski interprets the vision in a similar manner: "In this vision, ʿAmram saw the two spirits who rule over humanity engaged in a struggle to take possession of him at his death" (Kobelski, *Melchizedek and Melchireša'*, 24). He calls VA "the earliest extant example of a text containing a narrative of the struggle between the good and the bad angels for the possession of a human being after death" (ibid., 75; see also pp. 52, 77, 83, and 139). He states that the use of the verb דין "suggests the background of a legal procedure in which a judgment will be made on the merits of ʿAmram's life and a claim made on him by one of the spirits" (ibid., 29; cf. Perrin's statement in n. 35 above). As already mentioned, this interpretation does not fit well with the reconstruction of the word בחר (which Kobelski accepts) and the notion of choice on the part of Amram. The structure of VA as a whole—as far as the fragmentary state of the manuscripts allows us to see—seems to indicate that Amram saw the two beings and their struggle over him while he was in Canaan and not at the time of his death. Of course, the vision might still be said to refer to something that will happen in "real life" when Amram is about to die, but nothing in the preserved text supports this interpretation. Note also that Amram calls one of the beings—probably the one representing light—"my lord" (מראי) in 4Q544 2, 13. This could be taken as an indication that Amram (as we would expect) chose the side of light (cf. Goldman, "Dualism," 424–425). Curiously, Puech (*Qumrân grotte 4.XXII*, 327, commenting on 4Q544 2, 11) seems to think that the angel of darkness has power over Amram.

[38] Perrin, "Another Look," 112. Note that Duke, whose edition of the text includes only the words במן מננה אנת[ה, still refers to "angelic figures who are appealing to Amram for his loyalty" and who are "trying to convince a human to follow them" (Duke, *The Social Location*, 80), which seems to allow Amram a high degree of choice. Since he posits no בחר or בעה, this interpretation must be based on the words דאנין עלי and תגר.

explicitly in the extant material makes it difficult to give a clear answer. According to Popović, VA "does not contain deterministic thought, as far as can be gauged from the extant text."[39] However, some of the fragments do contain passages that may suggest a deterministic point of view.

First, VA contains much prediction. As mentioned above, Amram's first words to his sons (in 4Q543 2 and 4Q545 1a i) as well as several passages from the vision account later on in the text seem to present future events related to Moses and Aaron, the exodus and the future priesthood. This is the case in 4Q543 2, 4: ומלאך אל תתקרה;[40] 4Q543 2, 5:]תעבד בארעא דא ודין חסין ת[;[41] 4Q543 15, 1: תתוב לעמך;[42] 4Q543 16, 2: תעבד לעמך;[43] 4Q545 4, 16:]א[חוה לכה רז עובדה;[44] 4Q545 4, 18: שביעי באנוש קרה[ית רעות];[45] 4Q545 4, 19: יתבחר לכהן עלמין;[46] 4Q546 6, 2:]ותטבע[;[47] 4Q547 9, 4: בהר סיני;[48] 4Q547 9, 6:]ב[ה יתרם כהן מן כול בני עלמא באח[רי/והי.[49] Such predictions seem to imply some kind of determinism, and in fact, Popović mentions the idea of a fixed history as a typical deterministic trait in apocalyptic texts.[50] The testament-like setting and the emphasis on the authoritative value of the writing (פרשגן) seem to underline the trustworthiness of the predictions.

Second, the following fragments include words or expressions that may indicate a deterministic point of view or some kind of divine control. However, the lack of context precludes real conclusions:

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[39] Mladen Popović, "Apocalyptic Determinism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature*, ed. John J. Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 255–270 (266).

[40] "And the messenger/angel of God you will be called."

[41] "…you will do in this land, and strong judgment y[ou will…]."

[42] "You will return to your people."

[43] "…you will do for your people."

[44] "I shall tell you the secret of his work/service." This seems to be in reference to the future priesthood; based on the use of the word רז elsewhere, the expression here might be taken as an indication that this is a special revelation of a divine secret or predetermined plan.

[45] "Seventh among the men of [his] favour/will [he will] be called." According to Puech (*Qumrân grotte 4.XXII*, 343), this cryptic phrase refers to Aaron (counting Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Levi, Qahat, Amram, Aaron). The word רעותה may connote divine election and predetermination.

[46] "He will be chosen as an eternal priest." The verb בחר may connote divine election.

[47] The verb "sink" in the imperfective; possibly referring to Pharaoh's chariots (Duke, *The Social Location*, 26).

[48] "…on Mount Sinai." Cf. Jesper Høgenhaven, "Geography in the Visions of Amram Texts (4Q543–5479)," in *Vision, Narrative, and Wisdom in the Aramaic Texts from Qumran: Essays from the Copenhagen Symposium, 14–15 August, 2017*, ed. Mette Bundvad and Kasper Siegismund, STDJ 131 (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 119–136 (132).

[49] Puech, *Qumrân grotte 4.XXII*, 389: "et]son[fi]ls sera élevé (comme) prêtre parmi tous les fils d'éternité *dans l'ave*[*nir*/*aprè*[*s lui*."

[50] Popović, "Apocalyptic Determinism," 258. Further on in his discussion of the characteristics of determinism, he also mentions the pseudepigraphic attribution of visions to "important figures from the past" as a means of making *vaticinia ex eventu* (p. 261).

4Q543 16, 4: עדבד;[51] 4Q543 18, 2:]לך לבב מבֿ;[52] 4Q545 2, 2: מֹא בקשט לעלם[ע]ד;[53] 4Q545 9, 5:]ומני עדניהון;[54] 4Q546 12, 4: ורז מרים.[55]

So far, only the manuscripts universally acknowledged to belong to VA have been considered, but as mentioned in n. 1, some scholars have suggested that 4Q548 and 4Q549 are part of the same composition. Milik follows Starcky's count of only five manuscripts (543–547),[56] but also mentions a manuscript (4Q548), which "pourrait être un autre exemplaire du Testament de Amram."[57] In Puech's edition of the text, both 4Q548 and 4Q549 are part of the presentation of 4QVisions de 'Amram, but with a degree of uncertainty. Puech notes that there are no overlaps with the other manuscripts, yet the dualistic distinction between light and darkness in 4Q548 could fit into the framework of VA, and 4Q549 could be the ending of a testament-like work (with a meal, somebody dying, genealogy).[58] Several scholars have expressed reluctance about including the two manuscripts. For instance, Duke sees the identification of either manuscript with VA as very unlikely,[59] as do Jurgens and Perrin,[60] while Tervanotko and Goldman accept 4Q549, but not 4Q548.[61] In the present context, 4Q549 is of little interest since nothing in the two fragments seems relevant to the discussion of determinism. In 4Q548, however, we have a fragmentary description of what appears to be a

[51] "…your lot." A word typically used in deterministic contexts, but here with no context at all. For a brief comment on the deterministic meaning of the Hebrew equivalent (גורל), see Popović, "Apocalyptic Determinism," 261.

[52] Someone (God?) giving (?) "you" some kind of "heart" (a discerning heart?).

[53] "They gave the decree in truth forever." It is possible, of course, that this fragment actually refers to the enactment by the two beings of Amram's choice and not to some predetermined decree.

[54] Puech (*Qumrân grotte 4.XXII*, 348): "et il a fixé leurs temps." This expression would seem to imply a deterministic view. Duke (*The Social Location*, 32) reads אדניהון with no translation ("their ears"?).

[55] "And the secret of Miriam…" As in n. 44, the word רז might connote divine secrets or a predetermined plan, but the exact reference is uncertain.

[56] Milik, "4QVisions de 'Amram et une citation d'Origine," 77.

[57] Ibid., 90. Milik's later view was that the manuscript belongs to a Testament of Levi, a view that was initially accepted by Puech as well (see Puech, *Qumrân grotte 4.XXII*, 391).

[58] Puech, *Qumrân grotte 4.XXII*, 283, 392, and 399. In 4Q549, Egypt and Miriam are mentioned, which may be seen as a (somewhat vague) connection to VA.

[59] Duke, *The Social Location*, 35–42.

[60] Jurgens, "Reassessing," 28, n. 55; Perrin, "Another Look," 106, n. 1.

[61] Hanna Tervanotko, "A Trilogy of Testaments? The Status of the 'Testament of Qahat' versus Texts Attributed to Levi and Amram," in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and the Scriptures*, ed. Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, BETL 270 (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 41–59 (42, n. 4). Goldman, too, hesitates on the inclusion of 4Q548 ("Dualism," 425; in n. 16 she mentions the possibility that 4Q548 may be another copy of The Testament of Qahat, 4Q542). See further Goldman, "The Burial," 232, n. 2, and "Between Aaron and Moses," 101, n. 1: 4Q548 does not belong to VA, but 4Q549 is a sixth copy, belonging to the end of the text. According to the statistical investigations by John Starr, *Classifying the Aramaic Texts from Qumran: A Statistical Analysis of Linguistic Features*, LSTS 89 (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 294, 4Q458 is "textually distinct" from the other VA texts, "which may indicate that it is not really part of this group." Starr's methodology, however, is not unproblematic; see the review by Daniel Machiela in *RBL* 6 (2021).

prediction about the eschatological end for people on either side of the dualistic divide. As was the case with the predictions mentioned above, this in itself may be interpreted as a form of determinism, but there is no information about the mechanism that decides one's place in this scenario, whether it is personal choice or divine decree. Yet, in the text of 4Q548 presented by Beyer and by García Martínez and Tigchelaar, there is a fragment which includes the words בחיר לקשט ("chosen for truth"), which may indicate that the latter concept (divine decree) is decisive.[62] This fragment is not part of Puech's edition of 4Q548, but can be found in his edition of 4Q580 as fragment 1 i, 10.[63] However, according to Perrin, it is "almost certain that 4Q580 (published as *4QTestament[a]?*) derives from the same manuscript as the Aramaic work represented in 4Q548."[64]

Another text that should be mentioned is 4Q542 (Testament of Qahat), whose connection with VA has been stressed by scholars; specifically, it has been noted that 4Q547 and 4Q542 were probably written by the same scribe.[65] Recently, Machiela has argued for an even closer connection by claiming not only that 4Q542 and 4Q547 were written by the same scribe and were part of the same scroll, but that they can plausibly be seen as parts of the same work, that is, "what scholars have hitherto called the Testament of Qahat was, in fact, an integral sub-section of the Visions of Amram."[66]

If this proposal is accepted, we suddenly have a passage that presents a much clearer deterministic point of view than what can be found in the other fragments of VA—a point of view that seems to leave little room for personal choice. In 4Q542 1 i, 2–3, we find the following description of God: הוא אלה עלסיה ומרא כול סעבדיא ושליט בכולא למעבד בהון כרעותה ("He is the God of the ages/eternity and Lord of all the deeds and ruler of everything/everyone, to do with them according to his will").[67]

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[62] Beyer, *Ergänzungband*, 89; Florentino García Martínez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition. Volume Two 4Q274–11Q31* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 1094 (Frag. 2 col. I, line 10).

[63] Émile Puech, *Qumrân Grotte 4.XXVII: Textes araméens, deuxième partie: 4Q550–4Q575a, 4Q580–4Q587 et appendices*, DJD 37 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2009), 417. For his decision not to consider the fragments published as 4Q580 part of 4Q548, see pp. 415–416 and Puech, *Qumrân grotte 4.XXII*, 391.

[64] Perrin, "Another Look," 106, n. 1. As mentioned above, Perrin does not consider 4Q548 to be part of VA.

[65] Puech, *Qumrân grotte 4.XXII*, 377.

[66] Machiela, "Is the Testament of Qahat," 37. Machiela discusses the scribal hand and the physical features of the manuscripts as well as their literary contents (shared "thematic interests such as proper marriage and a contrast between light and darkness," p. 33).

[67] For the edition of 4Q542, see Puech, *Qumrân grotte 4.XXII*, 257-282. According to Puech (p. 269), the scribe first wrote עלם, then immediately added a plural ending. The *mem* in סעבדיא also has the final form. Note that God is not mentioned very often in 4Q543–547. Apart from the designation for Moses (?) in 4Q543 2, 4 (אל תהוה ומלאך אל תתקרה [, "] of God you will be and the messenger/angel of God you will be called"; cf. 4Q545 1a i, 17), the other possible references to God or "The Most High" are quite uncertain.

3. A few remarks on determinism and human choice in Qumran and the Old Testament

If divine determinism is implied or—in the case of the fragment from 4Q542—explicitly expressed in passages that clearly or possibly belong to VA, what are the implications for the interpration of the question that the two beings ask Amram? It might be argued that the presence of deterministic ideas elsewhere in the composition is a problem for an interpretation that allows Amram to decide his own future and relation to the divine realm. However, such a conclusion is probably too simplistic.

Many other texts, from the canonical Old Testament as well as from among the non-biblical Dead Sea Scrolls, attest to a tension between divine control and sovereignty on the one hand and, on the other hand, human responsibility and the demand that human beings choose to follow the right path. Broshi has characterized the Old Testament as "a collection upholding free will," but while many passages can be interpreted in that way, there are clearly others that point in a much more deterministic direction, as Broshi seems to be well aware when he states that in both Judaism and Christianity the "two contradictory tenets" of "predestination" and "free will" "live paradoxically side by side, at different times in different amounts."[68] One and the same book may often contain elements that emphasize both divine and human agency, determinism and human choice. Divine election of Israel, God's decisive action in history, and the reality of prophecy (and hence some kind of predetermination of the future) are notions that are common in much of the Old Testament, often alongside statements that seem to presuppose human responsibility and the possibility of human choice.[69] For instance, on the one hand, the Book of Proverbs contains many paraenetical passages

[68] Magen Broshi, "Predestination in the Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Volume Two: The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Qumran Community*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006), 235–246 (236). The use of the term "free will" (or "predestination" and similar terms) in an ancient Jewish context may in itself be problematic if later or modern connotations are read into the texts. See Popović, "Apocalyptic Determinism," 256, Chad Martin Stauber, "Determinism in the Rule of the Community (1QS): A New Perspective," in *Celebrating the Dead Sea Scrolls: A Canadian Contribution*, ed. Peter W. Flint, Jean Duhaime, and Kyung S. Back, EJL 30 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 345–358 (348), and Jonathan Klawans, "Josephus on Fate, Free Will, and Ancient Jewish Types of Compatibilism," *Numen* 56.1 (2009): 44–90. Klawans treats Josephus's well-known description of the three main divisions of Judaism, each with its own view on the question of "fate" (the Essenes, who ascribe everything to "fate," the Sadducees, who deny the role of "fate," and the Pharisees, who take a middle position). That Josephus seems to use this as the main defining criterion shows the importance of the question.

[69] On the notions of prophecy and divine election as basic to practically all forms of ancient Judaism, see Klawans, "Josephus on Fate," 62 and 64. In this sense, there is a fundamental layer of determinism in most Jewish texts, even in the ones most open to human agency and "free will." Klawans also makes the relevant point that monotheism contains challenges that tend to restrict the movement towards either absolute free will or absolute determinism and predestination—the former weakens God's omniscience and omnipotence and the truth of prophecy, while the latter could implicate God in evil or imply that he is unjust, see Jonathan Klawans, "The Dead Sea Scrolls, the Essenes, and the Study of

that seem to point in the latter direction, but on the other hand, some of the most clearly deterministic ideas in the Old Testament are found in the same book (see Prov 16:1, 9, 33; 19:21; 20:24; 29:26). How are we to understand this if we insist on reading the text as a single work as it has been preserved, irrespective of the origins of its original parts? Is "compatibilism" the rigth term (the view that determinism and free will are not contradictory, but compatible),[70] or is "compatibilism" simply nonsense?[71] Does it rather make sense to see one of the two opposed notions as more fundamental when they both occur in the same text? The subject is huge and the following are merely some brief remarks of relevance for the interpretation of VA.

In the Qumran material we find the same type of tension.[72] For instance, the lines following the highly deterministic words quoted above from 4Q542 1 i, 2–3 contain exhortations to be careful with the inheritance and to hold firm to the commands of the ancestors, walking in uprightness (4Q542 1 i, 4–10: ואזלין בישירותא, אחדו בממר יעקוב אבוכון, אזדהרו בירותתא).

To give another example, the Community Rule, as preserved in 1QS, contains some of the most well-known and explicit deterministic statements in the Qumran corpus. Such ideas are found primarily in the so-called Treatise on the Two Spirits (1QS III, 13–IV, 26), for instance in 1QS III,15 (מאל דעות כול הויה ונהייה ולפני היותם הכין כול מחשבתם, "from the God of knowledge is everything that is and comes into being, and before their coming into being he has established all of their design/plan"), but similar ideas also appear in the final part of the scroll, for instance in 1QS XI, 11 (ובדעתו נהיה כול וכול הויה במחשבתו יכינו ומבלעדיו לוא יעשה, "and by his knowledge everything has come into being, and everything that is, by his plan/in its design he establishes it, and apart from him it is not done"; cf. XI, 17–18).[73] In other places, however, we find statements that seem to imply

Religious Belief: Determinism and Freedom of Choice," in *Rediscovering the Dead Sea Scrolls: An Assessment of Old and New Approaches and Methods*, ed. Maxine L. Grossman (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2010), 264–283 (277).

[70] See Klawans, "Josephus on Fate," 45.

[71] Ibid., 75 and 79, n. 75.

[72] Cf., for instance, John J. Collins, "Theologies in Tension in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Religious Worldviews Reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Proceedings of the Fourteenth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 28–30 May, 2013*, ed. Ruth A. Clements, Menahem Kister, and Michael Segal, STDJ 127 (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 25–47 (39), or Carol A. Newsom, "Predeterminism and Moral Agency in the Hodayot," in the same volume, pp. 193–211.

[73] For the recent critical edition of 1QS and the other Community Rule manuscripts, see Sarianna Metso, *The Community Rule: A Critical Edition with Translation*, EJL 51 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2019). There is a vast literature on 1QS and the Treatise on the Two Spirits. A few examples that may be of interest in the present context include, for instance, John R. Levinson, "The Two Spirits in Qumran Theology," in *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Volume Two: The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Qumran Community*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006), 169–194, or Mladen Popović, "Anthropology, Pneumatology, and Demonology in Early Judaism: The Two Spirits Treatise (1QS III,

personal responsibility with reward and punishment and the possibility of choice. The passages that describe the entry into the community (such as 1QS V, 8. 10. 22), and especially the use of the term המתנדבים (usually translated as "those who freely volunteer" or something similar), might give the impression of voluntarism and conscious, personal choice. In 1QS V, 1, המתנדבים occurs in combination with the verb שוב ("return," "repent"): המתנדבים לשוב מכול רע, which is translated as "who freely volunteer to convert from all evil" by García Martínez and Tigchelaar.[74] 1QS also includes a penal code (VI, 24–VII, 25) that prescribes various sanctions against members of the community if they break the rules. Furthermore, we find the notion of apostasy or backsliding (as in II, 11–18 or VII, 18–25), and we seem to have a distinction between unintentional and knowing transgressions (בשגגה and במדעו in VII, 3).[75] Such phenomena, especially the word מתנדבים and the penal code, have led some scholars to question the degree of determinism in the Rule, but Stauber argues convincingly that the meaning of מתנדבים should not be equated with the notion of "free will" or personal volition, but rather with having been "incited/inspired to do" something.[76] Further,

13–IV, 26) and Other Texts from the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Dust of the Ground and Breath of Life (Gen 2:7): The Problem of a Dualistic Anthropology in Early Judaism and Christianity*, ed. J. T. A. G. M. van Ruiten and George van Kooten, TBN 20 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 58–98.

[74] Florentino García Martínez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition. Volume One 1Q1–4Q273* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 79. Note also Popović's attempt to read 1QS III, 9 as being indicative of a lesser degree of emphasis on determinism (Popović, "Apocalyptic Determinism," 264). According to Popović, a person is "exhorted to determine his steps," which seems to contradict the statements elsewhere that God is the one who does so, but see n. 76 below.

[75] The Treatise on the Two Spirits is an originally independent text, cf., for instance, Frey, "Different Patterns," 289–290, and Sarianna Metso, *The Textual Development of the Qumran Community Rule*, STDJ 21 (Leiden: Brill, 1997). However, this does not free us from trying to explain the apparent tension between the Treatise and the surrounding text. In 1QS the Treatise functions as an integral part of the composition as a whole and, as pointed out above, the deterministic view is not exclusively confined to the passages that belong to the Treatise.

[76] Stauber, "Determinism in the Rule of the Community," 355, cf. David Lambert, "Was the Dead Sea Sect a Penitential Movement?," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Timothy H. Lim and John J. Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 501–513 (504). A similar alternative rendering could be applied to other derivations from the same root, such as the expression בנדבה, which Newsom ("Predeterminism and Moral Agency," 195–196) translates "freely" in 1QH[a] VII, 23 (ואהבכה בנדבה, "And I love you freely"). The alleged strong contradiction between lines 23–25a with their seemingly "voluntarist language" and lines 25b–27, which are clearly deterministic and deny human agency, may be less strong if we refrain from using the word "freely" (cf. Newsom's n. 8 on p. 196) and if we furthermore recognize the modal shade of meaning that could be inherent in a *weyiqtol* form ("and let me love," or "and I want/would like to love"). Though this may not remove the tension completely from the passage, it underlines the general deterministic basis of the context. When a human being becomes able to love God בנדבה, it is the result of divine, not human, agency, cf. Newsom's description of the process as a "second creation by God" (p. 203), and cf. Lambert's "divine re-creation" (Lambert, "Was the Dead Sea Sect," 502). This may also be relevant for Popović's view on 1QS III, 9 (see n. 74)—the "exhortation" to determine one's steps comes after the cleansing from sins that can only take place as part of the community and through God's spirit which is at work there. This seems to amount to a new creation of the person, so to speak, so that he is now able to "see the light of life" (להביט באור החיים in 1QS III, 7; note also that the verb form in question is a *weyiqtol* once again; it may be more of a prayer—"may he determine…"—than an ordinary exhortation).

Stauber argues that a penal code "does not imply that they believed in free will, since laws imply only that actions are taken, not that agency is present."[77]

I would suggest that 1Q14 8–10, 7 (ולכ[ו]ל המתנדבים לוסף על בחירי [אל]),[78] which combines מתנדבים with the notion of "joining the chosen ones of [God]," shows that the use of מתנדבים does not contradict the notions of determinism and chosenness and can be taken as support for an interpretation along the lines presented by Stauber. In general, it would seem that interpreting passages that appear to imply free choice and human agency in light of the fundamental theological assumptions inherent in more deterministic passages provides a more straightforward solution than the other way around.[79] This also applies to the situation noted above in the Book of Proverbs.[80]

It could be argued that the notion of determinism applies on the general, historical level, while individual human beings make their own choices. However, this does not seem to fit the all-encompassing statements on divine sovereignty made in Proverbs, 1QS, and 4Q542. To be sure, within the Treatise on the Two Spirits in 1QS it is stated that each of the opposing spirits are present in every human being in various proportions and that until now the spirits of truth and deceit/injustice are fighting in the hearts of human beings (1QS IV, 23, עד הנה יריבו רוחי אמת ועול בלבב גבר). Yet, in view of the broader context (for instance III, 15 quoted above and III, 16, ואין להשנות, "and nothing can be changed"), we must surely interpret this in a way that takes into account the belief that God has determined the outcome of the fight in advance.[81] However, this outcome cannot be known with complete certainty until the appointed time for God's visitation (מועד פקודה, 1QS IV, 18–19). Until that time, a person's standing may be partially discerned through the actions that he performs and the

[77] Stauber, "Determinism in the Rule of the Community," 356.

[78] See Józef T. Milik, "Commentaire de Michée," in Dominique Barthélemy and Józef T. Milik, *Qumran Cave I*, DJD 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), 77–80 (78). His translation is "et à tous ceux qui s'offrent pour être agrégés aux élus [*de Dieu*."

[79] Cf. Klawans, "Josephus on Fate," 62, on the "sectarian" literature from Qumran: "Scattered references to human decisions can be found in the corpus, but whatever intimations of free will are granted in these texts do not compromise the overall commitment given to predestination."

[80] Cf. Kasper Siegismund, "Frygt Gud og opfør dig ordentligt: Teologiske læsninger i Ordsprogenes Bog," in *Gud og os: Teologiske læsninger af Det Gamle Testamente i det 21. århundrede*, ed. Jan Dietrich and Anne Katrine de Hemmer Gudme (Copenhagen: Bibelselskabets Forlag, 2021), 271–288.

[81] In contrast, Popović ("Apocalyptic Determinism," 266) states that it is not entirely clear if the end result of the struggle was thought to be predetermined.

association of such actions with either of the two fundamental spirits (1QS IV, 2–11) and through yearly scrutiny of the behavior and spiritual condition of each person (1QS V, 24).[82]

Distinguishing between the completely predetermined plan of God and the limited human insight into the exact status of individual persons may in fact be the key to interpreting the co-occurrence of deterministic thoughts and statements that seem to imply personal choice, both in 1QS and other texts where a similar situation obtains. A person's final destiny as well as the entire path of his life, his career of apostasy and/or (re)conversion, his response to exhortation, etc. may be determined and unalterable, but since *we* do not know the details of God's plan, exhortation and the threat of punishment or promise of reward still make sense, hence the need to *treat* people as if they had freedom to make choices.[83] The predetermined plan has to be played out by the actions of actual human beings, who are—for the most part—not aware of that plan.

In relation to VA, it may be of interest to note that it seems possible to interpret the "great dispute" that the beings are having over Amram in light of the (predetermined) struggle within the heart of man in 1QS referred to above.[84] If so—and if we choose one of the alternative reconstructions of the word following בעא suggested above—we may not need to see any "personal choice" or "free will" in VA.

Another text that must be considered in the present context is the final part of chapter 30 in the Book of Deuteronomy (Deut 30:15–20). Moses, on behalf of YHWH, presents the Israelites with two radically opposed paths, described as life and death respectively.[85] Life is equated with good and

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[82] Cf. Frey, "Different Patterns," 293. In addition, physiognomic and/or astrological criteria may have been used to determine a person's position relative to the dualistic divide—if the evidence from 4Q186 may be adduced, cf. Philip S. Alexander, "Predestination and Free Will in the Theology of the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and his Cultural Environment*, ed. John M. G. Barclay and Simon J. Gathercole, LNTS 335 (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 27–49 (39–41).

[83] Cf. also Alexander, "Predestination and Free Will," 49. Specifically on the notion of conversion/repentance, see Lambert, "Was the Dead Sea Sect," 508: When a person makes שוב, it is "a foreordained component of God's eschatological plan."

[84] According to Popović ("Anthropology, Pneumatology, and Demonology," 95), "As far as we can tell," VA "does not locate the strife of the angelic beings somehow within the human self." That is certainly true as far as the preserved remains allow us to see, but on a symbolic level the text may still be making this point, which does not rule out the possibility that the words were simultaneously understood as an actual description of the real world. In relation to the notion of struggle, and in light of the discussion above, note that the use of the word תגר in VA does not necessarily mean that the outcome of the struggle is open (cf., for instance, the way the battles in the War Scroll must be fought even though the final result is predetermined).

[85] On Deut 30 as one of the roots of the so-called Two Ways theology, see, for instance, Duke, *The Social Location*, 83–84, and his general discussion of "Two Ways and Angelology" (pp. 79–88).

associated with loving God, clinging to him, walking in his paths, keeping his commandments, and being fruitful and blessed in the land. Death, in contrast, is equated with evil and associated with disobeying God, serving other gods, being cursed, and not having a long life in the land. In 30:19, Moses directly admonishes the Israelites to choose life (ובחרת בחיים).

Goldman notes the importance of these verses in relation to VA and suggests that the passage with Amram's supposed choice may be modeled on the biblical command.[86] In light of the fact that Amram is Moses' father and probably used his account of the vision in his final words to his sons, this connection indeed seems important and it might imply the view that Moses later reused his father's description of the fundamental dualistic divide when he made his famous speech on the plains of Moab.

The situation in Deuteronomy 30 is clearly presented as one of choice, which may be taken as an argument for a similar interpretation of Amram's interaction with the two beings. However, even in Deuteronomy 30, the notion of personal choice and "free will" is not clear-cut.[87] To a very high degree, the overall context is characterized by divine control of events (getting the Israelites into Egypt, then out again, leading them through the desert). Additionally, the immediate context includes the intriguing statements in 29:3 (ולא נתן יהוה לכם לב לדעת ועינים לראות ואזנים לשמוע עד היום הזה, "and YHWH has not given you a heart to understand and eyes to see and ears to hear until this day") and in 30:6 (...ומל יהוה אלהיך את־לבבך ואת־לבב זרעך לאהבה את־יהוה אלהיך, "and YHWH your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring to love YHWH your God …").[88] Both cases suggest that divine control and determinism are somehow more basic than actual human agency.

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[86] Goldman, "Dualism," 429. Goldman also argues that the dualism prevalent in VA "relates to life and death rather than to righteousness and sinfulness, and that its purpose lies in emphasizing the necessity of 'choosing Life' on a personal, familial, and national level" (p. 432). However, it could be argued that that is precisely what "righteousness" is about. Goldman further states that VA "contains no traces of moral judgment in its treatment of the forces of darkness" (p. 431), cf. Frey, "Different Patterns," 322, who notes the "almost complete lack of specific ethical precepts," arguing that the pattern of dualistic thought in the document should be classified as "*merely cosmic*." Yet, the extremely fragmentary condition of the composition must be taken into account. It seems likely that Amram would derive some lessons from the cosmic dualism when addressing his sons (and daughter?) at the time of his death. Jurgens ("Reassessing," 38) suggests that Amram's vision "depicts his choice between a righteous or corrupted priesthood." While this may certainly be of relevance, what the two beings say about their role as rulers of all mankind seems to indicate a broader reference for the dualism presented in the vision.

[87] In contrast, Collins ("Theologies in Tension," 38), in reference to the notion of covenant generally, and not specifically to Deuteronomy 30, states that the "traditional covenant presupposed a vigorous doctrine of free will, by which the Israelites were to choose to obey the commandments or not, and were fully responsible for their actions."

[88] Cf. also Jer 24:7; 31:33; 32:39–40; Ezek 11:19; 36:26–27. On Deut 30:6, see Brettler's discussion of Deut 30:1–10, its syntax, and its thoroughly deterministic line of thought, Marc Z. Brettler, "Predestination in Deuteronomy 30.1–10," in *Those Elusive Deuteronomists: The Phenomenon of Pan-Deuteronomism*, ed. Linda S. Schearing and Steven L. McKenzie, JSOTSup 268 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 171–188.

Furthermore, we might ask what kind of a choice the Israelites are presented with: life or death—is that a real choice? Similarly, in VA, the description of the two beings as they appear to Amram may seem to indicate that the choice has already been made in some way—one is frightening and the other one smiling. Goldman refers to "Malchiresha's fearsome appearance" as a "warning sign," that would aid Amram in making the right decision.[89] In this connection, she notes the similarity with the figure of Death in chapter 17 of the long recension of the Greek version of the Testament of Abraham.[90] Although the precise details are probably not as similar as Goldman imagines (since the being in VA is unlikely to be serpent-like like Death in the Testament of Abraham, cf. n. 15 above), it might be significant that Death in the Testament of Abraham appears differently to sinners and the righteous. If something similar is at play in VA, the notion of Amram's "personal choice" seems to become less clear. In short, as was argued for 1QS and the Book of Proverbs above, and as seems likely for Deuteronomy 30 as well, it may be that in the case of VA, too, we ought to be careful not to read too much "free will" or "personal choice" into the text even though it might, on the surface, appear to express such notions in *one* (heavily reconstructed) passage.[91]

4. The Iranian connection? VA and Yasna 30:3

The history of scholarship has seen many attempts at finding parallels between various aspects of ancient Judaism and Zoroastrian or—expressed more generally—Iranian religious thought. Dualistic and eschatological ideas, the idea of the resurrection of the dead, the development of angelology and demonology, the notion of a periodization of history, etc. have all been claimed to derive from Iranian influence. Instances of influence have been pointed out in canonical Old Testament books, apocrypha, and pseudepigrapha—and the discovery of the Qumran material provided added impetus for comparison and claims of influence.[92] For a lengthy period of time, Judaism developed as part of the

[89] Goldman, "Dualism," 426.

[90] Ibid., 427.

[91] As mentioned above (n. 69), most ancient Jews must have subscribed to a basic layer of deterministic notions (divine election of Israel, prophecy, etc.). However, this does not mean that we cannot distinguish between texts that are more or less explicitly deterministic and texts that explicitly contain statements that promote the possibility of human choice. Ben Sira/Sirach has often been mentioned as a case that tends in the latter direction, most clearly in Sir 15:11–17. See especially the discussion by Klawans ("Josephus and Fate," 51–53 and 59–62), but note that Klawans seems to downplay the deterministic passages in Ben Sira too much—his reading of Sir 33:7–15 is hardly convincing and passages such as Sir 11:11ff. and 1:14 (᾽Αρχὴ σοφίας φοβεῖσθαι τὸν κύριον, καὶ μετὰ πιστῶν ἐν μήτρᾳ συνεκτίσθη αὐτοῖς) should be taken into account too.

[92] On the general question, see the monograph-length treatment by Silverman, which, however, focuses on the development of apocalypticism and does not treat Qumran texts, but uses texts from Ezekiel, Daniel, and 1 Enoch as test cases, Jason M. Silverman, *Persepolis and Jerusalem: Iranian Influence on the Apocalyptic Hermeneutic*, LHBOTS 558 (London: T & T Clark, 2012). Other relevant works include the following: Karl G. Kuhn, "Die Sektenschrift und die iranische

Persian empire, and there must have been numerous opportunities for contact between Iranians and Jews, in the Persian period and even in the Hellenistic period; hence, the idea that some kind of influence must have occurred ought to be uncontroversial.[93] However, when it comes to providing tangible proof of such influence in specific cases, the situation becomes more problematic, with the oft-noted uncertainties regarding the dating of the Iranian material and the possibility of deriving new developments in Jewish writings from "internal" factors. Shaked rightly rejects the two extreme positions of either denying Iranian influence altogether or attributing practically everything new in post-Biblical Judaism to such influence.[94] He also notes that even when "internal" factors can be adduced to explain particular phenomena (that is, when it can be shown that new developments had their precursors in older "indigenous" texts), foreign influence cannot automatically be ruled out as a possible contributing factor leading the development in the same direction.[95]

This is not the place to go deeper into the general question of Iranian influence. In the present context, the interesting thing is Popović's claim that there is a striking agreement between the passage from VA with Amram's "choice" and Yasna 30, one of the Avestan Gathas (the oldest part of the Avesta, often somewhat uncritically stated to derive from Zarathustra himself).[96] Popović does not go further into the historic connection between the two texts, but focuses on the similarities as a means for understanding the position taken in VA with regard to determinism and choice. Here, I want to argue briefly that the similarities are in fact not as clear as they seem to be in Popović's presentation.

Religion," *ZTK* 49.3 (1952): 296–316; David Winston, "The Iranian Component in the Bible, Apocrypha, and Qumran: A Review of the Evidence," *HR* 5.2 (1966): 183–216; Shaul Shaked, "Iranian Influence on Judaism: First Century B.C.E. to Second Century C.E.," in *The Cambridge History of Judaism. Volume One: Introduction. The Persian Period*, ed. W. D. Davies and Louis Finkelstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 308–325; Florentino García Martínez, "Iranian Influences in Qumran?," in Florentino García Martínez, *Qumranica Minora I: Qumran Origins and Apocalypticism*, ed. Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, STDJ 63 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 227–241 (originally published in 2003 in *Apocalyptic and Eschatological Heritage: The Middle East and Celtic Realms*, ed. Martin McNamara); Albert de Jong, "Iranian Connections in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Timothy H. Lim and John J. Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 479–500.

[93] Cf. Silverman, "Persepolis and Jerusalem," 76. On p. 26 he notes, "If one accepts that the traditions of the Judaeans were affected by the other imperial powers with which they came into contact, one would *prima facie* assume the same must be true for the Persian Empire. Certainly, if Persia did not have an influence, there ought to be a significant reason for such an exceptional status." In VA, the very first word, of course, is an Iranian loanword (see n. 3), as is the word רז (see n. 44 and n. 55).

[94] Shaked, "Iranian Influence," 309.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Popović, "Apocalyptic Determinism," 268. Yasna 30 has been discussed repeatedly in connection with Qumran writings (for instance, as early as in Kuhn, "Die Sektenschrift"). Previously, however, such discussions have not targeted VA, but rather 1QS and the Treatise on the Two Spirits. Brand (*Evil Within and Without*, 273) and Collins ("Theologies in Tension," 34–37) also discuss Yasna 30 and VA (but based on different translations of the Avestan text).

Popović discusses the passage based on a translation of Yasna 30:3–4 taken from Alexander: "The two primeval Spirits who are twins were revealed [to me, Zarathustra] in sleep. Their ways of thinking, speaking, and behaving are two: the good and the evil. And between these two [ways] the wise men have rightly chosen, and not the foolish ones. And when these two Spirits met, they established at the origin life and non-life and that at the end the worst existence will be for the followers of Falsehood and for the followers of Truth the best thinking."[97]

Clearly, the two spirits may remind us of the two beings in VA, the notion of being revealed in sleep also agrees with Amram's vision/dream, and the notion of choice fits well with the standard reading of the passage in VA, as argued by Popović. However, things are a bit more complicated. Unfortunately, the Gathas in general are notoriously difficult to understand. According to Shaked, the "difficulties inherent in the text of the Gathas have given it the reputation of being one of the most obscure texts in religious literature."[98] In particular, Yasna 30:3 (the first part of the passage quoted above, referred to as the "Twins Stanza") has been the subject of much discussion and numerous competing interpretations and translations have been proposed.[99] For our purposes, especially the word translated "in sleep" above is of relevance. The Avestan is *x^vafənā*, which in the interpretation behind the translation used by Popović is parsed as an instrumental singular. This is possible, but seeing the word as a nominative dual may be a more plausible solution, as argued by Humbach, who gives the following (annotated) translation of the entire verse: "These (are) the two spirits (present) in the primal (stage of one's existence), twins who have become famed (manifesting themselves as) the two (kinds of) dreams, the two (kinds of) thoughts and words, (and) the two (kinds of) actions, the better and the evil. Between these two, the munificent discriminate rightly, (but) not the miserly."[100] Humbach criticizes translations such as "have been revealed by a vision" for not accounting for the meaning of the verb in the sentence (*asruuātəm*), which literally means "they (du.)

[97] Alexander, "Predestination and Free Will," 34. Alexander cites the translation from Gherardo Gnoli (with no further reference).

[98] Shaked, "Iranian Influence," 311.

[99] See Amir Ahmadi, "The Twins Stanza, Y 30.3," *Iranian Studies* 46.2 (2013): 227–249. Old Testament and Qumran scholars who cite Yasna 30 have done so using several diverging translations.

[100] Helmut Humbach (in collaboration with Josef Elfenbein and Prods O. Skjærvø), *The Gāthās of Zarathushtra and the Other Old Avestan Texts. Part I: Introduction—Text and Translation* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1991), 123.

have been heard."[101] He adds that "visions are usually seen, not heard,"[102] but it might be argued that dreams (the basic meaning of the root in *xᵛafənā* is "sleep") can surely include aural impressions as well. However, he also notes that with his interpretation, *xᵛafənā* fits better into the immediate context as the first of four dual forms describing the two spirits.[103] Skjærvø gives a similar translation, and in his introduction, he explains: "The origins of good and evil are two Spirits (Avestan *manyu* 'mental impulse, inspiration'), depicted as 'twin 'sleeps' (= sleeping things),' presumably twin fetuses embodying contrasting and irreconcilable potentials for good and evil."[104]

It bears repeating that the meaning of the passage is contested and uncertain, and it seems difficult to decide whether the interpretation offered by Humbach is correct. But if it is, the direct similarity between the passages in Yasna 30 and VA is less striking. Still, the general situation with a human being choosing between two antagonistically opposed figures from the spiritual or divine realm could be argued to be the same. According to Popović, "Both texts emphasize the choice individuals have in determining their own destiny."[105] However, in light of the possibility that there is in fact no real "free choice" in VA (as argued in the preceding sections), we ought to be very cautious when making such comparisons. Popović has pointed out an interesting possible parallel between the two texts, but as this brief discussion has attempted to show, it cannot be used uncritically.

5. Conclusions

So, did Amram have a choice? We do not know for sure. The fragmentary state of VA forces us to be content with stating that it may have been the case that Amram had a chance to seek to be ruled by one or the other of the two beings that he saw in his vision. I have argued that the first part of the usual reading of the fragmentary passage in which the beings ask Amram a question is most likely

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[101] Helmut Humbach (in collaboration with Josef Elfenbein and Prods O. Skjærvø), *The Gāthās of Zarathushtra and the Other Old Avestan Texts. Part II: Commentary* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1991), 49. I have benefited from a correspondence with Birgit Anette Rasmussen (Olsen), professor of Indo-European studies at the University of Copenhagen, who supports Humbach's reading of the verse.

[102] Ibid.

[103] Ibid.

[104] Prods O. Skjærvø, *The Spirit of Zoroastrianism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 45 and 8. Cf. also his "Zoroastrian Dualism," in *Light against Darkness: Dualism in Ancient Mediterranean Religion and the Contemporary World*, ed. Armin Lange et al., JAJSup 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 55–91 (66–67). For an entirely different approach, see Stanley Insler, *The Gāthās of Zarathustra*, Acta Iranica 8 (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 33. He sees the troublesome word as belonging to an entirely different root and translates "…twins which are renowned to be in conflict." According to Insler, a word with the meaning "sleep" has "no sense in this passage" (p. 165).

[105] Popović, "Apocalyptic Determinism," 268. For some critical remarks on the notions of "choice" and "free will" in the Iranian material, see Shaked, "Iranian Influence," 318–319.

correct (with the verb בעא) but that the second, wholly reconstructed, part is more problematic. Other reconstructions seem to be possible which would not imply the same degree of choice for Amram in relation to the divine realm as in the usual reconstruction. Even if the reconstruction with לאשתלטה ("which of us do you seek to be ruled by") is accepted, it does not necessarily mean that the composition as such should be regarded as advocating some kind of "free choice" or "free will" theology. There seems to be nothing else in VA that would clearly indicate such a theology and I have pointed out that other parts of the composition (or fragments that may belong to it) in fact contain elements that suggest a deterministic point of view. I evaluated this finding in light of other texts that seem to combine references to personal choice and various forms of determinism. The comparison with a selection of other texts from Qumran and the Old Testament suggested that, in many cases, determinism might be seen as the more fundamental notion and that passages that seem to refer to "free choice" ought to be interpreted on that background. In addition, I noted that the description of the two beings in Amram's vision might even be thought to undermine the notion of real choice. To be sure, VA does not explicitly spell out a deterministic point of view but it has been shown that there are reasons for treating the supposed "free choice" dualism of VA in a much more cautious manner than has, with few exceptions,[106] hitherto been the case.

[106] Cf. Perrin, "Another Look."

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"Which of us do you seek to be ruled by?"
Some observations on the question of human choice in 4QVisions of Amram

Summary of the paper and the project

In the Aramaic composition known as Visions of Amram (4Q543–547), there is an interesting passage, in which the protagonist of the composition, Amram, sees two beings. They describe a fundamental dualistic division of the world, with one of the beings ruling over all that is light and the other one ruling over all that is dark. According to the most widespread view, the passage seems to allow Amram to choose whether he wants to belong on the side of light or on the side of darkness in this great dualistic divide (usually translated as "which of us do you seek to be ruled by," or something similar). In light of this passage, Visions of Amram has been presented as seemingly advocating some kind of "free will" theology, with an emphasis on human choice, a position that is in marked contrast to the deterministic thoughts expressed in several other Qumran texts.

In the paper, I first give a short introduction to Visions of Amram with a general outline of the contents of the text and then proceed to investigate the passage with Amram's supposed choice from several angles. In section 1, I discuss the state of the preserved text. The actual words that imply that Amram is allowed to choose are largely the result of scholarly reconstruction. I argue that the first part of the usual reading (the verb בעא, "seek," "ask," "want") is correct. The second part, however, which is completely reconstructed (the infinitive לאשתלטה, "to be ruled by"), is more problematic. I suggest other possible roots that could be read as the complement of בעא. In section 2, I argue that other parts of the composition (or fragments that may possibly belong to it) contain elements that suggest a deterministic point of view. In section 3, I evaluate this finding in light of other texts that, on the surface at least, appear to combine references to various forms of determinism and personal choice. The comparison with selected texts from Qumran and the Old Testament indicates that determinism may often be seen as the more fundamental notion and that passages that seem to refer to "free choice" ought to be interpreted on that background. I note that the description of the two beings in Amram's vision might in fact be thought to undermine the notion of real choice. In section 4, I briefly evaluate the similarities between the passage from Visions of Amram and Yasna 30, one of the Avestan Gathas. I argue that the agreement between these texts is probably less striking than has been suggested. The Avestan text is very difficult and has been the subject of much debate, with several different translations and interpretations on offer. Finally, in the concluding remarks, I argue

that very little in the preserved text of Visions of Amram supports the notion of "free will" and "human choice" and that a more cautious approach to the interpretation of the composition should be taken.

The present paper is my first work as a postdoc on the AMRAM-team at the University of Copenhagen, a three-year research project running from June 2021. AMRAM stands for Apocalypticism: Manuscripts, Rewriting, and Authority Management and seeks to contribute to the investigation of ancient apocalyptic literature, its emergence, character, and functions. The starting point for the project is the composition Visions of Amram and all the team members will work on a new digital edition of the text with commentary. In addition, each of the two postdocs and the PhD student will work on their own subprojects. My project focuses on the central question discussed in the present paper, the relationship between divine control and human choice, determinism and human agency. Starting from Visions of Amram, I will investigate how this question and the tensions that arise from it are treated in other Qumran texts and in the Old Testament.

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Abstract: The Reception of the Abrahamic Promise (Gen 12:1–3 par.) in Parallel Sections of Genesis in the Book of Jubilees

God’s promise to Abraham in Gen 12:1–3 and elsewhere (13:14–17; 15:1–7, 13–21; 17:1–21; 18:17–19; 21:12–13 and 22:16–18; cf. promises given to Hagar in 16:10–12; to Isaac in 26:2–5, 24; to Jacob in 28:13–15; 35:10–12; 46:3–4) is important in the reception history of the Abrahamic family history.

God’s promise and blessings to Abraham play an important role alson in the Book of Jubilees. In this paper, I will analyse how the Abrahamic pormise is interpreted and expounded upon in various parallel passages in Jubilees. My main focus is in three themes found in Gen 12:1–3: (1) The “seed” or offspring of Abraham; (2) Abraham (or his offspring) having a big reputation/name; (3) Abraham (and his offspring) as a blessing (to others). Also the fourth theme (4) land is implicit in Gen 12:1–3, but explicit elsewhere (e.g. 13:14–17). Also it will be analysed.

These themes occur and are alluded to in many parallel sections of Genesis in Jubilees. These sections and the rewriting process of the author of Jubilees is at focus. These sections include Jub 12:22–24; 13:19–21; chs. 14 and 15; 18:15–16; 24:8–11, 21; 26:24; 27:9–11, 22–24; 32:18–19 and 44:5–6.

This paper is a part of my doctoral dissertation which deals with the use and interpretation of the Jacob Story in the Book of Jubilees. The major question in this chapter is to see how the Abrahamic promise, containing also universalistic or inclusive aspects or possibilities of interpretation in Genesis, has been modified in Jubilees in utterly particularistic or exclusive way. A second part of this chapter consists of analysis of additions to Jubilees, which is excluded from this paper due its length.

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The Abrahamic Promise (Gen 12:1–3) and Its Reception in the Parallel Sections to Genesis in the Book of Jubilees [LANGUAGE NOT EDITED]

1 Introduction

God’s promise to Abraham in Gen 12:1–3 and elsewhere (13:14–17; 15:1–7, 13–21; 17:1–21; 18:17–19; 21:12–13 and 22:16–18; cf. promises given to Hagar in 16:10–12; to Isaac in 26:2–5, 24; to Jacob in 28:13–15; 35:10–12; 46:3–4) is important in the reception history of the Abrahamic family history.

God’s promise and blessings to Abraham play an important role also in the Book of Jubilees. In this paper, I will analyse how the Abrahamic promise is interpreted and expounded upon in various passages in Jubilees. My main focus is in three themes found in Gen 12:1–3: (1) The “seed” or offspring of Abraham; (2) Abraham (or his offspring) having a big reputation/name; (3) Abraham (and his offspring) as a blessing (to others). Also the fourth theme (4) land is implicit in Gen 12:1–3, and more explicit elsewhere (e.g. Gen 13:14–17). Also it will be analysed.

These themes occur and are alluded to in many parallel sections of Jubilees as well as in many additions in Jubilees in comparison with Genesis. I will analyse the reception of the Abrahamic promise both in parallel sections and in additions in Jubilees. Due the length of this section in my doctoral dissertation, only the parallel sections are analysed in this paper, and even that analysis is abbreviated from the fuller analysis written for the dissertation.

The main focus here will be on Jubilees 12:22–24 and 32:17–19. I have included detailed synoptic comparison of these texts as an Appendix in the end for those wishing to read them (hence the length of this paper).

For the discussion:

(1) Is there something irrelevant which should be omitted?

(2) Special focus on analyses of Jub 12:22–24, Jub 13, 15, 32.

(3) The coherence of argumentation and analysis overall.

2 Jubilees 12:22–24

Jub 11:14–12:27 rewrites Gen 11:27–12:3. This rewriting process has been analysed meticulously by Jacques van Ruiten.[1] In Jub 12:12–15 Abram burns a pagan temple in Ur of the Chaldeans and his brother Haran dies when trying to save the gods from the temple. Because of this incident Terah leaves Ur and arrives to Harran (cf. Gen 11:31–32). This forms the stage for the Abrahamic Promise of Gen 12:1–3.

In Jubilees, Abram now (1951 AM) starts to investigate the stars in order to see what kind of the following year is to become in relation to the rain. At that moment "A word came to his mind/heart" (Jub 12:17) and he understood that God controls everything, also the rain (12:18). Now, he prays (Jub 12:19–20):[2]

> "12:19 My God, my God, God Most High,
> You alone are my God
> You have created everything:
> Everything that was and has been is the product of your hands.
> I choose hereby you and your lordship.[3]
> 12:20 Save me from the power of the evil spirits who rule the thoughts of peoples' minds.
> May they not mislead me from following you, my God.
> Do establish (*wa-tərassəyani*) me, me and my seed forever.
> May we not go astray from now until eternity."

After this, Abram continues: "Shall I return to Ur of the Chaldeans who are looking for me to return to them? Or am I to remain here in this place? Make the path that is straight before you prosper through your servant so that he may do (it). May I not proceed in the error of my mind, my God." (Jub 12:21)

It is to this question and Abram's wish to be established, taken perhaps from a tradition or invented by the author himself, that Genesis 12:1–3 comes into play. Thus, the abrupt calling of Abram in Genesis 12 which seems to come out of nowhere is solved: Abram takes initiative, and God responds to it through his Angel of Presence (Jub 12:22–24; cf. Gen 12:1–3).

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1 Jacques T. A. G. M. van Ruiten, *Abraham in the Book of* Jubilees*: The Rewriting of Genesis 11:26–25:10 in the Book of* Jubilees *11:14–23:8*, JSJSup 161 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 19–64.

2 The English translation used in this text is based on the English translation by James C. VanderKam, *Jubilees: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2018), with some modifications by me. The translation of the commentary differs somewhat from VanderKam's first translation in James C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees*, CSCO 511; SA 88 (Leuven: Peeters, 1989). The critical edition of the Ethiopic Jubilees at use is based on 27 mansucripts and edited by James C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees: A Critical Text*, CSCO 510; SA 87 (Leuven: Peeters, 1989). Nowadays, more than 50 Ethiopic manuscripts of Jubilees has been identified. On the new manuscripts and their significance, see Ted Erho, "New Ethiopic witnesses to some Old Testament pseudepigrapha," *Bulletin of School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*, 76:1 (2013): 75–97; Matthew P. Monger, *4Q216: Rethinking* Jubilees *in the First Century BCE*, (PhD diss., Oslo: MF Norwegian School of Theology, 2018), 63–75; VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 14–16.

3 The Ge'ez perfect can have also a performative aspect, which suits here better than a past perfect (VanderKam). On performative aspect in Ge'ez, see Stefan Weninger, "On Performatives in Classical Ethiopic," *Journal of Semitic Studies* XLV.1 (2000): 91–101.

The different omissions, additions and changes are analysed in detail by van Ruiten.[4] In addition to the changed context of the Abrahamic Promise, the following changes are relevant regarding our survey: (1) Abram becomes *blessing* (ברכה, Gen 12:2) vs. *blessed in the land* (*buruka wəsta mədr*, Jub 12:23) and (2) the addition in Jub 12:24, that God will become the God of Abram, his son (*wald*), his grandson (*walda wald*) and all his seed (*kʷəllu zarʾ*).

(1) The question of *blessing* vs. *blessed in the land* is an interesting one. The change into 'blessed' happened probably due the Greek influence: the LXX Gen 12:2 namely translates והיה ברכה with ἔσῃ εὐλογητός and Eth Gen *wa-təkawwən buruka*. On the other hand, it is a possibility that already the LXX rendering of ברכה with εὐλογητός is an interpretive tradition that the author of Jubilees already followed. As van Ruiten points out, "The transformation stresses the fact that Abram is the one who is blessed. It does not focus on his role as being a blessing *for others*, as can be argued from Gen 12:2d."[5] I agree with van Ruiten, since the term *barakat* 'blessing' is used much at least in the additions made by the author.

One difficult issue in Jubilees is the ambiguous word *mədr*, which can mean both 'earth' and a specific 'land.' Thus the interpretive problem is similar as with ארץ in Biblical Hebrew. So, a question needs to be posed whether the addition 'in the land' in Jub 12:23 should be rendered 'in the earth' instead. Same question could be posed towards 'peoples of the land/earth.' Van Ruiten defends the translation of 'land' with the notion that the promised land plays an important role in Jubilees, and that the whole scene is related to Abram's entrance into the promised land.[6] VanderKam, on the other hand, sees both to mean 'earth' in general, since Gen 12:3 uses אדמה to mean earth/soil/world in general.[7] The word can though be used to denote the promised land/soil too (e.g. Deut 7:13; 11:9, 21; 12:19).

(2) van Ruiten does not exclude the option, that the ending in Jub 12:24 might allude to the concluding of the covenant in Gen 17:2–8, where God promises to be God to Abram and his seed after him. On the other hand, he is of the opinion that God now answers what Abram had decided beforehand (Jub 12:19; see above).[8]

The formula "I will be God to you" is a covenantal formula which is found in a *pleroma* of places within the Hebrew Bible (e.g. Gen 17:7–8; Exod 6:7; 29:45; Lev 11:45; 22:33; 25:38; 26:12, 45; Num 15:41; Jer 7:23; 11:4; 30:22; Ezek 36:28).[9] In this addition of the author, God promises to be God to *one* of Abram's sons (Isaac) and *one* of his grandsons (Jacob), and to *all Abram's seed*.[10] This seems to exclude Ishmael and Esau, though they may be at least at first sight to be included in Abram's whole seed, i. e. descendants. However, according to Jubilees (19:18, 23–24; 22:13, 15, 24), Abraham's 'house' (22:24) is to be built by Jacob, and Jacob will take Abram's place (19:17). It

4 van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 44–47.
5 van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 46 (emphasis *his*).
6 van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 46.
7 VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 456.
8 van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 47. VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 456 opts for influence from Gen 17:7–8 and 15:1 ("do not be afraid").
9 Claus Westermann, *Genesis 12–26: A Commentary*, trans. John J. Scullion S.J. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1985), 262.
10 In the Hebrew Bible and during the Second Temple Time, God had the epithet "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob/Israel."

is although Jacob and Jacob's whole seed (his twelve sons and their legitimate offspring) are to be 'all Abram's seed.'[11]

Concerning the linguistic problem of niphal/hithpael ברך, the Ge'ez version in Jub 12:23 is as ambiguous as the original.

Although the original text in Gen 12:1–3 itself is particularistic (God calls one man from the whole world to be in a covenantal relationship with him), it could also be interpreted universalistically or inclusive (i.e. other nations have a share in Abraham's blessing). Now, however, Abraham is not to become a blessing, but blessed. The near covenantal relationship between God and Abram, and the selected individuals from his offspring (Isaac and Jacob) is underlined. With these changes the universalistic or inclusive interpretation is made impossible.

It is also worth noting that the scene in Jubilees continues so that God orders the Angel of Presence to teach Abram the revealed language of the creation which no one had spoken after the Tower of Babel. Thus Abram could read and study the old books that for example Noah and Enoch (Jub 4:17; 10:13) had written, and the angel explained everything that Abram could not understand alone (Jub 12:25–27). This means that Abram spoke a language no other did. Therefore he had also access to revelation that no other had access to. This is also an exclusive trait in the rewritten story. On the other hand, it also underlines the difference between the old (cf. Jub 11) and the new.[12]

Other nations still can have a blessing. As in Genesis, it is related to how they relate to Abram and his family. If they bless Abram, they too will be blessed. In which way this happens is not elaborated upon.

3 Jubilees 13

Jubilees 13 rewrites Genesis 12:4–14:24.[13] In this section I will focus on the promises given to Abram in Gen 13:7, 14–17 and how they are interpreted in Jubilees.

Jubilees 13 follows chapter 12 where Abram has gone on the voyage to Canaan with the permission by his father Terah. Terah asked him to take Lot as his own son to the voyage with him, and then return if the land is pleasant (Jub 12:28–31). Now, Abram starts the voyage with Sarai and Lot.

The author has parahprased Gen 12:4–7 quite heavily in Jub 13:1–4.[14] Interestingly the possessions Abram has in Genesis 12:5 are omitted, only Sarai and Lot are mentioned, as if it would be emphasized that Abram was not a man of many possessions. This might be a wrong assumption, however, since Abram's possessions are still mentioned in Jub 13:13 (cf. Gen 12:16). I would suggest that the omission was done more in order to highlight that Abram was travelling with his

11 Rapp, *Jakob in Bet-El*, 177, says quite rightly, that "Damit steht die Verheißung an Abraham und seine Nachkommen von Anfang an unter dem Vorzeichen des Bundes."

12 Perhaps also the writing system that Terah as a priest of idols taught Abram in Jub 11:16 vs. the language that the Angel of Presence taught Abram in 12:25–26?

13 On detailed analysis, see van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 65–118.

14 See the synopsis in van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 68 and Appendix below. Heavy paraphrasing will be true also regarding Gen 12:9–13:4 in Jub 13:10–16, on which, see van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 73–80.

wife Sarai and the son of his brother Lot – which was like his own son.[15] In this way the bond between Abram and Lot is strengthened in Jubilees.

The promise by God that the land will be given to Abram differs here just slightly: now it is said that it will be given both to Abram and to his seed. The same is said in Jub 13:20 // Gen 13:15, and perhaps is a mere harmonisation.[16]

In the account of Jubilees, that the land is pleasant is highlighted with the addition in Jub 13:2 ("He saw and behold, the land from the entrance of Hamath to the tall oak – was very pleaseant."). In contrast, the mention of Gen 12:6b that Canaanites would occupy the land is omitted. With these two changes the author emphasizes that it is the pleasant land – and not the land of the Canaanites – that is promised in Jub 13:3.[17]

As in Genesis, there are no promise of blessing, name, or seed, although the last one is implicit in Jub 13:3 // Gen 12:7. But could Abram think that the seed promised is his adopted son Lot?

Jub 13:17–21, rewrites Genesis 13:5–18.[18] The author of Jubilees has mainly omitted Gen 13:5–11 which tell about struggles between Abram and Lot. The author instead only refers to this event by noting that Lot separated from him, making Lot the active part in separation (Jub 13:17 "In the fourth year of this week Lot separated from him").[19] Since the relationship between Abram and Lot is strengthened in Jubilees – it is to be reminded that Terah had said to Abram that he should take Haran's son Lot with him to his voyage *as his son* (*laka la-wald*, Jub 12:30) – it is elaborated how that separation broke Abram's heart (Jub 13:18, "He was brokenhearted that his brother's son had separated from him for he had no children"). It seems as if Abram did wish that Lot would be his adopted son who would inherit the promises given to him, since "he had no children."

In this context, after the separation, God seems to confirm his promise once again.[20] The author dates the event to the same year when Lot separated himself from Abram in order to strengthen the link between Lot's separation and God's promise found already in Genesis (Jub 13:17, 19). The promises itself are the same as in Genesis, namely (1) land, and (2) seed, with no mention of name or blessing. Whereas most of the differences seem to be minor details, two differences catch the eye. First, the land that Abram is supposed to walk through and watch "everything" is to be given to his seed (Jub 13:21), and not to him (Gen 13:17). This change can be accidental but it might also just strengthen the link between promises of land and seed even more than in Genesis, given the changed context given to this event (Lot's separation).[21] Second, the offspring of Abram will exceed even the sand on seashore/earth, as it cannot be counted (Jub 13:20; cf. Gen 13:16).[22] Thus, Abram is comforted by God's confirmation of promises.

15 Cf. van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 69: "The consequence of the omission of the mention of Abram's possessions (Gen 12:5a) is that in *Jubilees* the focus is solely on the persons Abram, Sarai, and Lot."
16 Similarly van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 70, who sees it influenced by comparable passages in Genesis.
17 Cf. van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 70.
18 See the synopsis in van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 81–82, and Appendix below.
19 van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 82.
20 Cf. VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 478: "The note about Abram's lack of a biological son provides a fitting backdrop for the promise of land and progeny in vv. 19-21."
21 1QapGen 21:14 also adds seed but retains Abraham in the promise.
22 The same version is found also in 1QapGen 21:13 and according to VanderKam, *Book of Jubilees* 2:79; *idem*, *Jubilees*, 478, in some Greek minuscules and Targum Neofiti and Onkelos.

4 Jubilees 14

Jubilees 14 rewrites Genesis 15–16.[23] What is important in our investigation is the conversation between Abram and God. Van Ruiten divides the conversation between Abram and God into two promise dialogues: (1) Gen 15:1–6 // Jub 14:1–6; (2) Gen. 15:7–21 // Jub 14:7–20.[24] The first dialogue in Jubilees does not differ much with the one given in Genesis.[25] As in Genesis, it focuses on the heir and descendants.

The second dialogue, on the other hand has some interesting differences of which two are striking:

(1) In contrast to Gen 15:7, Jub 14:7 expounds: "I am the Lord who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you the land *of the Canaanites* to occupy FOREVER AND TO BE GOD FOR YOU AND YOUR SEED AFTER YOU." First, the promise is to last forever, and not only for a while. Second, the covenantal language is again expounded (cf. 12:24). There is a clear emphasis on the intimate relationship between God and Abram and his seed after him. Again, van Ruiten sees influence of Gen 17:7–8 here.[26]

(2) Jub 14:20 adds to the version of Genesis:

> During this day we concluded a covenant with Abram like the covenant that we concluded during this month with Noah. Abram renewed the festival and the ordinance/covenant for himself forever."

Angel of Presence is referring to the covenant that had been concluded with Noah in Jub 6 after the flood. The author of Jubilees connects the covenant between Noah and God to the covenant in Sinai. As William K. Gliders has emphasized, there is but one covenant, concluded first with Noah, which is then renewed with Abraham and his seed and has its culmination in Jacob. The Festival of Weeks, which was already celebrated by angels in heaven (Jub 6:18), is the festival in which this renewal happens.[27] Noah had celebrated it when the covenant was concluded between God and Noah. Now Abram renews, or confirms (how *ḥaddasa* could also be rendered) the festival and the covenant (*šərʿāt*) for himself forever (14:20). The word *šərʿāt* can mean either an ordinance, something stipulated, or also a covenant. It is used many times in the following chapter 15 in a synonymical sense with *kidān*, 'covenant.'[28]

The conversation between Abram and God is connected to the following story in Genesis 16 concerning Hagar and Abram in a more explicit way with the following addition: "Abram was very happy and told all these things to his wife Sarai. He believed that he would have seed, but she

23 On detailed analysis, see van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 119–136.
24 van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 121.
25 On synopsis, see van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 122–125.
26 van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 128–129.
27 William K. Gliders, "The Concept of Covenant in Jubilees," in *Enoch and the Mosaic Torah: The Evidence of Jubilees*, ed. Gabriele Boccaccini and Giovanni Ibba (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 178–192 (here 182–187). On Festival of Weeks in Jubilees, see esp. Werner Eiss, "Das Wochenfest im Jubiläenbuch und im antiken Judentum," in *Studies in the Book of Jubilees*, ed. Matthias Albani, Jörg Frey, and Armin Lange, TSAJ 65 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 165–178; Sejin Park, *Pentecost and Sinai: The Festival of Weeks as a Celebration of the Sinai* Event, LHBOTS 342 (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 79–175.
28 See also Gliders, "The Concept of Covenant," 190.

continued not to have a child." (14:21). Now, Sarai advises Abram to have sex with Hagar in order to build up seed/descendants to him (14:22–24). Thus, Ishmael is born.[29]

Perhaps Abram is again confused: In Jubilees 13 he thought Lot to be his 'seed' but Lot separated from him. Now, in Jubilees, he is thinking that Ishmael is his promised seed.

5 Jubilees 15

Jubilees 15 rewrites Genesis 17.[30] In this chapter, the promise of descendants is twofold: On one hand Abram, who is now named Abraham (Jub 15:7) is to become a father of many nations. Nations and kings will come forth from Abraham as in Genesis (Jub 15:7–8 // Gen 17:5–6). On the other hand, again as in Gen 17:7–8, the close relationship between God and Abraham's seed is emphasized in Jub 15:9–10. Circumcision is given as *eternal* sign of the covenant (Jub 15:11).[31]

Now, the author of Jubilees diverts from the version of Genesis by not mentioning Ishmael in Jub 15:24 (cf. Gen 17:26), although Ishmael is mentioned in Jub 15:23 (cf. Gen 17:23). Moreover, Jubilees gives an halakic addition regarding circumcision (Jub 15:25–34).

The focus here is the right time for circumcision, and the right way to circumcise. 1 Maccabees tells us that during the second century BCE, some people wanted to remove or hide the marks of circumcision (1 Macc 1:15, 48). The right children of the covenant are those who are circumcised, and circumcised on the right day.

Although Ishmael was circumcised too, the addition makes clear that neither Ishmael nor later Esau could belong to the children of the covenant, or "Abraham's seed" in that sense. A reader of Genesis 17 could interpret in too universal terms the status of Ishmael as circumcised, even though the particularistic "Isaac, not Ishmael" is found there too.[32] Although he was circumcised, it did not happen on the eight day. On the other hand, although it is nowhere mentioned, Esau probably was circumcised on the eight day as was Jacob, and Ishmael too was circumcised at the same time as Abraham was. So why was Abraham included, but not Ishmael? Or why was Jacob chosen, but not Esau? Here, two important factors come to play.

(1) For the author, the revelation of the "Torah and Testimony" was dynamic and ended up in Jacob, who in the end gives his books and the books of his father(s) to his priestly son Levi so that he would renew and teach them on the following generations (Jub. 45:16).[33] Before Jacob's death, however, there are things that are first revealed and then followed after that. The author of Jubilees

29 van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 132, emphasizes that the author had not informed the reader concerning Sarai's problem to have children before. In Genesis, it is informed in the beginning of the Abraham Cycle (Gen 11:30).

30 On detailed comparative analysis, see van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 137–167.

31 Eternality of the circumcision is most probably related to the problems regarding circumcision at the time of the writer around 150 BCE. See the halakic addition of Jubilees (15:25–34) and the discussion below.

32 van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 166.

33 I have tackled this question elsewhere. See Topias K. E. Tanskanen, "'He Established a Testimony in Jacob, He Set a Torah in Israel': Psalm 78 and the *Book of Jubilees*," in *David, Messianism, and Eschatology: Ambiguity in the Reception History of the Book of Psalms in Judaism and Christianity*, eds. Erkki Koskenniemi & David Willgren Davage, SRB 10 (Åbo: Network for the Study of the Reception History of the Bible; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2020), 71– 119 (here 76–99).

has used this interpretive strategy when dealing for example with Reuben's sin with Jacob's wife Bilhah (Jub 33:16).[34]

In my opinion, the same idea is at play here. The law concerning circumcision was first regulated in Jub 15 // Gen 17, so Abraham did not have any chance to do it before. When being informed, however, the action was immediate: "On that very day (*wa-ba-gizē zāti ʿəlat*) Abraham was circumcised." (Jub 15:24) It is noteworthy that when *Damascus Document* refers to Jubilees, it too mentions Abraham's immediate action regarding circumcision (CD 16, 2–6):[35]

> As for the exact determination of their times to which Israel turns a blind eye, behold it is strictly defined in the *Book of the Divisions of the Times into their Jubilees and Weeks.* And on the day that a man swears to return to the Law of Moses, the Angel of Persecution shall cease to follow him provided that he fulfils his word: for this reason Abraham circumcised himself on the day that he knew (ביום דעתו)

Thus, on the day Abraham knew (ביום דעתו), on that very day (*ba-gizē zāti ʿəlat*), Abraham was circumcised, and accepted as a member of the covenant that was concluded on the same day. This, on the other hand, does not still exclude Ishmael: he, too, was circumcised on the same day "with Abraham" (15:24), even though he was not mentioned explicitly as in Gen 17:26.[36]

(2) That Ishmael and Esau were not chosen is motivated by the fact that God "knew them" (*ʾəsma ʾaʾmaromu*, Jub 15:30). Although Gen 16:4c–14 is left out from the rewriting of Gen 16:1–4, 15–16 in Jub 14:21–24, a negative depiction of Gen 16:12 could be lurking behind.[37] However, if this is the case, it is perplexing that it is left out from Jubilees.[38]

VanderKam suggests that perhaps different Jewish exegetical traditions concerning the participle מצחק in Gen 21:9, where Ishmael is connected to illicit behaviour, might lie behind the author's comment that God knew Ishmael's nature.[39] However, as VanderKam himself comments, this interpretive tradition is not used at Jub 17:4. Thus I do not believe it has played any role here.

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34 On this, see James L. Kugel, *A Walk through* Jubilees: *Studies in the* Book of Jubilees *and the World of its Creation*, JSJSup 156 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 163–164. Unlike Kugel, I do not think that 33:10–17 is from a hand of Interpolator, but from the same author than the rest. There is no "temporary ruling" after Jacob hands his books to Levi.

35 Translation by Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, Fiftieth Anniversary Edition (London: Penguin Books, 2011).

36 Michael Segal, *The Book of* Jubilees*: Rewritten Bible, Redaction, Ideology and Theology*, JSJSup 117 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 230–232, 242–243, suggests that omission of "on that day" in Jub 15:23 (cf. Gen 17:23) and of Ishmael in Jub 15:24 (cf. Gen 17:26) are intentional. With these differences in mind, he understands the verses so that Abraham was circumcised immediately, whereas Ishmael was circumcised later "with Abraham", but perhaps not on the same day. I think that this is perhaps too far fetched. I agree with van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 148–151, namely that by omitting mentions of Ishmael, he is downgraded. As van Ruiten notes (150–151), in comparison with the account of Genesis, where Ishmael is explicitly mentioned three times that Ishmael was circumcised, Jubilees mentions Ishmael just once on a passing remark (Jub 15:23).

37 "He shall be a wild ass of a man, with his hand against everyone, and everyone's hand against him; and he shall live at odds with all his kin."

38 Cf. Michael Francis, "Defining the Excluded Middle: The Case of Ishmael in *Jubilees*," *JSP* 21.3 (2012): 259–283 (here 264): "The nonexistence of the announcement in *Jubilees* removes one of the poles around which Ishmael's status as other is established."

39 VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 522. On these exegetical traditions, see targums on Gen 21:9 and *Gen. Rab.* 53:11.

The verb choice of the author in 15:30 is perplexing concerning that Ishmael honours his parents later on. What he of course does, is that his descendants are mixed with the sons of Keturah (Jub 20:12–13), but even this goes along with the prohibition of exogamy that Abraham gives to all his children in Jub 20.[40] Francis is of the opinion, that since Ishmael's mother is from the line of Ham, he is no rival to Isaac whose family is from the right line. In this sense, he is not a threat as Esau is.[41] Francis concludes, that Ishmael represents an obedient non-Israelite, who is in the middle: he is not part of the chosen lineage, and cannot convert fully. Nevertheless, he follows and hears the law, and can share some of the blessings. In the end, however, he remains an outsider.[42] Maybe the biological lineage does come into play here. This is why God also "knew" Ishmael?

6 Jubilees 18:14–16

Jubilees 17:14–18:19 rewrites the known story of Binding of Isaac or the *Akedah* (Gen 22:1–19). As the scene is widely scrutinized,[43] I will focus on the rewriting of the promise given by God/angel to Abraham as it is crucial for this investigation.[44]

There are no significant changes made to the speech, except that it is now by God himself and not his angel that the speech is spoken, and that God reveals in the end that he has (now) made known to everyone that Abraham is – as God already knew – faithful to him in everything.[45] The addition in the end is related to the fact that prince Mastema had not believed that to be the case (Jub 17:15–18), and also that the angel of God knew now that Abraham is faithful.[46]

The promises included here are thus the same than in Genesis: (1) seed who also possess gates/cities of their enemies perhaps alluding to the promised land (Jub 18:15b; cf. Gen 35 // Jub 32 below!) and (2) the blessing which is related to other nations too. Name or land (if not connected to the hegemony depicted in Jub 18:15) are not present.

That Abraham is faithful seems to be a basis for this oath sworn by God. VanderKam comments that "This raises a problem of interpretation because on earlier occasions God delivered the promises to him without condition or with the condition of circumcision."[47] That the promises are dependent on Abraham's faithfulness is reflected also in Jubilees 24:8–11, which will be analysed next.

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40 Francis, "Defining," 281 n. 72.

41 Francis, "Defining," 272–273. This is not the only reason for the different depiction of Ishmael (compared to Esau) in Jubilees. Since Jacob is the true heir and also Isaac is relativized (in comparison to Jacob, see the analysis of Jub 16 below), Ishmael is not a threat. Biblical traditions do not portray him that negatively either (pp. 271–272, 275–276).

42 Francis, "Defining," 282–283.

43 On close analysis of the rewriting process, see van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 209–226. See also Segal, *Book of Jubilees*, 189–202; Kugel, *Walk through*, 108–113; VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 568–582, etc.

44 See the synopsis in van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 217–218.

45 Jub 18:16: "I make hereby known to everyone that you are faithful to me in everything that I have told you. Go in peace." The Ge'ez perfect has a performative aspect here which I have made visible in the translation. Contra VanderKam. See n. 3 above.

46 VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 576. The Ethiopic text with *ʾaʾmarku* "I know (now)" is the preferred reading over Latin *manifestaui* in Jub 18:11. Perhaps the Greek *Vorlage* of the Latin text understood ידעתי (Gen 22:12) as piel and not qal, whereas the Greek *Vorlage* behind the Ethiopic translation understood it differently. God did know all the time (Jub 17:17; 18:9), but now does also the Angel of Presence know. ידעתי is then understood as piel here in Jub 18:16. See Kugel, *Walk through*, 110–111; van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 218.

47 VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 576.

7 Jubilees 24

Jubilees 24 broadly speaking retells Genesis 25:11–26:33.[48] Isaac settles in the Well of the Vision (Beer-Lahai-Roi) and a famine (cf. Gen. 26:1) starts to plague the land (Jub 24:1–2). Esau gives his birthright to Jacob in exchange for the soup (Jub 24:3–7; cf. Gen 25:29–34). Now, because of the famine, Isaac decides to go down to Egypt and he goes to the Philistean king Abimelech in Gerar (Jub 24:8). In this context, Lord appears to Isaac, orders him to reside in this land and gives promises to him (Jub 24:9–11 // Gen 26:2–6).

All the other minor changes between Gen 26:2–6 and Jub 24:9–11 – except the addition in the end – can be explained by a different *Vorlage* from the MT which the author of Jubilees has utilized.[49] A possible difference, however, might be in the clause "because Abraham/your father obeyed…" (Jub 24:11). The Ge'ez for 'because' is *həyyənta* which can also mean 'in substitution for, in compensation,'[50] and the basic meaning is that it denotes something which substitutes or takes place of the previous. In the MT Gen 26:5 the particle is עקב אשר (which according to *BDB* denotes a consequence and hence also reward)[51] and in the LXX ἀνθ' ὧν and in Eth Gen *ʾəsma* 'because, since, for.'[52] However, the difference is not that big: in all versions God's promise to Isaac is dependent on Abraham's pious life, and is established *because* Abraham had been pious and had kept the covenant with its stipulations.[53] It seems that ultimately this is related to the Binding of Isaac (Gen 22 // Jub 18).

In the same way the promise given by God is dependent on Isaac's actions, and this is emphasized in the version Jubilees gives, where God's commandment is iterated again in the end (Jub 24:11): "Now obey my voice and live in this land."

As said already, the rewriting of Jubilees follows the Genesis very closely and is, according to VanderKam, one of the longest direct citations in Jubilees.[54] As in Genesis, God promises (1) to be with Isaac,[55] (2) to bless him, and (3) to give the land Isaac is standing in to him and his seed. Moreover, God promises to carry the terms of the oath he had given to Abraham, which according to Genesis and Jubilees seems to mean to (1) make the number of descendants numerous, (2) give the land to Isaac and his descendants, and (3) that Isaac's seed will be the instrument by which all the nations of the earth/land will be blessed or wish the same kind of blessing they have.[56] The name or reputation is though not mentioned here nor in Genesis.

48 VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 712. What is left out are the family tree of Ishmael's descendants, the birth of the twin brothers and what they became (Gen 25:12–28). The birth story is reproduced in Jub 19:10–14 and the future Ishmael's descendants mentioned briefly in 20:12–13. Latin text that has survived includes 24:12–33.

49 See the textual notes in the Appendix below.

50 Leslau, *Comparative*, 221.

51 *BDB*, 784.

52 Lambdin, *Introduction*, 385

53 According to VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 717, the addition of covenant in the end of the list might stem from Gen 17:9–10 // Jub 15:11. See also Kugel, *Walk through*, 133–134.

54 VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 716.

55 VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 716, notes that this is the first time this promise is given to the patriarch in Genesis and Jubilees.

56 On the problem of hithpael form of ברך and Glt form of *bāraka*, see chapter XX above.

8 Jubilees 26

Jubilees 26:1–35 rewrites Genesis 27:1–41.[57] Isaac calls Esau to himself and asks him to hunt game and prepare a dish for him in order that he may bless Esau (Jub 26:1–2; cf. Gen 27:1–4). Rebekah is eavesdropping and when Esau leaves to the desert to hunt, Rebekah calls Jacob to herself and wants Jacob to obey her (Jub 26:4–6; cf. Gen 27:5–10). Now, the author adds some details to Jacob's reply, most likely in order to show that Jacob honours his father and will not do anything against him (Jub 26:7–8; cf. Gen 27:11–12).

Rebekah continues that the curse shall be on her and not on Jacob, if such a thing would occur (Jub 26:9 // Gen 27:13). So Jacob obeys her (this is highlighted by the addition of Jub 26:10a)[58] and brings to Rebekah what is needed, and Rebekah prepares the dish and Jacob to enter before Isaac (Jub 26:10–12; cf. Gen 27:14–17).

Now, the reader is to be reminded that in Jubilees 19:16–25 Abraham has ordered Rebekah to take care of Jacob and make it sure that he will take Abraham's place and that all the blessings will be upon him.[59] Abraham says this because he has recognized that Isaac loves Esau more than Jacob. This being said, what Jacob is doing is obeying (Jub 26:10) the orders of Rebekah, who follows the orders of Abraham, who ultimately follows what he has recognized to be God's plan, and which the author has revealed to be God's plan already in the creation story (Jub 2:19–23).[60]

Jacob comes to Isaac and their discussion is narrated (Jub 26:13–22). It is worth noting, that in Jubilees Jacob never says that he is Esau, only that he is Isaac's son.[61] Therefore, he does not seem to actually lie or deceive intentionally, he is telling half-truth.[62] Moreover, the author wants to underline that everything happened according to God's plan by adding that Isaac "did not recognize him because there was a turn of affairs from heaven to distract his mind." (Jub 26:18) Thus – ultimately – it was not the cunning plan of Rebekah which caused Isaac bless Jacob, but God's plan and turn of affairs from heaven that distracted Isaac at the crucial moment.[63] The author has solved the problem inherent in the account of Genesis which could easily be interpreted so that Jacob was scheming and doing something horrible: cheating his father.

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57 The Latin text has survived only from 26:8 to the beginning of v. 23.

58 "So Jacob obeyed his mother Rebekah." Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 1:269.

59 See chapter XX below.

60 Cf. Halpern-Amaru, *Empowerment*, 87–88. Endres, *Biblical Interpretation*, 80, suspects that "the author desired to point once again to Rebekah's stature as the real leader of the family; Jacob's acquiescence to her command also corresponds well with her authority as prophetess." I would hesitate this strong a suspect and instead note that Rebekah is following what Abraham had ordered him, although Jub 25 does add a strong flavour to Rebekah's prophetic role (Cf. Also VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 749 n. 19, with whom I disagree on same grounds).

61 Jub 26:13: "I am your son…" cf. Gen 27:18: "I am Esau your firstborn…"; Jub 26:19: "He said, 'Are you my son Esau?' He said, 'I am your son.' (*ʾana waldəka*)" cf. Gen 27:24 "He said, 'Are you really my son Esau?' He said, 'I am' (אני)." On how the interpretation could be made, see Kugel, *Walk through*, 137; *idem*, *Traditions*, 359–360.

62 Berger, *Jubiläen*, 455–456; Endres, *Biblical Interpretation*, 88–89: VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 750. VanderKam also gives a valid interpretation why the author, leaving Isaac's original question in Gen 27:18 away still retained the latter part of Jacob's answer ("I have done as you told me."): Jacob had been his whole life obedient to Isaac.

63 Endres, *Biblical Interpretation*, 89; VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 751. The Ge'ez word *miṭat* "turning, turn" stems from *mēṭa* "to turn" and might reflect Greek μεταστροφή (LXX 1 Kings 12:15; 2 Chr 10:15) and ultimately Hebrew סבה or נסבה.. Charles 1902, 162; VanderKam 2018, 751. On similar interpretations of why Isaac blessed Jacob, see Kugel, *Traditions*, 361–362.

So, Isaac blesses Jacob in Jub 26:23–24 (cf. Gen 27:28–29). The blessing is not altered that much. The blessing includes those found in Genesis: that earth will produce food, hegemony over other peoples and his brothers, and that those who bless Jacob will be blessed but those who curse him will be cursed. It is worth noting that the basic promises of seed, name, land, and blessing are not found here nor in Genesis *per se*. The author has, nevertheless, added allusions to this with his addition in Jub 26:24, namely that all the blessings given to Abraham and Isaac would forever belong to Jacob and his seed.[64] Although Gen 28:4 might be the biblical basis,[65] the addition reminds what Abraham said to Rebekah some chapters back:

> 19:23 All the blessings with which the Lord blessed me and my seed will belong to Jacob and his seed for all time. 19:24 Through his seed my name and the name of my ancestors Shem, Noah, Enoch, Malaleel, Enosh, Seth, and Adam will be blessed.[66]

Thus, now Isaac has done what Abraham knew was happening and what was the reason why Abraham had ordered Rebekah to take care of Jacob: Jacob is the heir of all the promises and blessings.[67] Abraham has said the same to Jacob too in his last speech (Jub 22:13).[68]

9 Jubilees 27

Jubilees 27:1–27 rewrites Genesis 27:42–28:22.[69] Rebekah knows via a dream what Esau is planning against Jacob and thus he wants Jacob to leave to Haran (27:1–5). Jacob hesitates because Isaac is ageing and he wants Isaac's order so that he does not seem to leave the old man behind (27:6).[70] Rebekah then goes to Isaac and complains about Esau's wives which make Isaac summon Jacob and command him to a voyage to Laban (Jub 27:9–11; cf. Gen 28:1–4).[71]

The blessing is mostly the same as in Genesis.[72] As in Genesis, Isaac wishes that God will bless Jacob (general blessing), make him numerous, that Jacob would become a company of people[73] (seed), and that the blessings given to Abraham would be on Jacob and his seed *so that* he would possess (*kama təras*) the land (land). Again, the promise of name is not found here nor in Genesis. It is noteworthy that the promise of seed can be interpreted here in an exclusive or particularistic way, since in Jub 'people' is in singular but in Gen 28:3 it is plural (cf. Gen 35:11 // Jub 32:18 and the analysis below).

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64 "May all the blessings with which the Lord has blessed me and blessed my father Abraham belong to you and your seed forever." (Jub 26:24)

65 Charles, *Book of Jubilees*, 163.

66 On the differing translation from VanderKam, see the discussion in chapter XX below.

67 Kugel, *Walk through*, 137. Cf. Halpern-Amaru, *Empowerment*, 88: "The addition transforms Isaac's blessing into a formal transfer of the covenant promises from one generation to the next."

68 On Jubilees 22, see chapter XX below.

69 The Latin text has been survived partly for Jub 27:11–24.

70 Cf. Jub 26:7–8. Both these additions confirm that Jacob is honouring his parents. This is true also after he returns (Jub 29:15–20; see also 32:31–32; 33:21; 35:1–6, 9–13).

71 On the exegetical brilliance of the author who solves some questions raised by the text in Genesis, see Endres, *Biblical Interpretation*, 92–94; Kugel, *Walk through*, 138; VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 760–762.

72 See the textual notes in the Appendix. See also VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 763 n. 18. VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 762–764 also notes many similarities between Rebekah's blessing of Jacob in Jub 25 and Isaac's blessing here in Jub 27:9–11 // Gen 28:1–4. On analysis of Jub 25, see chapter XX below.

73 As the Ge'ez *ḥəzb* can also mean a tribe or a crowd, it does not need to mean that Jacob's offspring will generate many peoples. The noun, however, most often refers to a people, nation, or Gentiles (esp. in the NT). See Leslau, *Comparative*, 253; Lambdin, *Introduction*, 407.

The last blessing, however, seems to be different in Jubilees than in Genesis.[74] In Genesis 28:4, it is the land where Jacob resides as an alien (ארץ מגריך) that he and his offspring will possess and that God gave to Abraham (אשר־נתן אלהים לאברהם). In Jubilees 27:11, however, there are two lands that Jacob and his offspring will possess: the land where Jacob resides as an alien (*mədra fəlsatəka*; *terram peregrinationis tuae*) *and* all the land God gave Abraham (*wa-kwəllā mədr ʾənta wahabo ʾəgziʾabḥēr la-ʾabrəhām*; *et omnem terram quam dedit deus abrahae*). Of course these two entities can overlap (also totally), but it seems that in Jubilees the promise for the land is wider here. One possibility might be that "the land where you reside as an alien" would designate Jacob in Mesopotamia, and "all the land that Lord gave to Abraham" would refer to the promised land.[75] Given that the promise for the land is widened also elsewhere in Jubilees (see esp. Jub 32:17–19 and the analysis below), this is a plausible interpretation.

That the blessings given to Abraham would be on Jacob and his seed is found also in Genesis (although there it is in singular). It is not elaborated here more, but has been highlighted elsewhere and especially in the main blessing Isaac gives to Jacob in Jubilees' version (Jub 26:24), as shown above. VanderKam notes here rightly that after "the instructions and blessings that Isaac gave to Jacob on this occasion, there could be no question whether Jacob was the rightful patriarchal heir."[76] This is now what Isaac knows, too, but for the reader of Jubilees, that was clear from the beginning and confirmed many times after chapter 2.

As Isaac sends Jacob on the voyage, Rebekah starts to grieve for her (Jub 27:12–13). In an addition to the narrative in Genesis, Isaac comforts Rebekah (27:14–17).

The consolidation Isaac gives to Rebekah alludes to the Bethel theophany which will follow shortly. The Ge'ez phrase *ba-salām* (lat. *in pace* 3x, *cum pace* 1x) recurs 4 times here and was added also to Isaac's instruction to Jacob in Jub 27:11, as shown above. This reminds what Jacob wishes in Gen 28:21 (Jub 27:27; cf. Jub 27:24), namely that God would bring him back *in peace* (בשלום). Also other allusions exist: God will guard Jacob, will be with him, and will not *ever* abandon Jacob (cf. Gen 28:15 // Jub 27:24). Interestingly Gen 28:14, which contains the promises given also to Abraham is not alluded to in Isaac's consolidation. It is also noteworthy that Isaac refers to Jacob's upright and just behaviour, as he is perfect and true in his actions (that is, not Esau).[77] Either he assures Rebekah that Jacob would not become unjust in his journey to another land, or that his just actions is also presented as a condition to God's providence (cf. Jub 15–16; 20).

Now, Jacob goes forth towards Haran and turns off the highway and visits Bethel (Jub 27:19–24 // Gen 28:10–15).

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74 Jub 27:11: "May he give to you the blessings of my father Abraham, to you and to your seed after you, so that you may possess the land where you live as an alien – and all the land that the Lord gave to Abraham. Go in peace, my son."

75 This is noted also by VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 764. The Ge'ez root *fls*, used in *mədra fəlsatəka* has also a connotation of exile and suits Mesopotamia well (Leslau, *Comparative*, 160). This is, however, true only in the Ge'ez layer.

76 VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 763.

77 'Perfect' seems to stem ultimately from the Hebrew תם in Gen 25:27, as Kugel (*Traditions*, 353) points out. See also Jub 35:12. Both the Ge'ez *bəʾsi məʾəman* and Latin *uir verax* (which VanderKam translate 'true man') refer to a man who speaks true and is trustworthy and reliable in his speech and actions. The same Ge'ez term is also found in Jub 17:15–18; 18:16 referring to Abraham as reliable and faithful. In Jub 35:12 the 'true' is *rātəʿ* 'upright, honest, righteous,' the same word used to Jacob being 'just in his ways' in Jub 27:17.

There are many additions with which the author changes the episode. First, he dates the event on the first of first month (1/1, Jub 27:19), a significant date connected to the cult, as noted already. Moreover, it is one of the memorial days revealed in the aftermath of the flood (Jub 6:23–31) and it is the birthday of Levi (Jub 28:14). Now, the connection to the cult is noteworthy here, since the original story is cultic too, but the author wishes to diminish it a bit.[78]

The dream itself (Jub 27:21) and God's speech in the dream (Jub 27:22–24) are quite similar to the biblical story (Gen 28:13–15), but some changes can be detected. The basic promises of (1) land, (2) seed and spreading, (3) blessing, (4) presence, (5) guarding, and (6) bringing back to the promised land are maintained with some additions. The promise of name or reputation is not present here in either versions, which is peculiar given how God's speech in Genesis 28 connects Jacob with the patriarchal promises given to Abraham in Genesis 12:3; 13:14, 16.

Regarding the promise of the land the addition that it will be given to Jacob's offspring "after you" is perhaps just a phrase that is often found in the patriarchal promises (e.g. Gen 17:7, 9, 19; 35:12).[79] The promise of Jacob and his offspring becoming the instrument of blessing to the *regions* of nations (Jub 27:23)[80] is interesting enough, and found only here (cf. Jub 12:23; 18:16; 24:11). Regarding the individual promises to Jacob, the author has added the detail of bringing Jacob back "in peace" in order to harmonize it with Jacob's vow in Gen. 28:21 // Jub 27:27. Moreover, God will not abandon Jacob before he has done "everything" he had said to Jacob. It is interesting that the author has maintained this promise in this way, as in Jub 27:17 Isaac – the reader or listener can understand him alluding to God's promise in Gen 28:15 – maintains that Jacob will not (ever) be abandoned. Perhaps Isaac's consolidation is also guiding the reader's association when one reads the text further.

The vow in Jub 27:25–27 is not itself altered and it follows Genesis, but Jacob's actions are altered.[81]

10 Jubilees 32:17–19 (Gen 35:9–13)

Jubilees 32 is elaboration of Gen 35:7–20.[82] Since it is analyzed from a different point of view and set of questions elsewhere,[83] I will here focus to the rewriting of God's speech in Gen 35:9–13 only.

78 I have left out this discussion due the length of the paper.

79 As Gen 17:7 and 35:12 are related to the land and, moreover, Gen 35:12 is given in Bethel, they seem to be what influenced the addition, but I would not see this detail significant.

80 "All the regions of the nations will be blessed through you and your seed," ge'ez *kʷəllomu baḥāwərta ʾaḥzāb*; lat. *omnes tribus terrae*. I am not sure why VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 757, 768, translates "all the families of the nations," where the one part seems to be taken from the Latin, and the second from the Ge'ez version (He backs up his choice with *tribus* in VanderKam, *Book of Jubilees* 2:176, but why not take both from the Latin then?). Although Dillmann, *Lexicon*, 493 gives also the meaning of a people in a certain region (and refers e.g. to Gen 41:57!) as a possibly meaning for *bəḥēr* (pl. *baḥāwərt*), and Leslau 'nation,' the basic meaning is a region or district and in that sense also a nation living there (see Leslau, *Comparative*, 91; Lambdin, *Introduction*, 392). Even then the translation should be something like "all the (regional) nations of the peoples," referring first and foremost to the area, not "families of the nations." Again, Ge'ez is *lectio difficilior* and Latin perhaps conforms with the known text of Genesis. Eth Gen 28:14 has *kʷəllu ʾaḥzāba mədr* 'all the nations of the earth.'

81 I have left out this discussion due the length of the paper.

82 The Hebrew text has been preserved somewhat in 4Q223–224 1 i:1–5 has preserved parts of Jub 32:18–21.

83 This is another chapter in my dissertation, of which one version was presented in OTSEM 2019 in King's College, London.

Jacob has returned to Bethel and he installs Levi into priesthood and offers and gives tithes via Levi to God (Jub 32:1–9 and halakic discussion in 32:10–15). After it, Jacob plans to build the place into a cultic place and erect an eternal sanctuary in Bethel. During that night, God appears to him (Jub 32:17–19; cf. Gen 35:9–13).

There are significant changes which the author has made both to God's speech and to the situation itself.[84] This is significant given that the author has not altered other speeches by God that much.[85] God's speech in Jubilees retains the basic promises of offspring and land with no mention of name or blessing (as in Genesis), although one can note that the imperative to be fruitful and increase is changed into a promise.[86] That many peoples will come forth from Jacob is found in Genesis only here and in Gen 28, whereas regarding Abraham that promise is found also in Gen 17:5, 16.

This (universalistic?) promise of also Jacob as a source for many nations is, however, omitted in Jubilees.[87] Instead, it is stated that there shall be "kings" coming from Jacob, who will rule everything and everyone.[88] Moreover, this same motif of kings coming from Jacob who rule everything is connected *expressis verbis* to the promise of the land, and perhaps the mention of the kings ruling 'nations' is taken from the account in Genesis that nations would come from Jacob. The modification changes the meaning totally.

Moreover, as the phrasing in Jub 32:18 seems to be close to that of Gen 17:6 (cf. Jub 15:8), it seems necessary to note the difference. Whereas in Gen 17:6 // Jub 15:8 God promises that generally kings and nations shall come from Abraham, in Jub 32:18 kings shall rule nations.[89]

As mentioned before, the promise of the land is connected to the ruling of the land. The author, however, did not stop here. The promise is also widened: it includes *the whole earth*.[90] Although the Ge'ez *mədr* along with the Hebrew ארץ means both land and earth, it seems as if the author has taken the text of Gen 35:13 to include two different lands or pieces of earth, if the Hebrew text is paused accordingly:[91] (1) The land promised to Abraham and Isaac (ואת־הארץ אשר נתתי לאברהם וליצחק לך אתננה), which although already is widened (*kʷəllā mədra za-matəḫta samāy;* "all of the land that is beneath the sky;" Jub 32:19), and (2) the land which God will give to Jacob's seed after him (ולזרעך אחריך אתן את־הארץ), where the author most probably understood הארץ to denote the whole earth (*wa-ʾəm-dəḫra-zə*[92] *yāstagāb*[*b*]*əʾu kʷəllā mədra wa-yəwarrəsəwwā la-ʿālam*; "And after that they will gain the whole earth and possess it forever."). The reasoning behind this reading could be the following: Why does Genesis 35:13 have two different times 'I will give' and 'land,' and not

84 See the Appendix below.
85 This is noted especially by Rapp, *Jakob in Bet-El*, 192–193.
86 Endres, *Biblical Interpretation*, 167; Kugel, *Walk through*, 154.
87 It is retained in Jub 27:11, but there the plural of "nations/peoples" is changed to singular, and therefore the "company of people" may refer to only one nation. This means that regarding Jacob, both mentions of Genesis of Jacob becoming source of many nations or peoples are changed.
88 VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 886, notes that the end of Jub 32:18 seems to be borrowed from Deut 11:24 = Josh 1:3.
89 Cf. Rapp, *Jakob in Bet-El*, 194: "Im Gegensatz zur Verheißungsrede an Abraham ist die Gottesrede an Jakob durch eine Universalisierung der Herrschaft der Nachkommenschaft Jakobs und durch eine Universalisierung der Landverheißung an diesen Patriarchen gekennzeichnet."
90 Charles, *Book of Jubilees*, 194; Berger, *Jubiläen*, 484; Endres, *Biblical Interpretation*, 167; VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 887.
91 Cf. Jub 27:11 above!
92 Cf. Eth Gen 35:12 *ʾəm-dəḫrēka*.

simply אתננה לך ולזרעך אחריך, as seems to be the case elsewhere (cf. Gen 17:7 ונתתי לך ולזרעך אחריך את ארץ…)? This change is interesting especially concerning the blessing of Isaac given to Judah before (Jub 31:18–20), namely that leaders will come forth from Judah and rule Jacob's sons.

Moreover, this widening of the horizon seems to be true also regarding how God introduces himself: Instead of El Shadday, he is now the Lord who has created heaven and earth, that is the whole world.[93] The Creator God promises Jacob's offspring universal hegemony.

The possible universalistic interpretation of the offspring becoming many nations is thus omitted. Instead it is turned the other way around: other nations will be under the hegemony of Jacob's offspring, of which kings will come forth and rule wherever mankind has set foot. The entire earth will be possessed forever by Jacob's descendants.

The universalistic interpretation seems not to be an exception. Similar promises are given to Abraham, namely that his seed would possess cities of their enemies (Jub 18:15; cf. Gen 22:17). Isaac too blesses Jacob with same kind of a promise Jub 26:23 (cf. Gen 27:29), a theme taken by the author and put on the mouth of Abraham in Jub 22:11–14, where Abraham gives his last testament to Jacob, too.[94] It is, nevertheless, expanded in a way not found in other passages (except perhaps Jub 22). It seems reasonable to suggest that this speech by God in Jubilees 32 very well is the culmination of the patriarchal promises, as Rapp argues.[95]

11 Conclusions

In parallel sections in Jubilees, all the basic promises of (1) blessing, (2) land, (3) seed, and (4) name are retained. The author has quite faithfully rendered God's speeches and promises except in the case of Jub 32 (cf. Gen 35).

There are, however, some slight changes, of which the most relevant ones are those made to the original promise (Jub 12:24), Isaac's blessing of Jacob (Jub 26:24), and God's speech to Jacob (Jub 32:17–19). The author has revealed already in Jub 12:24 that God will have a covenantal relationship with Abraham, Isaac (not Ishmael), Jacob (not Esau), and all Abram's, that is Jacob's, seed. Jub 26:24 makes Isaac's blessing – which originally had no allusions to the Abrahamic promise – into a blessing with which Isaac bestows all the blessings to Jacob, and Jacob only. And in God's speech to Jacob in Bethel, universal hegemony is promised to Jacob and his seed. Thus, these three chapters can be taken as an example how the author has modified the story to delete every possible interpretation that Jacob would not be the rightful heir, the culmination point, and the ultimate goal of the Abrahamic promise.

(1) *Land*. Land is present in every instance it is found also in Genesis. It is, however, widened in Jub 27:11 and 32:18–19. Now, the land includes also Mesopotamia (27:11) and even the whole earth (32:18–19).

93 VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 886, considers that this change explains the meaning of Shadday, and refers to LXX Job and Targum Neofiti as another examples. So also Endres, *Biblical Interpretation*, 166–167. But elsewhere that word is transliterated (Jub 15:3; 27:11).

94 Similarly Rapp, *Jakob in Bet-El*, 181; VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 887. See the analyses of these sections in XX-YY.

95 Rapp, *Jakob in Bet-El*, 177.

(2) *Seed*. As was already mentioned above, the promise of seed is interpreted to mean Jacob, and Jacob only. Moreover, whereas concerning Abraham it is still maintained that he is a father of many nations, and that kings shall come from him (e.g. Jub 15:8), concerning Jacob both instances where that promise is found in Genesis are changed so that it means only Jacob and his seed (27:11; 32:18–19). Moreover it is connected to the promise of land in that way that Jacob's seed shall have hegemony over the whole earth.

(3) *Name.* It is peculiar that the promise of name is not found in Genesis nor in Jubilees much more than in the original promise of Jub 12 // Gen 12. That aspect is though found in additions in Jubilees.

(4) *Blessing*. Concerning the original promise in Jub 12:22–24, the universalistic interpretation that Abram will be a blessing is changed so that he is blessed. The blessing is elaborated that much elsewhere. The ambiguous "become blessed or wish blessing" remains ambiguous here aswell. Other people will become blessed, if they bless Jacob.

Appendix

I have inserted in this appendix the texts in synoptic comparison which are analysed in the text above. The methodology is the same used by Jacques van Ruiten in his work *Abraham* on Jub 11–23:8. The normal text is the text which is found in the other text too. Text in SMALL CAPS is such that is not found in the other text. *Slight variations* are italicized, and **rearrangements** are in **bold**.

The synoptic comparison for texts in Jub 12–23:8 are taken with slight modifications from van Ruiten's fabulous *Abraham*. For the remaining texts, the comparison is my own. The translations are based on NRSV for Genesis and VanderKam's fresh commentary for Jubilees, but I have modified both in order to make the differences and similarities more visible.[96]

Gen 12:1–3	Jub 12:22–24
1 *And the Lord said to Abram:*	22 HE FINISHED HIS SPEAKING AND HIS PRAYING, *and behold, the word of the Lord was sent to him through my hand, saying*:
"*Go from* your land and your family and your father's house to the land that I will show you.	"*Now you, come* from your land, from your family, and your father's house to the land that I will show you.
2 I will *make* of you a great people.	I will *establish* you into a large AND POPULOUS people.
I will bless you	23 I will bless you
and make your name great,	and make your name great.
You will become a *blessing*	You will become *blessed* IN THE LAND
	All the *peoples* of the land will be blessed in you.
3 I will bless those who bless you, and *him* who curses you I will curse;	Those who bless you I will bless, and *those* who curse you I will curse.
and all the *families* of the land will be blessed in you.	
	24 I WILL BECOME GOD FOR YOU, YOUR SON, YOUR GRANDSON, AND ALL YOUR SEED. DO NOT BE AFRAID. FROM NOW UNTIL ALL THE GENERATIONS OF THE LAND I AM YOUR GOD.

Gen 12:4–7	Jub 13:1–4
4 Abram went, AS THE LORD HAD TOLD HIM; AND LOT WENT WITH HIM. ABRAM WAS-SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS OLD WHEN HE DEPARTED from Haran	Abram went from Haran

96 On the use of synoptic comparison, see further Erkki Koskenniemi & Pekka Lindqvist, "Rewritten Bible, Rewritten Stories: Methodological Aspects," in *Rewritten Bible Reconsidered: Proceedings of the Conference in Karkku, Finland August 24-26 2006*, ed. Antti Laato & Jacques van Ruiten, SRB 1 (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 11–39.

5 And ABRAM took his wife Sarai, and Lot the son of his brother, AND ALL THEIR POSSESSIONS WHICH THEY HAD GATHERED, AND THE PERSONS THAT THEY HAD GOTTEN IN HARAN; AND THEY SET FORTH TO GO to the land of Canaan.	and he took his wife Sarai and Lot, the son of his brother HARAN, to the land of Canaan.
They came to *the land of Canaan*.	*He* came to *Asur*.
6 ABRAM *passed* THROUGH THE LAND *to* THE PLACE *at* Shechem, to the oak *of Moreh*.	He *walked as far as* Shechem AND SETTLED NEAR A *tall* oak.[97]
AT THAT TIME THE CANAANITES WERE IN THE LAND	
	2 HE SAW AND BEHOLD, THE LAND FROM THE ENTRANCE OF HAMATH TO THE TALL OAK – WAS VERY PLEASANT.
7 And the Lord APPEARED TO ABRAM, AND said,	3 And the Lord said TO HIM:
"To your seed I will give this land."	"To YOU AND your seed I will give this land."
He built there an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him.	4 He built there an altar AND OFFERED ON IT A SACRIFICE to the Lord who had appeared to him.

Gen 13:11–18	Jub 13:17–21
11 SO LOT CHOSE FOR HIMSELF ALL THE JORDAN VALLEY, AND LOT JOURNEYED EAST; THUS THEY SEPARATED FROM EACH OTHER	
12 ABRAM SETTLED IN THE LAND OF CANAAN	
	17 IN THE FOURTH YEAR OF THIS WEEK LOT SEPARATED FROM HIM
while Lot settled AMONG THE CITIES OF THE VALLEY AND MOVED HIS TENT AS FAR AS Sodom.	Lot settled in Sodom.
13 Now the men of Sodom WERE WICKED AND very sinful AGAINST THE LORD.	Now the people of Sodom were very sinful.
	18 HE WAS BROKENHEARTED THAT HIS BROTHER'S SON HAD SEPARATED FROM HIM FOR HE HAD NO CHILDREN.
14 The Lord said to Abram, after Lot had seaprated from him:	19 IN THAT YEAR WHEN LOT WAS TAKEN CAPTIVE, The Lord said to Abram – after Lot had separated from him, IN THE FOURTH

97 The same interpretation of "the oak of Moreh" is found also in the LXX.

	YEAR OF THIS WEEK – AND SAID TO HIM
"Lift up your eyes, AND LOOK from the place where you are, toward the north, the south, **the east and the west;**	Lift up your eyes from the place where you have been living toward the north, the south, **the west, and the east;**
15 because all the land which you see **to you I will give and to your seed** forever	20 because all the land which you see **to you and your seed I will give** forever.
16 I will establish your seed like the *dust* of the *earth*; if a man can count the *dust* of the earth, your seed *will also be counted*.	I will establish your seed like the *sand* of the *sea*; if a man can count the *sand* of the earth, your seed *will NOT be counted*.
17 Get up, walk IN THE LAND through its length and its breadth, because I will give it *to you*."	21 Get up AND walk through its length and its breadth. LOOK AT EVERYTHING because I will give it to *your seed*."
Abram MOVED HIS TENT, AND *he came* and settled *by the oaks of Mamre, which are at* **Hebron;** AND THERE HE BUILT AN ALTAR TO THE LORD.	Abram *went to* **Hebron** and settled *there*.

Gen 22:15–18	Jub 18:14–16
15 THE ANGEL OF the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven	The Lord called to Abraham BY HIS NAME a second time from heaven, JUST AS WE HAD APPEARED IN ORDER TO SPEAK TO HIM IN THE LORD'S NAME
16 He said: "By myself I swear hereby, says the Lord: because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, *your only one*, 17 I will indeed bless you,	15 He said: "By myself I swear hereby[98], says the Lord: because you have done this thing, and have not refused me your *first-born* son WHOM YOU LOVE, I will indeed bless you
And I will indeed multiply your seed as the stars of heaven and as the sand on the seashore.	And will indeed multiply your seed as the stars of heaven and as the sand on the seashore.
Your seed will possess *the gate* of their enemies.	Your seed will possess *the cities*[99] of their enemies.
18 By our seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed, because of the fact that you have obeyed my voice."	16 By your seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed because of the fact that you have obeyed my voice.
	I MAKE HEREBY KNOWN[100] TO EVERYONE THAT YOU ARE FAITHFUL TO ME IN EVERYTHING THAT I HAVE TOLD YOU. GO IN PEACE."

98 Although VanderKam translates the Ge'ez perfect with a past tense, and van Ruiten follows him, the Ge'ez perfect (as the Hebrew perfect in Genesis) clearly has a performative aspect here. On performatives in Ge'ez, see Stefan Weninger, "On Performatives in Classical Ethiopic," *JSS* XLV/1 (2000): 91–101.

99 LXX Gen 22:16 has plural τὰς πόλεις followed by Eth Gen 22:16 (*ʾahgura*), an interpretation of 'gates,' as noticed by commenators of Genesis and VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 576.

100 VanderKam and van Ruiten has translated the Ge'ez perfect with a past tense, but it has a performative aspect here. See note 66 above.

Gen 26:2–6	Jub 24:9–11
2 The LORD appeared to him and said, “Do not go down to Egypt. Dwell in the land that I will tell you.	9 The LORD appeared to him and told him, “Do not go down to Egypt. Dwell in the land that I will tell you.
3 Reside in this land as an alien, and I will be with you, and will bless you; for to you and to your seed I will give all *these lands*,[101] and I will establish *the* oath[102] that I swore to your father Abraham.	Reside in this land as an alien, and I will be with you, and will bless you; 10 for to you and to your seed I will give all *this land*. I will establish *my* oath that I swore to your father Abraham.
4 I will make your seed as numerous as the stars of the sky, and will give to your seed all *these lands*[103]. And through your seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed,	I will make your seed as numerous as the stars of the sky, and will give to your seed all *this land*. 11 And through your seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed
5 *because Abraham*[104] obeyed my voice and kept my obligation, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.”	*because*[105] *your father* obeyed my voice and kept my obligation, commandments, laws, statute, AND COVENANT.
	NOW OBEY MY VOICE AND LIVE IN THIS LAND.”

Gen 26:23–25	Jub 24:21–23
23 He went up from there to *Beer Sheba*	21 He went up from there to *the well of the oath*[106] DURING THE FIRST YEAR OF THE FIRST WEEK IN THE FORTY-FOURTH JUBILEE [2108]
24 The LORD appeared to him that night and said,	22 The LORD appeared to him that night – ON THE FIRST OF THE FIRST MONTH – and said TO HIM,
“I am the God of your father Abraham. Do not be afraid, for I am with you and will bless you and make your seed numerous for my servant Abraham’s sake.”	“I am the God of your father Abraham. Do not be afraid, for I am with you and will bless you. I will CERTAINLY make your seed numerous LIKE THE SAND OF THE EARTH for my servant Abraham’s sake.
25 There he built an altar and called on the name of the LORD, and PITCHED HIS TENT THERE	23 There he built the altar THAT HIS FATHER ABRAHAM HAD FIRST BUILT and called on the name of the LORD and OFFERED A SACRIFICE TO THE GOD OF HIS FATHER ABRAHAM.

101 MT has here as in v. 4 plural את־כל־הארצות האל but LXX πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν ταύτην followed by Eth.
102 MT השבעה but LXX τὸν ὅρκον μου followed by Eth.
103 MT has here as in v. 3 plural את־כל־הארצות האל but LXX πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν ταύτην followed by Eth.
104 MT Eth only “Abraham”, but LXX Αβρααμ ὁ πατήρ σου.
105 Ge’ez *həyyənta*, see the discussion below.
106 Here the Ethiopic Jubilees, as usual, has translated the Greek translation of the name.

Gen 27:11–12	Jub 26:7–8
11 But Jacob said to his mother Rebekah,	7 But Jacob said to his mother Rebekah,
	"MOTHER, I WILL NOT BE SPARING ABOUT ANYTHING THAT MY FATHER EATS AND THAT PLEASES HIM, BUT I AM AFRAID, MOTHER, THAT HE WILL RECOGNIZE MY VOICE ***and wish to*** **feel me**
"*Look*, **my brother Esau is a hairy man**, while **I am smooth**.	8 *You know that* **I am smooth** while **my brother Esau is hairy**.
12 ***Perhaps my father will*** **feel me**, and I will look to him like a mocker, and bring a curse on myself and not a blessing."	I will look to him like a mocker. I WOULD BE DOING SOMETHING THAT HE DID NOT ORDER ME, AND HE WOULD GET ANGRY AT ME, and I would bring a curse on myself and not a blessing."

Gen 27:28–29	Jub 26:23–24
28 May God give you of the dew of heaven, and of the fatness of the earth,	23 May the Lord grant to you and multiply for you (your share) of the dew of heaven and the fatness[107] of the earth;
and multitude of grain and *wine*.	MAY HE MULTIPLY[108] the multitude of grain and *oil*[109] for you.
29 May peoples serve you, and *nations* bow down to you.	May peoples serve you, and *people*[110] bow down to you.
Become lord to your brothers, and may the sons of your mother bow down to you.	24 Become lord to your brothers; may the sons of your mother bow down to you.
	MAY ALL THE BLESSINGS WITH WHICH THE LORD HAS BLESSED ME AND BLESSED MY FATHER ABRAHAM BELONG TO YOU AND YOUR SEED FOREVER
May *those*[111] who curse you be cursed, and *those* who bless you be blessed.	May *the one* who curses you be cursed, and *the one* who blesses you be blessed.

107 Although the Ge'ez word in both cases is *ṭall*, which usually connotates moisture and dew but can also refer to 'fatness.' Cf. also the verbal form *ṭalla*, which can have meaning 'to be fat' (Leslau, *Comparative*, 591). VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 744, 752, did not notice this and translated it with 'dew.' Thus, although the words in the MT and LXX Gen 27:28 differ ('dew' and 'fatness'), the same word is used in Ge'ez both here and in Eth Gen 27:28 but the semantic range of that word is wider than those in Hebrew and Greek respectively.

108 EJ adds the predicate *ʾabzəḫ* which is not found in Gen 27:28.

109 Ms. 44 adds also 'wine' along with grain and oil.

110 The first occurrence is plural *ʾaḥzāb* of *ḥəzb* 'nation, people, tribe, sect, gentiles;" the second one is in singular, which although can refer to Gentiles in general (Leslau, *Comparative*, 253). Eth Gen 27:29 follows the LXX ἄρχοντες in rendering it by *malāʾəkt* 'leaders.'

111 In the MT Gen 27:29, the cursing ones are in plural but the adjective 'cursed' in singular. In the LXX and Eth Gen 27:29 both are in singular.

Gen 27:39–40	Jub 26:33–34
39 Then Isaac, HIS FATHER[112], answered and said to him: “See, away from the fatness of the earth shall your dwelling place be, and away from the dew of heaven on high.	33 Isaac answered and said to him, “See, away from the fatness[113] of the earth shall your dwelling place be, and away from the dew of heaven on high.
40 By your sword you shall live, and you shall serve your brother;	34 By your sword you will live, and you shall serve your brother;
And it shall happen when you break loose[114], you *shall break* his yoke from your neck	*May it be that if you become great and remove* his yoke from your neck,
	THEN YOU WILL COMMIT AN OFFENCE FULLY WORTHY OF DEATH AND YOUR SEED WILL BE ERADICATED FROM BENEATH THE SKY

Gen 28:1–4	Jub 27:9–11
1 So Isaac called Jacob, blessed him, and *commanded*[115] him, and said to him,	9 So Isaac called HIS SON[116] Jacob, blessed him and *instructed* him, and said to him,
“You shall not marry one of the Canaanite women. 2 Set out *Paddan-aram* to the house of Bethuel, your mother’s father; and take as wife from there from the daughters of Laban, your mother’s brother.	10 “You shall not marry ANY[117] of the Canaanite women. Set out, GO TO[118] *Mesopotamia*,[119] to the house of Bethuel, your morther’s father; and take as wife from there from the daughters of Laban, your mother’s brother.
3 May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful, and make you numerous, *that you may become* a company of *peoples*.	11 May the God of Shaddai bless you; may he make you grow, and make you numerous. And *be*[120] a company[121] of *people*[122].
4 May he give to you the *blessing* of Abraham, to you and to your seed *with* you, so that you may take possession of the land where you live as an alien – which God gave to Abraham.”	May he give to you the *blessings* of MY FATHER[123] Abraham, to you and to your seed *after* you, so that you may possess the land where you live as an alien – AND ALL THE LAND that the Lord gave to Abraham. GO IN PEACE, MY SON.”

112 This is lacking in Eth Gen 27:39, but found in MT LXX.

113 Concerning the Ge’ez *ṭall* see note 107 above.

114 The MT Hebrew phrase כאשר תריד has been problematic for ancient commentators. See Charles, *Book of Jubilees*, 164; Endres, *Biblical Interpretation*, 91; Kugel, *Walk through*, 137–138; VanderKam, *Book of Jubilees* 2:170; *idem*, *Jubilees*, 755–756. On different interpretations in antiquity, see esp. Kugel, *Traditions*, 366–372.

115 The Hebrew צוה is semantically quite close to the Ge’ez *gaššaṣa*. Eth Gen 28:1 lacks the verb totally.

116 This is found also in Eth Gen 28:1.

117 MT שה מבנות כנען but EJ *bəʾsita ʾəm-**kʷəllu** awāləda kanāʾan* (Eth Gen 28:1 *bəʾsita ʾəm-awāləda kanāʾan*).

118 EJ adds *ḥor* ‘go,’ which probably follows the LXX Gen 28:2 ἀναστὰς ἀπόδραθι (Eth Gen 28:2 *tanšəʾa ḥur*).

119 Cf. LXX Gen 28:2 εἰς τὴν Μεσοποταμίαν.

120 Whereas in MT consecutive perfect follows the many wav + jussive in order to present the result (‘so that,’ Nyberg, *Hebreisk grammatik*, §86ff–gg), but in Ge’ez *wa-kun* is another subjunctive in the chain.

121 The Ge’ez *makbəb* is also the name of the book of Qohelet in the Ethiopic Bible.

122 EJ *ḥəzb*, but MT LXX Eth Gen 28:3 pl. (Eth *ʾaḥzāb*).

123 Cf. LXX Gen 28:4 τοῦ πατρός μου.

Gen 28:10–5	Jub 27:19–24
10 Jacob left *Beer-sheba and went toward* Haran.	19 Jacob left *the well of the oath*[124] *to go to* Haran DURING THE FIRST YEAR OF THE SECOND WEEK OF THE FORTY-FOURTH JUBILEE [2115].
[cf. Gen 12:8; Joshua 16:1; 18:12–13; Judges 1:22–23; 1 Sam 13:2]	HE ARRIVED AT LUZ – THAT IS ON THE MOUNTAIN – THAT IS, BETHEL – ON THE FIRST OF THE FIRST MONTH OF THIS WEEK.
11 He *happened to come* to a certain place and *spent the night* there, because the sun had set.	He *arrived*[125] at the place IN THE EVENING, TURNED OFF THE ROAD TO THE WEST OF THE HIGHWAY DURING THIS NIGHT,[126] and *slept* there because the sun had set.
He took from the stones of the place and set (it) UNDER HIS HEAD and *lay down* IN THAT PLACE.	20 He took from the stones of *that*[127] place and set it BENEATH THAT TREE.[128] HE WAS TRAVELING ALONE and *fell asleep*.
12 He dreamed that a ladder was set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and that angels of God were ascending and descending on it. 13 And the Lord was standing on it[129].	21 He dreamed THAT NIGHT that a ladder was set up on the earth and its top was reaching heaven; and that angels of the Lord were going up and down on it; and that the Lord was standing on it.
13 He said, “I am THE LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you are *laying* I will give to you and to your seed;	22 He SPOKE WITH JACOB and said, “I am the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you are *sleeping* I will give to you and your seed AFTER YOU.
14 Tour seed shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall *spread abroad* to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south.	23 Your seed will be like the dust of the earth. You will *become numerous*[130] toward the west, the east, the north, and the south.
All the *families* of the *earth* shall be blessed through you and through your seed.	All the *regions*[131] of the *nations* will be blessed through you and your seed.
15 As for me, I *am* with you and I will guard you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land because I will not leave you until I have done what I have said to you.”	24 As for me, I *will be* with you and I will guard you wherever you go, and I will bring you back IN PEACE to this land because I will not leave you until I have done EVERYTHING that I have said to you.”

Gen 28:16–22	Jub 27:25–27
16 Jacob *woke from his sleep and* said, “Surely *the Lord is in this place* but I did not know (it)!”	25 Jacob *slept sleep*[132] and said “Surely *this place is the house of the Lord* but I did not know (it)!”
17 He was afraid and said, “HOW awe-inspiring is this place! This is none other than the house of	He was afraid and said, This place, *which* is nothing but the house of the Lord, is awe-

124 As usual, the Greek *Vorlage* has translated the Hebrew Beer Sheba and it is then translated to Ge’ez too.

125 The Ge’ez *baṣḥa* has also a connotation of something occurring by accident (Leslau, *Comparative*, 111), but the connotation is weaker than with the Hebrew פגע.

God, and this is the gate of heaven."	inspiring; and this is the gate of heaven."
18 So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put *under his head* and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it.	26 So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put *at his head* and set it up as a pillar FOR A MARKER. He poured oil on the top it.
19 He *called* that place Bethel; but the name of *the city* was Luz at first.	He *named* that place Bethel. But at first the name of *the region* was Luz.
20 Then Jacob made a vow, saying,	27 Jacob made a vow to the Lord, saying,
"If God is with me, and guards me in this way which I am going, and gives me food to eat and clothing to wear,	"If the Lord is with me and guards me on this road which I am going, and gives me food to eat and clothing to wear
21 so that I return to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God,	so that I return to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God,
22 and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house;	And ALSO this stone, which I have set up as a pillar FOR A MARKER IN THIS PLACE is to become the house of the Lord.
and of all that you give me I will surely tithe to you.	and that you have given me I will tithe to you, MY LORD.

126 Concerning the textual problems, see VanderKam, *Book of Jubilees* 2:174; *idem*, Jubilees, 759.

127 The Ge'ez *wəʾətu* is probably a translation of the Greek article.

128 VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 757, 759, translates "set it at the place (for) his head beneath that tree." The phrase concerning the head is lacking in Ge'ez but found in Latin *ad caput sibi*. Cf. Jub 27:26 where *diba rəʾsu* is found. Although VanderKam says that "the lack of the expression in the Eth. MSS. tradition here may seem the preferred reading, and perhaps it is," (p. 759) he still adds this to the text with the help of Latin. The omission is however *lectio difficilior* and thus preferable, even though there hypothetically is space for מראשתיו in 1Q17 1, 5 (VanderKam, *Textual and Historical Studies*, 79–80). It seems more reasonable that the Latin tradition has here added the phrase in order to harmonize with the known text of Genesis. Furthermore, VanderKam also notes that "there is no obvious scribal trigger for omission of *diba reʾsu*" (p. 759).

129 NRSV 'beside him.' The problem is that to which object does the suffix in עליו refer to, to סלם or to Jacob? As the suffix is used twice to refer to סלם and the whole scene is Jacob's dream (cf. The LXX Gen 28:13), I see it more reasonable to see it referring to Jacob. Also Jubilees follows this tradition. I reckon that those who do not see it referring to Jacob are influenced *a priori* by the hypothesis of v. 12 stemming from Elohist and v. 13 from Jahvist, the common thesis in older literary critical studies. I have argued this more closely in my Master's thesis where I analysed the Bethel Episode in detail. See Topias Tanskanen, "Guds hus och himlens port: En traditionshistorisk analys av Gen. 28:10–22" (Master's Thesis, Åbo Akademi, 2018), 3–20, 80–84 (esp. 11–20).

130 The same Ge'ez verb *bazḫa* in G imperfect (though in 3rd singular masculine referring to the seed [cf. the LXX], and not 2nd singular masculine) is used also in Eth Gen 28:14.

131 Ge'ez *kʷəllomu baḥāwərta ʾaḥzāb*; lat. *omnes tribus terrae*. I am not sure why VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 757, 768, translates "all the families of the nations," where the one part seems to be taken from the Latin, and the second from the Ge'ez version (He backs up his choice with *tribus* in VanderKam, *Book of Jubilees* 2:176, but why not take both from the Latin then?). Although Dillmann, *Lexicon*, 493 gives also the meaning of a people in a certain region (and refers e.g. to Gen 41:57!) as a possibly meaning for *bəḥēr* (pl. *baḥāwərt*), and Leslau 'nation,' the basic meaning is a region or district and in that sense also a nation living there (see Leslau, *Comparative*, 91; Lambdin, *Introduction*, 392). Even then the translation should be something like "all the (regional) nations of the peoples," referring first and foremost to the area, not "families of the nations." Again, Ge'ez is *lectio difficilior* and Latin perhaps conforms with the known text of Genesis. Eth Gen 28:14 has *kʷəllu ʾaḥzāba mədr* 'all the nations of the earth.'

132 Ge'ez *wa-noma yāʿqob nəwāma*.

Gen 35:9–13	Jub 32:17–19
9 God appeared to Jacob **again** WHEN HE CAME FROM PADDAN-ARAM, and he blessed him. 10 GOD said to him,	17 The Lord appeared to him DURING THE NIGHT. He blessed him and said to him,
"YOUR NAME IS JACOB[133]; no longer shall you be called Jacob, but Israel *shall be your name*." SO HE WAS CALLED ISRAEL[134].	"You are not to be called Jacob *only* but *you will be named* Israel."
11 GOD said to him, "I am God ALMIGHTY: *be fruitful and multiply*; A NATION AND A COMPANY OF NATIONS WILL COME FROM YOU, and kings will *come out from your loins*.[135]	18 He said to him **again**, "I am the Lord WHO CREATED HEAVEN AND EARTH. *I will increase your numbers and multiply you* VERY MUCH. Kings will *come from you*, AND THEY WILL RULE WHEREVER HUMANITY HAS SET FOOT.
12 The land that I GAVE TO ABRAHAM AND ISAAC I will give to you, and to your seed *after you I will give* the land."	19 I will give your seed ALL OF the land[136] that IS BENEATH THE SKY. THEY WILL RULE OVER ALL THE NATIONS JUST AS THEY WISH. *After that*, *they will gain* the ENTIRE land/earth, AND THEY WILL POSSESS IT FOREVER.
13 Then GOD went up from him AT THE PLACE WHERE HE HAD SPOKEN WITH HIM.	20 WHEN HE HAD FINISHED SPEAKING WITH HIM, he went up from him, AND JACOB KEPT WATCHING UNTIL HE HAD GONE UP INTO HEAVEN.

Gen 46:1–4	Jub 44:1–6
1 Israel set out WITH ALL THAT HE HAD. He *came to Beer-sheba* and offered *sacrifices* to the God of his father Isaac.	1 Israel set out FROM HEBRON, FROM HIS HOUSE, ON THE FIRST OF THE THIRD MONTH. He *went by way of the well of the oath* and offered a *sacrifice*[137] to the God of his father Isaac ON THE SEVENTH OF THIS MONTH.
	2 WHEN JACOB REMEMBERED THE DREAM THAT HE HAD SEEN IN BETHEL, HE WAS AFRAID TO GO DOWN TO EGYPT
	3 BUT AS HE WAS THINKING ABOUT SENDING WORD TO JOSEPH THAT HE SHOULD COME TO HIM AND THAT HE WOULD NOT GO DOWN, HE REMAINED THERE FOR SEVEN DAYS ON THE CHANCE THAT HE WOULD SEE ***a vision*** (ABOUT) WHETHER HE SHOULD REMAIN

133 Interestingly this is also lacking in the Eth Gen 35:10, but found in the MT LXX Gen 35:10.

134 This is lacking both in the LXX and in the Eth Gen 35:10.

135 MT מחלציך יצאו vs. EJ *ʾəmənnēka yəkawwən* which retroverted would be ממך יהיו (cf. Eth Gen 35:11 *yəḍāʾu* [interstingly subjunctive] *ʾəmənnēka*). VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 886 n. 81 refers to Gen 17:6 as a possible inspiration.

136 Although Lat. reads "blessings," it seems to be a corruption, given the context in Jub 35:19 and its base text in Gen 35:12. VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 868, 887 n. 85.

137 MT Gen 46:1 has pl. זבחים but LXX and Eth sg.

	OR GO DOWN.
	4 HE CELEBRATED THE HARVEST FESTIVAL – THE FIRSTFRUITS OF GRAIN – WITH OLD GRAIN BECAUSE IN ALL THE LAND OF CANAAN THERE WAS NOT EVEN A HANDFUL OF SEEDS IN THE LAND SINCE THE FAMINE AFFECTED ALL THE ANIMALS, THE CATTLE, THE BIRDS, AND HUMANITY AS WELL.
2 God *spoke* to *Israel* ***in visions*** OF THE NIGHT, and said, "Jacob, Jacob." He said, "Here I am."	5 ON THE SIXTEENTH the Lord *appeared* to *him* and said TO HIM, "Jacob, Jacob." He said, "Here I am."
3 Then he said, "I AM GOD[138], the God of your *father*; do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make of you into a great nation there.	Then he said TO HIM, "I am the God of your *fathers*[139] – THE GOD OF ABRAHAM AND ISAAC. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there.
4 I myself will go down with you TO EGYPT, and I myself will ALSO *bring you up again*; and Joseph shall put his hands on your eyes.	6 I myself will go down with you and I myself will *lead you* (back). YOU WILL BE BURIED IN THIS LAND, and Joseph will put his hands on your eyes. DO NOT BE AFRAID; GO DOWN TO EGYPT.

138 MT Gen 46:3 אנכי האל אלהי אביך, but EJ seems to follow that of the LXX and Eth Gen 46:3 ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ θεὸς τῶν πατέρων σου.

139 LXX and Eth Gen 46:3 has plural, whereas MT has singular.

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Summary of the PhD Project: The Use and Interpretation of the Jacob Story in the Book of Jubilees

The question of different approaches to the patriarchal stories in general and the Abrahamic family history in particular forms the background for my study. Abrahamic family history in Genesis contains both universalistic and particularistic tendencies: On one hand, all will be blessed in or through Abraham and his seed (Gen 12:1–3). On the other hand, it is Isaac and not Ishmael, and Jacob and not Esau, that is elected by God and will be heir to the promises given to Abraham. This was then interpreted in various ways: the LXX seems to emphasize the universalistic tendency.

Jubilees, on the other hand, underlines the exclusive train in reception. This is my focus. Jacob is the main character in the rewriting, and the importance of Torah and its observance is another focus of Jubilees. I have characterized Jubilees as an ellipsis which has two focal points: (Jacob as) Abraham’s seed and Torah (which Jacob receives). These two focal points are related to one another through the character Jacob.

My thesis contains three case studies, which enlighten these two focal points. The first study, already published as an article, concerns how Ps 78:5 alongside with Ps 105:6–11 gave the author the biblical basis for his idea that patriarch Jacob has received Torah, especially Deuteronomic laws. Although other patriarchs follow Mosaic stipulations too in Jubilees, Jacob is the culmination and the end point of revelation.

The second case study concerns how Israel (in 2nd singular) is addressed in Deuteronomy and how these commandments are put into action by Jacob(=Israel) in Jubilees. The focus is especially on Deut 7, 12, 23, and Jub 30–32. This case study contributes to the first study, and a preliminary version was presented in OTSEM 2019 in King’s College, London. The focus in these two studies is on the second focal point: Jacob and Torah.

The third case study concerns the Abrahamic Promise (Gen 12:1–3) and its reception in Jubilees. I analyse all the passages which quote, rewrite, allude or echo the Abrahamic Promise in Jubilees. Here, the goal is to see how these possible universalistic promises are interpreted utterly exclusive: Jacob is Abraham’s seed (if he follows Torah). This is the chapter of which a part is presented here in OTSEM 2021 Göttingen/online.

An introductory chapter will be included, where I will discuss the authorship of Jubilees (redactions or not), the relationship between different versions (Hebrew, Latin, Ge’ez, Syriac?, Coptic?) of Jubilees, the debate concerning the term “Rewritten Bible/Scripture, relationship to Qumran and other early Jewish literature and the possible historical situation of the book in the 2nd century BCE.

Summary of the Paper: The Abrahamic Promise (Gen 12:1–3) and Its Reception in the Parallel Sections to Genesis in the Book of Jubilees

God's promise to Abraham in Gen 12:1–3 and elsewhere is important in the reception history of the Abrahamic family history. God's promise and blessings to Abraham play an important role also in the Book of Jubilees. In this paper, I will analyse how the Abrahamic promise is interpreted and expounded upon in those passages which are parallel to Jubilees (excluding the additions). My main focus is in three themes found in Gen 12:1–3: (1) The "seed" or offspring of Abraham; (2) Abraham (or his offspring) having a big reputation/name; (3) Abraham (and his offspring) as a blessing (to others). Also the fourth theme (4) land is implicit in Gen 12:1–3, and more explicit elsewhere (e.g. Gen 13:14–17). Also it will be analysed.

In parallel sections in Jubilees, all the basic promises of (1) blessing, (2) land, (3) seed, and (4) name are retained. The author has quite faithfully rendered God's speeches and promises except in the case of Jub 32 (cf. Gen 35).

There are, however, some slight changes, of which the most relevant ones are those made to the original promise (Jub 12:24), Isaac's blessing of Jacob (Jub 26:24), and God's speech to Jacob (Jub 32:17–19). The author has revealed already in Jub 12:24 that God will have a covenantal relationship with Abraham, Isaac (not Ishmael), Jacob (not Esau), and all Abram's, that is Jacob's, seed. Jub 26:24 makes Isaac's blessing – which originally had no allusions to the Abrahamic promise – into a blessing with which Isaac bestows all the blessings to Jacob, and Jacob only. And in God's speech to Jacob in Bethel, universal hegemony is promised to Jacob and his seed. Thus, these there chapters can be taken as an example how the author has modified the story to delete every possible interpretation that Jacob would not be the rightful heir, the culmination point, and the ultimate goal of the Abrahamic promise.

(1) *Land*. Land is present in every instance it is found also in Genesis. It is, however, widened in Jub 27:11 and 32:18–19. Now, the land includes also Mesopotamia (27:11) and even the whole earth (32:18–19).

(2) *Seed*. As was already mentioned above, the promise of seed is interpreted to mean Jacob, and Jacob only. Moreover, whereas concerning Abraham it is still maintained that he is a father of many nations, and that kings shall come from him (e.g. Jub 15:8), concerning Jacob both instances where that promise is found in Genesis are changed so that it means only Jacob and his seed (27:11; 32:18–19). Moreover it is connected to the promise of land in a way that Jacob's seed shall have hegemony over the whole earth.

(3) *Name.* It is peculiar that the promise of name is not found in Genesis nor in Jubilees much more than in the original promise of Jub 12 // Gen 12. That aspect is though found in additions in Jubilees.

(4) *Blessing*. Concerning the original promise in Jub 12:22–24, the universalistic interpretation that Abram will be a blessing is changed so that he is blessed. The blessing is not elaborated that much elsewhere. The ambiguous "become blessed or wish blessing" remains ambiguous here as well. Other people will become blessed, if they bless Jacob.

NAHUM'S ACROSTIC HYMN IN THE CONTEXT OF ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIAN PLAGUE AMULETS

The acrostic poem within the 'Majestic Hymn to Yahweh' in Nahum 1:2-10 has long perplexed scholars, particularly with regards to why it only seems to contain the beginning of the alphabet. Emendations, transpositions, rearrangements, and complicated formulas have been proposed to explain the curious arrangement of the acrostic poem. Some scholars have found the entire alphabet in Nahum, while the original acrostic as introduced by Delitzsch in 1867 only pertains to Nah 1:3-7. Others yet claim that the latter half of the acrostic was lost in the process of textual transmission. While many solutions have been proposed to the problem, so far the significance of the number seven has been overlooked, the seven couplets of the acrostic seeming to belong to a very particular tradition. This contribution discusses the acrostic hymn in the context of the seven weapons given to Marduk by the plague god Erra in the *Epic of Erra*, likely originating in 'the seven terrors' worn by the monster Huwawa in the text *Gilgamesh and Huwawa A* from Sippar. Texts enumerating these seven weapons were popularized in so-called 'House Blessings', clay tablets containing lines from the Erra Epic placed within houses meant to safeguard their inhabitants against the plague. Such popular texts embodied living traditions among the common people for whom the texts had practical rather than literary interests. Evoking such a popular and powerful blessing at the beginning of the Book of Nahum adds a layer to our understanding of the text whose full significance depends on the historical setting and dating of the book.

NAHUM'S ACROSTIC HYMN IN THE CONTEXT OF ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIAN PLAGUE AMULETS

1. INTRODUCTION

The acrostic poem[1] within the 'Majestic Hymn to Yahweh' in Nahum 1:2–10 has long perplexed scholars.[2] Emendations, transpositions, rearrangements, and complicated formulas have been proposed to explain the curious irregular and seemingly incomplete arrangement of the acrostic poem.[3] Some scholars have found the entire Hebrew alphabet embedded in the first lines of the book, while the original acrostic as introduced by Franz Delitzsch in 1867 only pertains to Nah. 1:3–7.[4] Others yet claim that the latter half of the acrostic was lost in the process of textual transmission, and only the initial half of the once complete poem has been retained.[5] While many solutions have been proposed to explain the problem, thus far the significance of the number seven has been overlooked – the hymnic portion, as it is found in the text, containing seven poetic couplets.

This article discusses the acrostic hymn in the context of the seven weapons given by Marduk to the plague god Erra in the ancient *Epic of Erra*, popular in the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian eras. The concept of these seven weapons likely originates in 'the seven terrors' with which Gilgameš defeated the monster Huwawa, as exemplified by the text *Gilgameš and Huwawa A* from Sippar. However, while many of the seven terrors or weapons seem to match, in the context of the later epic they have clearly taken on a different meaning. The Epic of Erra in which these seven weapons of the plague god were enumerated were popularized in so-called 'House Blessings', clay tablets containing lines from the epic placed within houses. These amulets were meant to safeguard them against the plague.

Such popular texts, several of which have been preserved even to the modern day, embodied living traditions among the common people, for whom they had practical apotropaic rather than purely literary interests. The acrostic hymn of Nahum seems to contain references to texts found on such amulets. Evoking a popular and powerful blessing at the beginning of the Book of Nahum adds a layer to our understanding to the text whose full significance depends on the historical setting and dating of the book.

2. BACKGROUND OF NAHUM'S ACROSTIC POEM

[1] Acrostic refers to poems in which the first letters or syllables of lines, verses or other recurring features of a text spell out words, messages, or the alphabet in sequence. See e.g. G.B. Gray, *The Form of Hebrew Poetry* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1915). The beginning of Nahum features an alphabetic acrostic sequence.

[2] K. Spronk, "The Line-Acrostic in Nahum 1: New Evidence from Ancient Greek Manuscripts and from the Literary Analysis of the Hebrew Text," in R. de Hoop, M. C. A. Korpel & S. E. Porter (eds.), *The Impact of Unit Delimitation on Exegesis* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 228–243, suggests that evidence of an understanding of the acrostic feature of the text is visible already in the Greek manuscripts of Alexandrinus (A) and Marchalianus (Q) from the 5th and 6th centuries, respectively. It is interesting to note that in Marchalianus one of the capital letters is not at the beginning of the line but in the middle, suggesting an early attempt at harmonizing the text.

[3] These are discussed in more detail with references in the following chapter.

[4] F. Delitzsch, *Biblischer Commentar über die Psalmen* (Leipzig: Dürffling und Franke, 1867), 107.

[5] Regarding the textual criticism of Nahum, the manuscripts discovered at Qumran (4QpNah/4Q169, a commentary), Wadi Murabba'at (MurXII, a scroll containing the Minor Prophets), and Nahal Hever (8HevXII gr, a Greek translation of the Minor Prophets) show only minor variations to the text, suggesting that the acrostic feature of the text is not a corruption. See A. Hill & R. Patterson, *Minor Prophets: Hosea through Malachi* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2008), 356.

The text of the Majestic Hymn to Yahweh (with the embedded acrostic poem in *italics*) reads:

1 [1]A prophecy concerning Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.

(1) [2](א) *Yahweh is a jealous and avenging God; Yahweh takes vengeance and is filled with wrath. Yahweh takes vengeance on his foes and vents his wrath against his enemies.*
(2) [3]*Yahweh is slow to anger but great in power; Yahweh will not leave the guilty unpunished.* (ב) *His way is in the whirlwind and the storm, and clouds are the dust of his feet.*
(3) [4](ג) *He rebukes the sea and dries it up; he makes all the rivers run dry.* (ד)[6] *Bashan and Carmel wither and the blossoms of Lebanon fade.*
(4) [5](ה) *The mountains quake before him and the hills melt away.*
(ו) *The earth trembles at his presence, the world and all who live in it.*
(5) [6]*Who can withstand his* (ז) *indignation? Who can endure the heat of his anger?* (ח) *His wrath is poured out like fire; the rocks are shattered before him.*
(6) [7]*Yahweh is* (ט) *good, a refuge in times of trouble.* (י) *He cares for those who seek his protection,*
(7) [8]*But with an overwhelming flood* (כ) *he will make an end of Nineveh;*
He will pursue his foes into the realm of darkness.

[9]Whatever they plot against Yahweh, he will bring to an end; trouble will not come a second time.
[10]They will be entangled among thorns and drunk from their wine; they will be consumed like dry stubble!

Above, the seven couplets consisting of one or two bicola have been numbered with numerals in brackets, whereas the Hebrew alphabet sequence is marked by Hebrew letters in brackets. Note that while seven couplets can be counted, the number of Hebrew letters as traditionally detected in the acrostic (א–כ) is eleven. The letter ז is closer to the beginning of the line in the Hebrew text. Letters א–ח, corresponding to the Hebrew numerals 1–8, seem to describe Yahweh's destructive power. Apart from the א that seems to repeat the same thing in three different ways,[7] the rest of ב–ח forms a fairly regular pattern of one letter of the alphabet per bicolon, enumerating seven examples of Yahweh's destructive power. Letters כ–ט, while certainly following the alphabetic sequence, fall outside of this regular pattern, ט–י offering a complete change of pace from the destructive aspects of Yahweh.[8]

While the text has been dubbed the 'majestic' hymn, it seems to describe Yahweh as an avenger rather than royalty, enumerating the different powers of the divinity to mete out punishment for his enemies. Most of these powers are reminiscent of the theophany of the Storm-god, a staple of many psalms of the Hebrew Bible, as well as other North West Semitic texts.[9] The theophanic character of the acrostic hymn is generally accepted.[10]

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[6] *Dalet* has been the most difficult letter for commentators of the acrostic, as there is no word beginning with the letter between *gimel* and *he*. The word אַמְלֵל appears twice in the verse, and the usual solution is to claim that the first is a corruption of the word דָּלַל with similar meaning for a better synonym parallelism based on the LXX using two different verbs in the Greek translation. See S. J. de Vries, "The Acrostic of Nahum in the Jerusalem Liturgy," *VT* 16/4 (1966), 476-481 (478).

[7] K. Spronk, *Nahum* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1997), 6, noted that the first letters of the bicola in verses 2–3 spell out the Hebrew word אני, 'I am', which is a feature of Mesopotamian line-acrostics, especially in royal texts, spelling out the name of the author following the pronoun. If this is intentional, whether it recalls the Mesopotamian practice or not, it would explain why א is not followed by ב until the second half of the third line. From there on, the first seven acrostic lines follow in a regular pattern. See also W. M. Soll, "Babylonian and Biblical Acrostics," *Bib* 69 (1988), 305–323; K. Spronk, "Jonah, Nahum, and the Book of the Twelve: A Response to Jacob Wöhlre," *JHS* 9/8 (2009), 1–9.

[8] de Vries, "The Acrostic of Nahum," 481 calls it a "parenetic expansion" to the hymn.

[9] R. Müller, "The Origins of YHWH in Light of the Earliest Psalms," in J. van Oorschot & M. Witte (eds.), *The Origins of Yahwism* (BZAW, 384; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2017), 207–238 (211), calls it the "divine epiphany in a thunderstorm".

[10] M. A. Sweeney, "Concerning the Structure and Generic Character of the Book of Nahum," *ZAW* 104 (1992), 364–377 (364). See also K. J. Cathcart, "The Divine Warrior and the War of Yahweh in Nahum," in M. Ward

The acrostic structure of the poem was first pointed out by Delitzsch, who awarded the recognition of the pattern to an otherwise unknown Württemberg pastor named Frohnmeyer.[11] Several different strategies have been taken by scholars in trying to resolve the problem of why there appears to be an alphabetic sequence to the text, but why it is incomplete. While Frohnmeyer and Delitzsch detected the alphabetic sequence only in verses 1–7, already in 1880 Gustav Bickell attempted to find the entire alphabet in the psalm.[12] Julius Wellhausen argued in 1898 that the acrostic can only be demonstrated in verses 2–8, which seems to be the generally accepted span of the acrostic even in modern scholarship,[13] even though periodically new attempts to locate the entire sequence of the alphabet are made.[14] The different solutions to the seeming incompleteness of the acrostic include Thomas Renz's 'broken acrostic' and Michael Floyd's 'chimerical acrostic', the latter rejecting an authorial intent for the acrostic altogether.[15] That the beginning of Nahum does contain an acrostic portion, however, is mostly no longer challenged.[16]

The dating of the acrostic is a similarly fraught issue. Herman Gunkel argued that it was a post-exilic addition to the older prophetic text,[17] where Adam Van der Woude believed it was written during the exile.[18] Duane Christensen dated the acrostic to the time of King Manasseh's rebellion between the years 652–648,[19] and Simon de Vries placed it in the context of the celebration of the overthrow of Assyria.[20] A further but related problem is the relationship between the acrostic psalm and the rest of the Book of Nahum.[21] Some have been reluctant to see the book as more than a collection of prophetic sayings lacking systematization,[22] while others have found order in the prophetic sayings, but still interpret

(ed.), *Biblical Studies in Contemporary Thought* (Somerville, MA: Greeno, Hadden & Co, 1978); R. Mason, *Micah, Nahum and Obadiah* (London: Bloomsbury, 2004), 64–65.

[11] Delitzsch, *Biblische Commentar*, does not mention his first name, but it is possibly in reference to pastor Johann Gottlieb Frohnmeyer (1813–1880), pastor of Kirchenkirnberg, Kirchberg an der Murr and Lienzingen in the region of Württemberg. The idea that Delitzsch gives Frohnmeyer credit for is that the prophet had allowed the sequence of the letters influence the chain of his thought.

[12] G. Bickell, "Die hebräische Metrik," *ZDMG* 34 (1880), 557–563. Bickell reconstructed the couplets in verses 2–10 in order to find the entire alphabetic sequence. His use of the syllabic theory of the Hebrew meter to prove this was challenged by H. Gunkel, "Nahum 1," *ZAW* 11 (1893), 223–244. Gunkel, on the other hand, believed that the acrostic poem spanned verses 1:2–2:3.

[13] J. Wellhausen, *Die Kleinen Propheten übersetzt und erklärt,* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1898).

[14] C. L. Taylor, Jr., *The Interpreter's Bible* (New York, NY: Abingdon, 1954). He writes: "At least it may be said that in the process of transmission what was once an alphabetic hymn has now become seriously corrupted, rearranged, and supplemented.". For a concise history of commentaries on the text, see K. Spronk, "Synchronic and Diachronic Approaches to the Book of Nahum," in J. C. De Moor (ed.), *Synchronic or Diachronic? A Debate on Method in Old Testament Exegesis* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 159–186.

[15] T. Renz, "A Perfectly Broken Acrostic in Nahum 1?," *JHS* 9/23 (2012), 501–527; M. H. Floyd, "A Chimerical Acrostic of Nahum 1:2–10," *JBL* 113/3 (1994), 421–437. Floyd largely accounts the acrostic as a chance occurrence, failing to see the purpose of an incomplete alphabetic sequence. On the incompleteness of the sequence, see William A. Ross, "Text-Critical Question Begging in Nahum 1,2–8: Re-evaluating the Evidence and Arguments," *ZAW* 127 (2015), 459-74.

[16] de Vries, "The Acrostic of Nahum," 476. However, see attempts to dispute the existence of the acrostic in A. Haldar, *Studies in the Book of Nahum* (Uppsala: Lundequistska, 1947); W. A. Meier, *The Book of Nahum* (St Louis, MO: Concordia, 1959); O. Palmer Robertson, *The Books of Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990).

[17] Gunkel, "Nahum 1".

[18] A. S. Van der Woude, "The Book of Nahum: A Letter Written in Exile," *OTS* 20 (1977), 108–126.

[19] D. L. Christensen, "The Acrostic Poem of Nahum Reconsidered," *ZAW* 87/1 (1975), 17–30 (29).

[20] de Vries, "The Acrostic of Nahum," 476.

[21] Sweeney, "Concerning the Structure". See pp. 364–365 for literature discussing the overall structure of Nahum.

[22] R. J. Coggins, *Israel Among the Nations: A Commentary on the Books of Nahum and Obadiah and Esther*

them as comprising of short units likely harking back to prophetic oracles.[23] The book has also been interpreted as forming a complete liturgical composition.[24] This does not necessitate a lost full acrostic, as for example Renz claims that the case for authorial unity of the text is stronger than is commonly acknowledged in spite of the 'broken' acrostic.[25] However, if the original composition did contain only the seeming beginning of an acrostic poem, it requires an explanation.

The acrostic poem in verses 2–8, as generally accepted, has seven couplets of bicola, and since the lines in acrostic psalms begin with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet that were also used in counting,[26] each couplet of the poem would originally have been, in a sense, numbered: 1, 2, 3… However, in its 'broken' form, the numbering is not as easy to detect.[27] The author argues that the number seven is not only significant for the interpretation of the acrostic in the hymn, but that it was purposefully employed in reference to particular texts in the Akkadian literary ambit (Neo-Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian) for a specific purpose – to set the stage of the prophetic book in the genre of city laments, given the overall topic of the fall of Nineveh in the book.[28] Marvin Sweeney suggested that the shared theme of destruction is, in fact, one of the factors demarcating v. 8 as the end of the acrostic.[29] According to Gavin Cox, the purpose of utilizing the motif of the flood in the Book of Amos is to act as a covenant curse to warn the Israel community of treaty violations.[30] He states that accompanying promises with curses was standard legal practice in the ancient world, and that curses were more important

(Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1985), 6–8.

[23] H. Schultz, *Das Buch Nahum: Eine redaktionskritische Untersuchung* (BZAW, 129; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1973); K. Seybold, *Profane Prophetie: Studien zum Buch Nahum* (SBS, 135; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1989).

[24] D. L. Christensen, "The Book of Nahum as Liturgical Composition: A Prosodic Analysis," *JETS* 32 (1989), 159–169. Christensen counts "syntactic-accentual stress units" and "morae" in order to establish that the book consists of a sophisticated composition, establishing 2:11 as the center of the book. He uses this literary quality of the book to argue (p. 168) that the changes to the acrostic hymn are "deliberate alterations on the part of the author and not scribal errors in the transmission of the text". Christensen may be right in his assertion that the book must have been a literary composition due to the wealth of elements that only make sense in a written text. While he does not discuss it, these elements also increase the likelihood of the writer having borrowed from another literary composition.

[25] Renz, "A Perfectly Broken Acrostic," 2. On p. 7 he presents in concise manner the positions taken by different scholars with regards to the nature of the acrostic: the hymn was influenced by the alphabet, the complete alphabet was originally used but was lost in transmission, only a part of an acrostic poem was originally used, the author composed an incomplete acrostic, or the appearance of acrostic features are entirely coincidental. The position taken in this article is that an incomplete acrostic was originally composed by the author with an intent to enumerate items from one to seven only. Cf. also Floyd, Floyd, "A Chimerical Acrostic," 422: "The very idea of an acrostic that spells out only part of something would seem to be a contradiction in terms." His mistake is in thinking that it is the entire alphabetic sequence that the acrostic was meant to convey, rather than a list of seven items.

[26] See e.g. J. R. Skinner, *Key to the Hebrew-Egyptian Mystery in the source of measures originating the British inch and the ancient cubit* (Cincinnati, OH: Robert Clarke & Co, 1875), 7.

[27] Renz, "A Perfectly Broken Acrostic," 7–8, poses the question: "Why would the poet allow the order of the alphabet to exert an influence on a composition without the alphabetic sequence being of any real significance?". It is argued here that it is not the *sequence* of the alphabet that is of significance, it is the enumeration of seven items through the use of the alphabet.

[28] In fact, L. F. Bliese, "A Cryptic Chiastic Acrostic: Finding Meaning from Structure in the Poetry of Nahum," *Journal of Translation and Textlinguistics* 7 (1995), 48–81 (53) argued that the alphabetic sequence stopped short of the letter *nun* ("expected but not realized") because of the theme of Nineveh in the book, serving as a cryptic reference.

[29] Sweeney, "Concerning the Structure," 278.

[30] G. Cox, "The 'Hymn of Amos': An Ancient Flood Narrative," *JSOT* 38/1 (2013) 81–108 (96).

than blessings, which is why curse formulas were longer than formulas for blessing.[31] While Amos and Nahum may both draw from the city lament genre, Nahum's references to city laments seem more particular.[32]

Renz made the observation that the divine name is not used in Nahum in much of the text outside of the acrostic poem, while the name of Nineveh is not mentioned in the acrostic.[33] The acrostic features are evidence of literary sophistication or may alternatively have functioned as mnemonic devices in an oral composition. Renz proposes that the book uses both acrostic and anti-acrostic features in order to create a rhetorical effect of disrupted order. According to Renz:

> Without the acrostic features there would be no poetic communication of the concept of order. Without its irregularities, however, the acrostic might leave a wrong impression, as if the divine order is easily discerned or to be equated with the status quo. Instead the poem conveys a sense of the clash of different political orders and prepares for the celebration of Assyria's oppressive political system later in the book.[34]

However, it is not merely the arrangement of Nahum's acrostic seemingly into seven couplets that makes the text fruitful for comparison with these particular texts in the Akkadian literary ambit, it is the content of the text. In the following, the acrostic of Nahum will first be compared with the recounting of the seven weapons given to Erra for upholding the cosmic order by the god Anu in the Babylonian *Epic of Erra* from the Neo-Assyrian period, and then with the seven weapons given to Gilgameš to defeat the monster Huwawa by the god Utu in the Old Babylonian *Gilgameš and Huwawa A*. It is argued here that these weapons are alluded to in the acrostic hymn as features of Yahweh's power with a two-fold purpose: first, to proclaim Yahweh's awesome and unparalleled power, and second, to invite the protective apotropaic force of the source text upon the community for the use of which the Nahumic text was intended.

3. Erra and Išum: The Seven Weapons of Anu

Nahum's acrostic poem seems to contain several details that are featured in the Babylonian epic of 'Erra and Išum', also known by the name 'Epic of Erra'.[35] Likely originating in the Neo-Assyrian period (8th century) but popular also in the Neo-Babylonian period, the Epic of Erra is broadly contemporary with the prophetic texts of the Hebrew Bible.[36] In fact, the oldest

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[31] Id.

[32] It is interesting to note that the Book of Lamentations also contains an acrostic poem, Lam. 4. See E. Assis, "The Alphabetic Acrostic in the Book of Lamentations," *CBQ* 69/4 (2007), 710–724.

[33] Renz, "A Perfectly Broken Acrostic," 23.

[34] Ibid., 22.

[35] The critical edition of the text is L. Cagni: *L'epopea di Erra* (Studi semitici, 34; Rome: Istituto di studi del Vicino Oriente dell'Università, 1969), published in English as *The Poem of Erra* (Malibu, CA: Undena Publications, 1977). A more recent edition of the text is found in B. R. Foster: *Before the Muses: an Anthology of Akkadian Literature* (University Park, PA: Penn State UP, 2005). Previously Smith, Ebeling, Jensen, King, Ugnad, Zimmern, Oppenheim, Gössmann, Lambert, Reiner, Kienast, and Falkenstein had worked on the text. Erra has been referred to as 'Era' and 'Irra' in previous scholarship and was initially transcribed as 'Dibarra'. See L. W. King, "New fragments of the Dibarra-legends on two Assyrian Plague-tablets," *ZA* 11 (1896), 50–62. On the text criticism of the Epic of Erra, see B. Hruška, "Zur letzten Bearbeitung des Erraepos," *ArOr* 42 (1974), 354–365.

[36] J. Jacobs, "The city lament genre in the ancient Near East," in M. Bacharova, D. Dutsch & A. Suter (eds.), *The fall of cities in the Mediterranean: Commemoration in literature, folk-song, and liturgy* (Cambridge: UP, 2016), 13–35 (20), suggests a date in the Neo-Babylonian period (626–539), but since there are known

exemplars of the text are from Nineveh, whose destruction is a central topic in the Book of Nahum.[37] The epic consists of five tablets, containing the likely didactic story of Erra, the god of pestilence,[38] who wages war in Babylonian cities but is mollified by a lengthy debate between himself and Išum, a minor divinity that functions as Erra's attendant in the story. While c. 700 lines of the 800 lines of the complete poem remain, the missing lines are mostly from the middle of the composition and the first tablet, discussed here, is preserved nearly in full.[39]

In the first tablet of the story, a group called 'the Seven' (^{d}imim.bi, Akk. *Sebetti*) are described at length.[40] They are divine beings but gods, created by the union of the sky-god Anu with the earth. The Seven are weapons that are charged by Anu with certain powers before unleashing them to the world.[41] The seven weapons were given to Erra for the purpose of upholding order in the postdiluvian world (STT 1.16: 31–38),[42] are described in the following:

> He summoned the first to give instruction: "Wherever you come and go, **have no equal** (*maḫira*)!"
> He said to the second: "Burn like **fire** (*girra*)! Blaze like **flame** (*nablu*)!"
> He [commanded] the third: "Look like a **lion** (*lābu*)! Let whoever looks at you be paralyzed with fear!"
> He said to the fourth: "Let a **mountain** (*šadû*) obliterated at the raising of your **fierce arms** (^{giš}tukul.meš)!"
> He said to the fifth: "Blast like the **wind** (im)! Investigate the circumference of the earth!"
> He commissioned the sixth: "Sweep over above and below (like the flood) and spare no one!"
> The seventh he charged with **viperous venom** (*imat bašmi*): "Slay whatever lives!"

With the exception of the reference to a lion, which are mentioned four times in three verses subsequently in Nahum (2:12–14),[43] all of the other weapons of Marduk seem to be referenced at the beginning of the first chapter, in the acrostic hymn.[44] The poetry in the Babylonian epic follows in balanced couplets in a style that is very similar to the couplets found in Nahum.[45]

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copies from the library of Nineveh, this is clearly inaccurate. Nineveh was destroyed in 612 BCE. The range of dates for the composition of the Epic of Erra are from 1000 to 750 BCE.

[37] A. George, "The poem of Erra and Ishum: A Babylonian poet's view of war," in H. Kennedy (ed.), *Warfare and Poetry in the Middle East* (London: I. B. Tauris 2013), 39–71 (57).

[38] According to B. Hruška, "Einige Überlegungen zum Erraepos," *BiOr* 30:1/2 (1973), 3–7 (3), Erra was not originally the god of pestilence but only became one as a result of later Erra-Nergal syncretism. The name Erra signifies 'the burnt' and was according to Hruška originally the god of annihilation through burning. The god's weapon was hunger. Hruška discussed this in the context of the Assyrian military strategy of 'scorched earth', which left their enemies starving.

[39] Ibid., 47.

[40] L. Verderame, "Pleiades in Ancient Mesopotamia," *MAA* 16/4 (2016), 109–117, connected the Seven of the Epic of Erra to the Pleiades, arguing that this group of seven stars had a relation to war and death. Connected to the moon and beginning the list of Mesopotamian constellations at the ecliptic, the Pleiades were among the few celestial bodies that received a cult. See also G. G. G. Reinhold (ed.), *Die Zahl Sieben im Alten Orient: Studien zur Zahlensymbolik in der Bible und ihrer altorientalischen Umwelt* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2008); F. A. M. Wiggermann, "Siebengötter (Sebettu, Sebitti, Sibittu). A. Mesopotamien," in M. P. Streck & al (eds.), *Reallexicon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie* 12 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 459–466; G. Konstantopoulos, *They are Seven: Demons and Mosnters in the Mesopotamian Textual and Artistic Tradition* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan PhD thesis, 2015).

[41] P. Machinist & J. Sasson, "Rest and Violence in the Poem of Erra," *JAOS* 103/1 (1983), 221–226, describe them as "personified weapons".

[42] Also COS 1.113.

[43] On the references to lions in the book, see Johnston, "Nahum's Rhetorical Allusion to the Neo-Assyrian Lion Motif," 287–307.

[44] The fact that the passage in the other versions enumerates the objects would give a reason for the incomplete acrostic in the poem. Traditionally the acrostic has been interpreted as reaching from א-ט, which in Hebrew corresponds to numbers 1–9. The acrostic poem in vv. 2–8 consists of seven verses, however.

[45] George, "The poem of Erra," 49.

The proposed correspondences between the weapons in the epic and how the power of Yahweh as described in Nahum may be illustrated in the following chart:

Erra's weapon	**Yahweh's power**[46]
1. No equal	ז indignation[47]
2. Fire, flame	ח fire[48]
3. Lion, fear	ו trembling, ג rebuke[49]
4. Mountain, fierce arms	ה mountains, hills
5. Wind	ב whirlwind
6. Flood	כ flood
7. Viperous venom	ד Bashan,[50] א venom[51]

The Epic of Erra and the Book of Nahum are roughly contemporary texts, and while it is not the intention of the author to suggest that the author of Nahum had necessarily used the Babylonian epic as his direct source text, it must be acknowledged that the Epic of Erra and the Nahumic text have more correspondences between them than either of them have with the older Gilgameš passage discussed in more detail in the following section. It has also been pointed out that the text of Nahum belies a knowledge of Akkadian terms and traditions, suggesting that the author had been familiar with Mesopotamian writings.[52]

4. Erra, Nahum, and the genre of Sumerian City Laments

The Epic of Erra itself is a relatively late example of Mesopotamian texts borrowing from the Sumerian city lament genre[53] – poetic texts lamenting the destruction of cities – so it would

[46] It is perhaps worth mentioning that many of the words listed here are also among the 13 words shared by Nahum 1 and Micah 7:8–20. See J. D. Nogalski, "The Redactional Shaping of Nahum1 for the Book of the Twelve," in P. D. Davis & D. J. A. Clines (eds.), *Among the Prophets: Language, Images and the Structure of Prophetic Writings* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 193–202. He calls these *Stichwort* or catchwords, forging a connection between the books in the larger composition of the Twelve.

[47] The word זעם means to rage, to be defiant. This is admittedly the weakest parallel.

[48] Note that Hebrew אֵשׁ, fire, is cognate with the name of Išum. On the connection of the name to fire, see D. O. Edzard, "Išum," *Reallexicon der Assyriologie 5* (1976–1980), 213–214; Hruška, "Einige Überlegungen," 5.

[49] The word גער also has the meaning of 'to roar', connected especially to the bellowing of animals. See A. Murtonen, *Hebrew in Its West Semitic Setting: A Comparative Survey of Non-Masoretic Hebrew Dialects and Traditions* (Leiden: Brill, 1990) 139.

[50] On the association of Bashan (cf. the Ugaritic *bṯn* – snake) and the serpent, see R. S. Hendel, "Serpent," in K. Van der Toorn, R. Becking & P. Van der Horst (eds.), *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 1999). 744–747 (744). J. Day, *God's conflict with the dragon and the sea: Echoes of a Canaanite myth in the Old Testament* (Cambridge: UP, 1985), 113–115, had argued against the proposition earlier due to the Hebrew cognate in the form of פתן. However, it seems to be a late Aramaic loan-word in Hebrew (see HALOT 1996, 990). It is not argued here that Bashan has the meaning of serpent in the text, as it is clearly paralleled with another place-name, but that intentional world-play may have been sought in it. Erra's seventh weapon is Akkadian *bašmu*, the venomous viper.

[51] The word חֲמָה has both the meaning of fury and of venom. Bashan seems the better match for Erra's seventh weapon, however.

[52] Renz, "A Perfectly Broken Acrostic," 3. These include the Akkadian name acrostics mentioned previously but also references to Esarhaddon's Succession Treaty, and others. Most of the Akkadian acrostics are dated before the fall of Nineveh.

[53] George, "The poem of Erra," 47. According to Jacobs, "The city lament genre," 20, the Erra epic seems to deviate from the generic norms of the city lament genre while still containing a lament. City laments were written on the topics of the destruction of Ur (LU), Sumer and Ur (LSU), Nippur (NL), Uruk (LW), and Eridu (LE). Only LSU, LU, and NL survive in their entirety. They also share elements with the Curse of Agade and Ur-Namma A. These laments do not feature merely the destruction of their respective cities, but

only make sense for it and Nahum to draw from similar literary traditions, perchance even with similar intent, given the overall topic of the destruction of Nineveh by flood in Nahum.[54] Comparing the city laments with texts of the Hebrew Bible, Chip Dobbs-Allsop writes:

> These historical city laments describe the destruction of particular cities and their important shrines. They attribute the cause of this destruction to the capricious decision of the divine assembly. Once the decision has been made, it is irrevocable. After the chief gods and goddesses abandon their cities and shrines, the poems narrate the onslaught of Enlil's storm, a metaphor for the military attack of the enemy.[55]

While the Epic of Erra is not a flood story *per se*, the flood is referenced in the text multiple times. It is different from the flood accounts in Gilgameš and Atrahasis in that it is the god Marduk that is the cause of the flood the story and not Enlil, as is the case with the other Mesopotamian flood stories.[56]

Selena Wisnom suggested that Erra and Išum does not borrow from the city lament genre in general or as a whole, but from the 'Lament of Sumer and Ur' in particular (or another composition based on it). She notes that while city laments share a general topic, each one treats the same theme in its own way and hence vary both in structure and detail. What is different from the Lament of Sumer and Ur is that its concern is the whole land and not one particular city, which is a feature of the other laments.[57] In Nahum, the focus is on the destruction of one particular city, Nineveh. So far as the author is aware, the Lament of Sumer and Ur has not been compared with the Book of Nahum specifically, although Nahum has been discussed in the context of laments in general.[58] Since Nahum begins with the theophany of the Storm-god and the storm is the agent through which Enlil wreaks havoc in the Lament of Sumer and Ur there are certain similarities between the texts, but the lament does not mention the seven weapons nor does Nahum reference anything in the lament that is not also featured in Erra and Išum. Therefore, it is unlikely that Nahum was directly influenced by the Lament of Sumer and Ur.[59]

John Jacobs, while discussing Sumerian city laments, noted that the 'city', as both an abstract concept and a concrete reality transcending the boundaries of time and space, is the perfect *topos* or *locus* for the "nearly incessant conflicts which have long kept and which

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also clear examples of the restoration of the city.

[54] D. Bodi, *The Book of Ezekiel and the Poem of Erra*. (OBO, 104; Göttingen: Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), 95ff., has also compared this passage to the seven executioners mentioned in Ez. 9:2. While the scene may conceptually draw from the Erra tradition, there is more textual similarity between Nahum and Erra.

[55] F. W. Dobbs-Allsopp, *Weep, O Daughter of Zion: A Study of the City-Lament Genre in the Hebrew Bible* (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Institute Biblico, 1993), 13.

[56] See Y. S. Chen, "The Flood Motif as a Stylistic and Temporal Device in Sumerian Literary Traditions," *JANER* 12 (2012), 158–189.

[57] S. Wisnom, *Weapons of Words: Intertextual Competition in Babylonian Poetry: A study of Anzû, Enūma Eliš, and Erra and Išum* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 221.

[58] E.g. by L. Lanner, *Who Will Lament Her?: The Feminine and the Fantastic in the Book of Nahum* (London: Bloomsbury, 2006), but also in most commentaries. See a list in Spronk, "Synchronic and Diachronic," 160. Other books from the Hebrew Bible have also been compared with the lament genre, e.g. D. L. Petter, *The Book of Ezekiel and Mesopotamian City Laments* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011). It is worth iterating that Ezekiel was compared to Erra and Išum by D. Bodi (see fn. 54). While specific themes between Nahum and Ezekiel have been compared (e.g. in the context of lion motifs by G. H. Johnston, "Nahum's Rhetorical allusions to the Neo-Assyrian Lion Motif", *Bibliotheca Sacra* 158 (2001), 287–307; in the context of Neo-Assyrian treaty curses in B. N. Peterson, *Ezekiel in Context: Ezekiel's Message Understood in Its Historical Setting of Covenant Curses and Ancient Near Eastern Mythological Motifs* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2012), specific verses in commentaries), the connections between the two books seem to contain vast untapped potential for future research.

[59] For the text of the lament, see P. Michalowski, *The Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur* (Mesopotamian Civilizations 2; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1989).

continue to keep" humanity apart, even though it is the ultimate expression of collective and cooperative humanity. He argues that the city is the quintessential embodiment of both creation and destruction, a microcosm of the world.[60] As an archetypal city in ancient literature, Nineveh perhaps more than any other city expresses this dichotomy or anxiety that we attach to the concept of cities. Nineveh was the jewel of the Tigris, as well as being the home-base of the Neo-Assyrian war machine. According to David Vanderhooft, it is only natural that peoples of the endangered periphery reflected and refracted the self-portrait of the imperial capital in their writings.[61]

Copies of the Epic of Erra have also been found at Nineveh,[62] in addition to a number of other sites.[63] The text appears to have been extremely popular during the Neo-Assyrian period. One could speculate that the epic was originally composed in honour of the Neo-Assyrian king Sennacherib, as the fourth tablet describes how Erra discarded his divinity and became human (IV 3) to capture Babylon, even mentioning the opening of the canals to carry off the blood of the fallen Babylonians (IV 35).[64] Regardless, the popularity of the text may be due to the line at the end of the composition (V 54) that states: "The singer who sings its lamentation will not die of the plague!", assuring the reproduction of the text. It is notable that the scribe is specifically motivated to reproduce the work. The very end of the composition (V 56–61) reads:

> The scribe who learns it will escape from the land of the enemy!
> By the instruction of the scholars: where my name is ever spoken, I will grant knowledge.
> In the house where this tablet is set, though Erra may be furious and the Seven may be murderous,
> the sword of destruction/pestilence shall not approach it, but peace will be assured for it.
> May this song last forever and endure for all time!
> May all the lands hear it and praise my might!
> May the people see and extol my name!

These lines may also have motivated the embedding of the elements of the blessing into the prophetic text, as they motivate both the continuous recital of the text and its copying to subsequent generations.

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[60] Jacobs, "The city lament genre," 13.

[61] D. S. Vanderhooft, "Biblical Perspectives on Nineveh and Babylon: Views from the Endangered Periphery," *CSMS Journal* 3 (2008), 83–92 (83).

[62] K.1282, K.2619, K.2755, **K.6506**, K.8341+9136+13332, **K.8571**, K.9956+79-7-8, 18, **K.10023**, **K.13361**, K.16965, K.18534, **Rm II, 328+477+K.16694**, BM 118998, Bu 91-5-9, 174, Bu 91-5-9, 186, Bu 91-5-9, 69+177+225. Currently there are sixteen known tablets containing copies of the epic from Nineveh (from 36 total), containing exemplars of all tablets besides the second. Copies of the first tablet (five in number), containing the description of the seven, are **bolded**. As there are more copies of the first tablet than of any of the other five tablets belonging to the epic, we may conclude that there may have been up to or at least five copies of the epic at the Nineveh libraries. The unpublished PhD dissertation of K. Taylor: *The* Erra Song: *A Religious, Literary, and Comparative Analysis* (Harvard: UP, 2017) was helpful in collecting this information.

[63] Ashur, Babylon, Ur, and Sultantepe according to Bodi, *The Book of Ezekiel*, 52. All in all 36 exemplars of the text is known, making it one of the most popular texts from ancient Mesopotamia. According to Hruška, "Zur letzten Bearbeitung des Erraepos," 355, 14 of the tablets from from Ashur, meaning that Nineveh and Ashur together account for the bulk of the tablets. To say that the text was popular in Assyria is an understatement.

[64] The epic is also largely written in the second person singular, addressed to the god Erra, so when it was read before the king, it would have been easy for the king to imagine that it was written about him and his conquests. Bodi, *The Book of Ezekiel*, 55, notes that the Sutean invasions that are alluded to in the texts went on until the time of Esarhaddon, so either monarch could be indicated.

The agent of destruction in the Sumerian city laments is the flood of Enlil.[65] Enlil was the agent of destruction via flood also in the Gilgamesh and Atrahasis epics. While the flood stories are not city laments in and of themselves, the city lament genre and the Mesopotamian flood stories do contain not only common themes of destruction by flood (which in the case of the city laments are in reference to hostile armies), they also share literary devices and vocabulary.[66] The city laments are older than Atrahasis, dating to the Isin-Larsa period (2000–1750 BCE).[67] According to Ruth Simoons-Vermeer, the Isin period is when the flood became a popular motif.[68] Regarding their origin and motivation, Y. Samuel Chen writes:

> the destruction of the land or cities which the Isin rulers claimed to have restored may be intended to symbolize not so much the collapse of the Ur III dynasty as the negatively perceived rule of the Larsa dynasty, the chief rival of the Isin dynasty, in certain cities such as Nippur. As political rhetoric, these portrayals of catastrophe under the previous regime and restoration by the incumbent polity served to bolster the claims of epoch-making achievements by the Isin rulers, and maybe the competing claims by their rivals as well.[69]

While the composition features elements of the flood story, Eckhart Frahm also discussed the Epic of Erra as a counter-text to the Babylonian creation epic 'Enûma eliš'. Frahm's argument is that the story of an all-powerful Marduk must have been seen as being at odds with reality at a city-state "in decay and stripped of almost all of its former glory", motivating the depiction of the hero of Enûma eliš as not only an impotent god, but almost a villain, the one that brought about the flood. While both stories prominently feature the god Marduk, given the flood thematic it would also make sense to view the story as a counter-text to the Neo-Assyrian flood story,[70] whether in the form of Atrahasis or, more likely given the dating, Gilgameš.[71]

While the flood is referenced in several places in the epic, it does not contain direct quotations from either the Gilgamesh or Atrahasis. Bodi has listed several features in the epic which are transformative in the Epic of Erra with regards to the better known flood stories, including how the flood is presented as the dislocation of the universe where the bond between

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[65] Dobbs-Allsopp, *Weep, O Daughter of Zion*, 57–58. E.g. the Lament for Sumer and Ur 73 states: "Their coming was the flood of Enlil that cannot be withstood".

[66] Chen, "The Flood Motif," 204, suggested that a part of the Gilgamesh flood story (XI, 99–103) echoed the Curse of Agade 74–75, the latter being the older of the two. This part mentions Enki tearing out the sacred mooring pole of the Abzu.

[67] Chen, "The Flood Motif," 200. The earliest evidence of them comes from literary catalogues from the Old Babylonian period (c. 2000–1600 BCE), which records the incipits ('names') of the laments but not their texts. Jacobs, "The city lament genre," 16.

[68] R. E. Simoons-Vermeer, "The Mesopotamian Flood Stories: A Comparisons and Interpretation," *Numen* 21/1 (1974), 17–34 (28).

[69] Chen, "The Flood Motif," 199.

[70] E. Frahm, "Counter-texts, Commentaries, and Adaptations: Politically Motivated Responses to the Babylonian Epic of Creation in Mesopotamia, the Biblical World, and Elsewhere," *Orient* 45 (2010), 3–34. The flood story is older than the Neo-Assyrian period, but it was during the Neo-Assyrian period that the flood story of Atrahasis was attached to the Gilgameš epic likely due to the political programme of the Sargonid rulers that associate the figure of Gilgameš with that of the king.

[71] For the most recent and comprehensive edition of Gilgameš texts, see A. R. George, *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic, Volume I* (Oxford: UP, 2003). The critical edition of Atrahasis is still W. G. Lambert & A. R. Millard, *Atrahasis: The Babylonian Story of the Flood*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), even though several tablets containing portions of the text have been found since. Wisnom, *Weapons of Words*, compares the text of Erra with other popular Mesopotamian compositions which, in addition to Gilgameš and Enûma eliš include Anzu and Lugal-e. She awards the intertextualities between these compositions to competitive strategies of allusions that are borne ultimately from the competition between deities. Since Yahweh, while usually described as the god above all other gods, was also subject to this competition between deities, using a similar competitive strategy of allusion may also have been used by the author of Nahum.

heaven and earth was untied, the shifting of Enlil's role to Marduk, the cause of the flood being the departure of Marduk from his shrine, no flood hero being mentioned, and the sparing of Sippar from the flood. Bodi argues that the text contains the latest stage of the ancient Mesopotamian flood tradition, or a completely different tradition that is unrelated to the better-known ones.[72] It bears noting that while the flooding of Nineveh is a prominent feature of the text of Nahum, it does not appear to have historical precedent.[73] As Nineveh was not destroyed in a flood, it functions as a literary trope and hence may well owe influence to a genre of writing in which flood was frequently found as a destructive agent – the Sumerian city laments.

The flood is a prominent trope shared by Erra and Išüm, Nahum, and the genre of city laments. The weapons, however, are a feature that is not found in the city lament genre. The concept of the seven weapons and the particular weapons that they were was, however, not an original invention of the author or composer of the Epic of Erra. A similar list of terrible things are found in the text *Gilgameš and Huwawa A* from Sippar.

5. The Gilgameš Tradition: Seven Terrors of Huwawa and the Weapons of Utu

What makes this passage of the Epic of Erra particularly interesting with regards to the Nahumic text is that it appears to originate in a version of Gilgameš[74] which, as mentioned, was rewritten in the Neo-Assyrian period to celebrate the Sargonid kings.[75] Even in the flood tablet of the Ninevite Gilgameš there is a passage in which the lion, the wolf, famine, and Erra (plague) are mentioned together (*Gilg*. XI 188–195), as alternatives to destroying mankind via flood. The fact that the name of Erra is invoked in this list suggests a connection between the character of Erra and such lists of calamities on the one hand, and the connection of a list of seven terrible things to Gilgameš traditions, on the other.

It is believed that the standard Babylonian Gilgamesh epic, known by the *incipit ša naqba/ī īmuru* ("He who saw the deep/s"), was composed by a scribe named Sîn-lēqi-unninni during the latter half of the Middle Babylonian period (1600–1155 BCE), and the Neo-Assyrian tablet copies are viewed as a more or less faithful iterations of this composition. Sîn-lēqi-unninni is mentioned as a scribe contemporary to king Gilgamesh in the Uruk List of Kings and Sages (BaMB 2 89/W.20030), which is not evidence of their contemporariness but is evidence of their association in the minds of later scribes. According to Andrew George, Sîn-lēqi-unninni gave the narrative its "final, fixed form". This is based on the colophon of the

[72] Bodi, *The Book of Ezekiel*, 113–114.

[73] See Renz, "A Perfectly Broken Acrostic," 25, and footnotes. A Pinker, "Nahum and the Greek Tradition of Nineveh's Fall," *JHS* 6/8 (2006), 1–16, contains an overview of traditional interpretations of Nahum with regards to the flooding of Nineveh that is reported both in the Biblical and in Greek sources but is missing from the Mesopotamian accounts. In addition to Diodorus, Xenophon's Anabasis (3.4.7) also contains a narrative similar to Diodorus (and, in fact, the description of the locale resembles Layard's (1849) description of Nineveh two thousand years later), but explicitly the text discusses places called Larissa and Mespila. According to Xenophon, the city of Mespila was taken only after the storm god Zeus intervened. Xenophon lived in the 5th century BCE whereas Diodorus lived in the first century BCE, meaning that there is a considerable time gap between the historical events and Diodorus' reporting of them. Neither is considered an accurate historical account. Renz also references archaeological studies at Nineveh not corroborating the accounts of flooding. The Mesopotamian record of the destruction of Nineveh is told in the Fall of Nineveh Chronicle (ABC 3, 43–45, BM 21901), which makes no record of a flood.

[74] As already noted by Hruška, "Einige Überlegungen," 6.

[75] See J. Bach, "Royal literary identity under the Sargonids and the Epic of Gilgameš," in J. Töyräänvuori (ed.), *The Construction of Identity in the Ancient World* (WdO, 50/2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2020), forthcoming.

Neo-Assyrian tablets rather than on any existing texts from the Middle Babylonian period, the assumption being that because the scribe is mentioned in the Neo-Assyrian tablets and the texts contain archaic or archaizing linguistic features, it is a faithful copy of the older text. The Neo-Assyrian Gilgamesh, written on twelve tablets altogether, is the most complete iteration of the myth that has survived.[76]

The standard version of Gilgameš, which consists of twelve tablets recording the adventures of its eponymous semi-divine hero, does also make a reference to seven cloaks or terrors worn by the monster Humbaba, but the text does not elaborate on them.[77] However, there is an older Gilgameš narrative from Sippar codified in the Ur III period which contains a similar episode, the similarity of which to the Epic of Erra has long been recognized. It is from this tradition of the listing of seven awful things, first found in the context of Gilgameš, from which the passage in the Epic of Erra seems to ultimately originate, even if the Ur III text had not been a direct source text used by the later author.[78] The text, *Gilgamesh and Huwawa A* (en-e kur lú-ti-la-šè),[79] is fragmentary, but there is enough to establish similarity.[80] Lines 36–42 read:

> There are seven warriors, sons of the same mother.
> The first, the eldest brother, has **lion**'s (pirig̃) paws and **eagle**'s (hu-rí-in) talons,
> The second is a horned **viper** (muš-šà-tùr)[ ],
> The third is a dragon **snake** (ušum-g̃al)[ ],
> The fourth blazes[81] with **fire** (izi) [ ],
> The fifth is a snake (muš šag̃-kal) (with?)[82] a heart of **darkness** (gi_4)[ ] the foothills (hur- šag̃) [ ],
> The sixth batters the **mountains** (kur) like **floodwater** (a-g̃i$_6$) that destroys all,
> The seven[th] flashes like **lightning** (nim-g̃in$_7$) that no man can deflect.

In the Gilgameš passage, the seven are warriors or heroes (ur.sag̃) that the sun god Utu gives Gilgameš as a gift in exchange for the hero's tears, to aid him in his quest to the Cedar Forest, where he is to battle the monster Huwawa. The correspondences between warriors of Utu, the weapons in the Epic of Erra, and how the power of Yahweh is described in Nahum may be illustrated in the following chart:

Gilgameš's weapon	**Erra's weapon**	**Yahweh's power**
1. Lion, eagle	3. lion, fear	ו trembling, ג rebuke
2. Viper	7. viperous venom	א venom (חֵמָה)

[76] A. George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh: The Babylonian Epic Poem and Other Texts in Akkadian and Sumerian* (London, UK: Allen Lane, 1999).

[77] According to M. G. Kovacs, *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (Stanford, CA: UP, 1989), the Akkadian text mentions cloaks while the Old Babylonian mentions terrors.

[78] Interestingly, in the Epic of Erra (IV 50) Sippar is mentioned as the only city that was spared from the flood because of its preciousness. Bodi, *The Book of Ezekiel*, 115, mentions a similar later Samaritan tradition of Mt. Gerizim having been spared from the flood.

[79] For the text, see George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, 149–161. The original publication with facsimile is in D. O. Edzard, "Gilgamesh und Huwawa A. I. Teil," *ZA* 80 (1990), 165–203; "Gilgamesh und Huwawa A. II. Teil," *ZA* 81 (1991), 165–233. The text is also known by the name *Bilgames and Huwawa*. See also A. R. George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh: A New Translation* (New York: Norton, 1999), 150–166; J. L. Cooley, *Poetic Astronomy in the Ancient Near East: The Reflexes of Celestial Science in Ancient Mesopotamian, Ugaritic and Israelite Narrative* (University Park, PA: Penn State UP, 2013), 89–93.

[80] The text has been discussed e.g. by B. Scherer, *Mythos, Katalog und Prophezeiung: Studien zu den Argoneutika des Apollonios Rhodios* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2006), 64; B. Kahler, "A Four-Legged Creature with Seven Snake-Heads Depicted on a Cylinder Seal of Tell Asmar, Iraq," in G. G. G. Reinhold (ed.), *Die Zahl Sieben im Alten Orient* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2008), 71–75 (73).

[81] The verb šeg̃$_6$ has the meaning of firing pottery or cooking.

[82] The text lacks a preposition.

3. Snake	*Ditto*	ד Bashan
4. Fire	2. fire, flame	ח fire
5. Darkness	5. wind	ב whirlwind, כ darkness
6. Mountains, floodwater	6. flood, 4. mountain	כ flood, ה mountains, hills
7. Lightning	1. no equal	ז indignation[83]

It is both clear that there is no one-to-one correspondence either between the Gilgameš and Erra texts, which have long been connected in research, or between the Nahumic text and either Mesopotamian sequence of the Seven, but also that there is a lot of similarity between them.

It is also easy to see that the later text Erra has modified the sequence, joined items together and separated others, and presented them in an entirely altered context. Nor does the author believe that the intention of the Nahumic author had been to compare Yahweh with either Gilgameš or Erra. The motivation of using this particular constellation of verbal images in the Gilgameš text is likely to enumerate all the calamities that can befall society or civilization. In Sumerian literary catalogues, which list the incipits (first lines) of large numbers of compositions, Gilgameš and Huwawa is grouped together with city laments. This is true especially of the Nibru catalogue, which seems to have had a curricular arrangement.[84] In fact, it may be the theme of the city lament that is the connecting thread between all three texts. Connected to the city lament genre is also the concept of the flood, which is found in all three traditions. The flood is also a feature of Neo-Assyrian treaty curses, of which other references have been found in the text of Nahum.[85]

Treaty curses contain similar imagery to what is found in all three texts pertaining to the seven. Treaty curses in the Hebrew Bible were discussed by Delbert Hillers, who identified among them a flood treaty curse. He writes:

> The treaty-curse which calls for flooding of the infidel's land has close Old Testament parallels in comparisons of a conqueror to a deluge. -- In Esarhaddon's annals, Enlil curses Babylon with a terrible curse, and a flood destroys the city. 'Like a deluge' (*abūbis, abūbaniš*) is a fairly common simile for the onrush of the king in the Assyrian royal inscriptions.[86]

Hillers discussed these treaty curses especially in connection with the doom oracles of the prophets. This provides a motivation for the use of flood traditions in the prophetic writings beyond a simple borrowing from Mesopotamian traditions. The flood as a treaty curse is found twice in Esarhaddon's succession treaty: "[May Adad submerge] your land with a great flood!" (SAA 02 006, 440 vi 13) and "May an irresistible flood come up from the earth and devastate

[83] More accurately lightning is alluded to by the breaking of rocks in v. 6, but the word lightning is not used in the Hebrew text.

[84] J. A. Black, *The Literature of Ancient Sumer* (Oxford: UP, 2016), 301. It is interesting that the literary catalogue lists what is apparently a city lament for an unknown city between two versions of Gilgameš and Huwawa, being versions of Gilgameš that did not yet have the flood story inserted into it. The flood is a central feature of the city lament genre. See Jacobs, "The city lament genre," 17, for the observation, although he does not make the connection.

[85] G. H. Johnston, "Nahum's Rhetorical Allusions to Neo-Assyrian Treaty Curses," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 158 (2001), 415–436. On p. 417 he writes: "Nahum seems to have alluded to the Assyrian treaty curses in his announcements of judgement on Assyria. The Assyrians would not implement their treaty curses against Judah; rather, Yahweh would implement these curses against *them!*" A similar appropriation of the language of Erra and Išum may plausibly have taken place.

[86] D. R. Hillers, *Treaty-Curses and the Old Testament Prophets* (Biblica et Orientalia, 16; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1964), 70–71. See also H. D. Galter, "Apokalypse Krieg: Die Visionen des Kabti-ilani-Marduk," in P. Mauritsch (ed.), *Krieg in den Köpfen* (Graz: UP, 2017), 25, discussing treaty curses in the context of the writings of Kabti-ilāni-Marduk, the author of the Epic of Erra. According to Hruška, "Einige Überlegungen," the Babylonian author had political motivations in writing the text.

you!" (SAA 02 006, 488 vi 70).[87] The flood is also a common feature of Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions that are not discussed in the present article.

If the passage discussed previously, or one similar to it from a later iteration of the Gilgameš epic, was the source of the description of the weapons given to Erra in the Epic of Erra, or the format of naming them in a list, it provides a parallel instance of using a clearly defined but limited portion of a composition both in a later text, and in a different context. This is on par with Mesopotamian literature as a whole. As described by Simo Parpola:

> The Gilgamesh epic and Mesopotamian myths in general were heavily coded texts involving a hidden level of understanding, towards which the reader was guided by means of various esoteric clues (intertextual allusions, puns, riddles, double entendres, ambiguous spellings, and enigmatic words and expressions) interspersed in the text. These clues were meant to be recognized and understood by readers intelligent and educated enough to do so, while escaping the ignorant and the fool, and unravelling textual secrets was considered tantamount to highest wisdom.[88]

While the Hebrew prophets are not the same as Mesopotamian court scribes, similar techniques may still have been employed by them.

Regardless, whether this list of seven awful things originated in this Gilgameš text from the Old Babylonian period, had been borrowed to the Gilgameš text from some other even older composition that has not survived to the modern age, or whether the list was transmitted independently and was attached to several different texts over the years, in the later times the list of seven awful things is found in a very particular, practical context: plague amulets.

6. Plague Amulets and House Blessings

Erica Reiner discussed the use of the Epic of Erra in tablets of amulet shape, which she called 'House Blessings'.[89] The Epic of Erra is the best-known example of text being employed in such tablets, as a prophylactic against the plague. These amulets could either be worn by an individual or were hung inside houses, their purpose being to invite blessing to the house.[90] The epilogue of the epic contains an apotropaic function, an assurance from the author that the presence of the text in the house safeguards against the plague, Erra.[91] Amulets were also sometimes buried in the foundations of homes and other buildings.[92] According to Reiner, such

[87] The same lines are also found in the Tell Tayinat version of the same treaty, published as SAA 02 15. Johnston, "Nahum's Rhetorical Allusions to Neo-Assyrian Treaty Curses," 423, lists darkness, flood and drying up of water sources among the stock curses in the treaty curse genre. The list of seven terrible things predates Neo-Assyrian treaty curses, but it is not impossible for the list in Erra and Išum to have alluded to treaty curse violations, and the Nahumic texts even more so. Johnston points out that curses were a feature already of Old Babylonian texts.

[88] S. Parpola, "Mount Nisir and the Foundations of the Assyrian Church," in S. Gaspa & al (eds.), *From Source to History* (Münster: Ugaarit-Verlag, 2014), 470–471.

[89] E. Reiner, "Plague Amulets and House Blessings," *JNES* 19/2 (1960), 148–155. See also J. Marquès-Rivière, *Amulettes, Talismans et Pantacles dans les Traditions Orientales et Occidentales* (Paris: Payot, 1972).

[90] For publications of the tablets, see E. F. Weidner, "Die Keilschrifttexte vom Tell Halaf. 1. Das Archiv des Mannu-ki-Aššur," in J. Friedrich, G. R. Meyer, A. Ungnad & E. F. Weidner (eds.), *Die Inschriften vom Tell Halaf: Keilschrifttexte und aramäische Urkunden aus einer assyrischen Provinzhauptstader* (BAfO 6; Osnabrück: Biblio-Verlag, 1967), 8–46 (46); S. Maul, *Zukunftsbewältigung. Eine Untersuchung altorientalischen Denkens anhand der babylonisch-assyrischen Löserituale (Namburbi)*. (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Abteilung Baghdad; Baghdader Forschungen 18; Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern, 1994), 179.

[91] George, "The poem of Erra," 65.

[92] Marquès-Rivière, *Amulettes, Talismans et Pantacles*, 89–83.

amulets were meant to protect the inhabitants against plague specifically. The amulets could either contain a condensed version of the epic or parts of it, usually from tablets III or V.[93]

Reiner suggested that the epic was especially suited for the purpose due to the combination of its protagonists, Marduk, Erra, and Išum. Marduk was the patron god of magic, Erra was the lord of the plague, and Išum was the night watchman. According to Reiner, Išum was believed to prowl the streets at night and upon seeing this type of amulet suspended at a gate to mark the house as one that the plague should pass by, he would leave the house alone. She also connected this belief with the famous story in Ex. 12:22–23, in which Moses orders for the mixture of hyssop and lamb's blood to be spread on the doorframes of the Israelite houses so that the final plague would pass them by.[94]

Two copies of the Nineveh recension of Erra served as such amulets.[95] The text is found in the characteristic amulet shape and containing a piercing from which the amulet was meant to be hanged, ostensibly inside the house. One of the amulets even contained a part of the copper pin with which it had once been hung.[96] Since King's discussion on the tablets is significant for the entire thesis of this article, it is quoted at length:

> It is hard to decide whether this practical use of the legend was an ancient custom in Babylonia or of recent Assyrian growth. It may possibly be urged that after the legends had been arranged and collected by the scribes of Ashurbanipal they were employed in this manner by his command; it appears to me however to be more probably that we may see in these two tablets a survival of a time long previous to the essentially literary age of the later Assyrian empire. While the nation was still young the stories and traditions of her gods and heroes were the property, and in great part the product, of the common people, and not the exclusive possession of a priestly class. The stories were not preserved on carefully arranged and numbered tablets stories in the royal library, but were a living tradition among the peasants of the land, for whom they had a practical rather than a literary interest. If a man, for instance, wished to escape the ravages of the plague-god, he must know the story of his exploits and the manner in which his wrath was turned aside; and further by hanging up his house a tablet inscribed with a hymn in praise of the god he would procure for his household complete immunity from the disease.[97]

This apotropaic function of the text was not a secondary development but according to Hruška had been intended by the author, Kabti-ilāni-Marduk, as the text's veritable *Sitz im Leben*.[98] Such a practice among common folk may be the reason such texts travelled also to the Levant, and their quotation in the prophetic texts of the Hebrew Bible may have been motivated by their familiarity by the population, by the audience of the prophetic texts.[99] Amulets containing blessings are also not unparalleled in the archaeological record of Palestine. Yehudah Cohn discussed the Mesopotamian plague amulets in connection with the silver amulets found at a Jerusalem burial site dated to the 5th century BCE, being roughly contemporary to the Nahumic

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[93] Reiner, "Plague Amulets", 148.

[94] Ibid., 150. Also discussed by Hruška, "Zur letzten Bearbeitung des Erraepos," 356–357.

[95] Bu. 91-5-9, 174; 186, published by King, "New fragments of the Dibarra-legends". Further examples of such amulets have been found elsewhere, like BM 118998, published by Reiner. "Plague Amulets". KAR 169 contains a similar amulet, beating the text of the entire usually five-tablet epic. The tablet K.5984 from Nineveh is an amulet which does not contain a quotation from the epic but does contain an invocation mentioning the names of Marduk, Erra and Išum, clearly belonging to the same tradition.

[96] Reiner, "Plague Amulets," 148.

[97] King, "New fragments of the Dibarra-legends," 62.

[98] Hruška, "Zur letzten Bearbeitung des Erraepos," 357.

[99] J. Finn, *Much Ado about Marduk: Questioning Discourses of Royalty in First Millennium Mesopotamian Literature* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2017), 82, points out an edict of Ashurbanipal (CT 22:1) ordering the governor of Borsippa to relinquish exorcistic lore, spells, and amulets to be included in the library of Nineveh. These confiscated texts were, according to the edict, thought to be "good for kingship". Such amulets, then, may have believed to have been protective also of the king. Their use as protective magic for the people of Israel by the prophet is well within reason.

and Erra texts. He suggested that such amulets are precursors to modern tefillin, being phylacteries containing scrolls inscribed with verses of the Torah.[100] These silver amulets from Ketef Hinnom contained a text parallel to the Priestly Blessing of Num. 6:23–27.[101]

While plague amulets containing specific quotations from the Epic of Erra have not yet been found from the area of ancient Palestine, a Neo-Assyrian Lamashtu plaque containing a drilled hole for hanging has been found from the area of the Shephelah. The Judean plaque contains cuneiform writing and also mentions the name of Marduk in the text; a central figure in the plague amulets.[102] The Lamashtu plaque is significant, as Mesopotamian Lamashtu plaques occasionally also depict the Seven.[103] Christopher Faraone also compared the Neo-Assyrian plague amulets to Yahweh's instructions in Deuteronomy 6:4–9, stipulating that the people of Israel not only repeat the Shema at morning and night, but to inscribe it on doorposts and gates, and to tie the commandments as symbols on their hands and their foreheads.[104]

Nahum may not even be the only prophetic book in the Hebrew Bible to have made use of the text of the seven terrible things. Bodi discussed the Epic of Erra also in connection with the Book of Ezekiel.[105] According to him, the text enjoyed extraordinary fame in the ancient world, as unaltered editions of the epic were diffused with "exceptional rapidity over a wide geographical area." It may have been even more popular than the Gilgameš epic in the first millennium BCE.[106] Brian Peterson even suggested that the plague amulets were the means that Ezekiel accessed the texts of the Epic of Erra.[107] However, while Ezekiel may mention the seven weapons in passing, Nahum actually seems to list them and transform them into aspects of the power of Yahweh. Should the seven weapons of the plague god have been a common trope in ancient Israel, it adds a layer of intentional world-play to the beginning of Nahum's first chapter.

7. Conclusions

The acrostic hymn of Nahum has posed a number of questions ever since the alphabetic sequence at the beginning of the book was first discovered. Solutions to the incompleteness of the acrostic have ranged from rearranging verses, trying to find alphabetic letters through complicated heuristics to claims that only the first part of the originally complete alphabetic sequence has been preserved in the text. All things considered, Nahum appears to be a literary text. There is also an argument to be made for the unity of the text. The partial acrostic in the beginning of the text may therefore have been inserted for a reason. Given the wealth of Neo-

[100] G. Barkay & al, "The Amulets from Ketef Hinnom: A New Edition and Evaluation," *BASOR* 334 (2004), 41–71; A. Berlejung, "Ein Programm Fürs Leben: Theologisches Wort und Anthropologischer Ort der Silberamulette Von Ketef Hinnom," *ZAW* 120/2 (2008), 204–230; Y. B. Cohn, *Tangled up in Text: Tefillin and the Ancient World* (Providence, RI: Brown Judaic Studies, 2008) 19; N. Na'aman, "A New Appraisal of the Silver Amulets from Ketef Hinnom," *IEJ* 61/2 (2011), 184–195.

[101] A. Yardeni, "Remarks on the Priestly Blessing on Two Ancient Amulets from Jerusalem," *VT* 41/2 (1991), 176–185. In addition, they have been compared with Ex. 20:6, Deut 5:10, 7:9, Neh. 1:5 and Dan. 9:4.

[102] M. Cogan, "A Lamashtu plaque from the Judean Shephelah," *IEJ* 45/2–3 (1995), 155–161. Lamashtu plaques were apotropaic and meant to protect against demons.

[103] S. H. Langdon, *Mythology of All Races, Vol. V: Semitic* (Boston, MA: Archaeological Institute of America, 1931), 370–371, mentions two such plaques, one of which is depicted in fig. 100.

[104] C. A. Faraone, *The Transformation of Greek Amulets in Roman Imperial Times* (Philadelphia, PA: Penn State UP, 2018), 231.

[105] Bodi, *The Book of Ezekiel*.

[106] Ibid., 512.

[107] Peterson, *Ezekiel in Context*, 149.

Assyrian influences in the text, the reason may have been to emulate Akkadian name and line acrostics. But it is not merely the form that has been influenced by Akkadian literature, it is also the contents.

Elements such as fire, wind, and flood may be seen as typical "destruction patterns" in Mesopotamian literature, but it is the structural element of their enumeration that seems curious in the context. This article advances the argument that the acrostic has been preserved in full and that there is a reason for the acrostic to feature only seven poetic couplets: counting items from one to seven. Seven is a significant number in both in the ancient world at large and in the Hebrew Bible in particular. It is suggested here that the reason for finding the number seven in the acrostic hymn of Nahum is in the Sebettu, the seven weapons of the divine warrior Erra as described in the Babylonian Epic of Erra, as what the text of the acrostic seems to enumerate are the awesome powers of Yahweh as the avenging Storm-god.

The plausibly acrostic poem at the beginning of the book of Nahum is not a perfect textual parallel for either the text describing the seven weapons given by Anu to Erra in the Epic of Erra or the terrors given by Utu to Gilgameš in Gilgameš and Huwawa A. But neither is the Erra text a perfect textual parallel to the older Gilgameš text, which has not hindered scholars from appreciating the connection between them, in spite of the different composition and arrangement of the seven listed items, or the different context of the surrounding narrative in which the sub-genre of the list of the seven has been inserted. Likely the list of the seven is not an original invention of the author of Gilgameš and Huwawa A, either. But there is something similar in the listing of seven terrible things to inflict violence with that resonates in the texts. One can of course argue that the number seven is not significant to the Nahumic text and hence it bears no similarity to these Mesopotamian lists, even though it was the numbers from one to seven that were originally detected in the acrostic, before further attempts were made to locate more of the alphabet in the text. The existence of these lists of seven terrible things gives meaning to why only the beginning of the alphabet would be found in the acrostic without a need for reconstructing or rearranging the text beyond recognition.

When ever discussion turns to possible influences between texts, the method and means of transmission plays an integral part. The Epic of Erra was an exceptionally popular text in the ancient world, the text containing a self-fulfilling mechanism assuring its continual duplication: everyone copying the text would be spared from calamity. The medium through which the text was transmitted among the non-scholarly elite population was in plague amulets, which were an easy and practical way of reproducing short and self-contained portions of the epic, like the sequences containing the description of the seven weapons. While thus far no plague amulets have been found in the area of ancient Israel, it is not beyond the imagining that such or similar tablets might one day be unearthed there. Written in cuneiform, the amulets would likely also not have been readable for everybody in the area even if they had been used. However, amulets can certainly be used by people that are unable to personally read them, and the contents of the amulets may still be known to their users. Amulets were certainly sold and used with texts that their clients did not necessarily know. The text itself is a mere record of the contents that are created between the maker of the amulet and its user. The plague amulets offer a plausible means of transmission for at least portions of the Epic of Erra to ancient Israel, where the story may have been well-known by the population or by selected portions of it, the literati that wrote prophetic texts definitely among them.

But does reference to the list of seven terrible things in Mesopotamian texts help explain the acrostic in Nahum? An opaque reference to the Epic of Erra in the prophetic text would

have served to enhance the prophet's message. The Epic of Erra was likely the most famous text of its age to offer subtle political criticism of the Neo-Assyrian empire using Neo-Assyrian hegemonic stories like the flood story in Gilgameš and Atrahasis, which had been used by imperial scribes to enhance the power of the king, and possibly for the king's erudition. The Mesopotamian flood story and the Epic of Erra borrow from the tradition of Sumerian City Laments in which the concept of the flood as a covenant curse, a divine punishment upon the people that have displeased the gods, is first employed. The use of the flood traditions in the Epic of Erra is evidence of the transformative use of both the city lament genre and the Mesopotamian flood story in a context contemporary with the biblical texts. In the destruction of Nineveh via flood, which does not seem to be based on historical events, the author of Nahum is dipping into this established tradition. Typically characterized as a divine warrior hymn, the acrostic is not taken as exclusive to its simultaneous role within a broader city lament for Nineveh. The influence of the genre or broader literary trend of city laments on the Nahumic text seems clear enough in the cultural environment in which it was composed.

It is possible that the parallels between the texts are due to a shared literary environment that shared certain tropes or motifs. However, the image of the flood is powerful and using it evokes compelling emotions in readers. Rendering the destruction of Nineveh as the result of a covenant curse suffered by the Neo-Assyrian king is to serve this oppressive empire poetic justice.[108] This is also why it would make sense for the author to have armed Yahweh with the seven weapons with which Erra ravaged the land. In doing so, the author not only referenced a popular text that was likely known by at least some of the readers, not only portrayed his god as a powerful avenger and the destruction of Nineveh as a tragedy of the highest order, but also invited protection against calamity for his own people by reproducing the text of the epic. Employing the Epic of Erra in the acrostic hymn at the beginning of the Book of Nahum has a protective and apotropaic function, and regardless of where in the first millennium BCE we date the text, the uncertain and unstable political climate and the oppressive empires vying for the control of the area of ancient Palestine would have made such protection highly desirable. If using a portion of the Epic of Erra in the text of Nahum would also have helped assure the preservation and copying of the text for future generations, it would only have been a bonus. The acrostic hymn at the beginning of Nahum was intended as a shield to protect its readers.

[108] Poetic justice was also mentioned by Johnston, "Nahum's Rhetorical Allusions to Neo-Assyrian Treaty Curses," 435, as the primary purpose of Nahum's use of treaty curse language. He writes: "The Hebrew prophets frequently emphasized the theme of poetic justice when they described Yahweh's judgement. They used a variety of rhetorical techniques and stylistic devices to create a literary correspondence between sin and judgement. When the correspondence between a sin and its judgement would not be readily obvious to empirical observation of the historical events, they made the correspondence explicit through literary devices". Allusions to Erra's seven weapons seems like just such a literary device.

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The exclusive monotheism as one key indicator of the change from non-biblical to biblical Judaism in the Egyptian Diaspora

-

a historical turning point late in the 2nd/1st Century B.C.?

"Spezifika der jüdischen Religion kommen in den Texten praktisch nicht vor: sie lassen sich noch nicht mal auf den Monotheismus festlegen."[1]

This statement can be made with a clear conscience about the Inscriptions from Leontopolis (2nd Century B.C. - 1st Century A.D.) and also corresponds to the general research opinion. But it clearly contradicts the biblical tradition, after that the exclusive monotheism has to be regarded as binding for the Jewish religion at the latest in the post-exilic period. An analysis of this Corpus of Jewish Inscriptions shows not only that the Hellenistic mythology (Hades, Moirai etc.), especially in the metrical inscriptions, is formative, but also that beside monotheism there are no other 'biblical' marker/criteria in the inscriptions, which are identified as typical characteristics of jewish grave-inscriptions as for example: explicit citation/implicit paraphrase of biblical texts; biblical-Jewish symbolism; Theonyms (El, Yhwh/Yahu); witnessing the Torah/the law; elaborate eschatological conceptions etc.[2]

– Nothing in the inscriptions indicates these kinds of biblical-Jewish influences –

How is the relation between these extra-biblical evidence and the radical demands of the biblical tradition to be determined, or how can the striking discrepancy so late be explained?

If you take a look at the history of the 'Judeans' in Egypt, you can see a "religionsgeschichtliche Parallele" to Leontopolis in the non-biblical Jewish military colony of Elephantine (6th - 4th Century B.C.). This is not only based on the fact that both colonies maintained their own Yhwh/Yahu temple even in the post-exilic period. In both colonies there is also a discrepancy between the requirements of the "exclusive monotheism" of the biblical tradition on one hand and the religious practices of the Judeans on the other hand noticeable: see 2nd commandment: "You shall have no other gods besides me. You are not supposed to make an image of a god for yourself, nor any image of what is up in heaven or what is down on earth or what is in the water under the earth." vs. TAD C 3.15; HTAT, 485 etc.: e.g. "Anat-Yahu".

Has anything changed fundamentally in the approximately 200 years that lie between the last evidence from Elephantine and the earliest evidence from Leontopolis? Has the 'religionsgeschichtlicher' background for the interpretation of the Judaism at Leontopolis to be adjusted due to new conditions?

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[1] Ameling, W., Die jüdische Gemeinde von Leontopolis nach den Inschriften, in: Karrer, M./Kraus, W. (Hgg.), Die Septuaginta – Texte, Kontexte, Lebenswelten: Internationale Fachtagung veranstaltet von Septuaginta Deutsch (LXX.D). Wuppertal 20.-23. Juli 2006, WUNT 219, Tübingen 2008, pp. 117-133, here: p. 126.

[2] These characteristics are used in the general research discussion as identification criteria for Jewish inscriptions in the period from the 3rd Century B.C. until the 7th Century A.D. cited. However, as my analyses show, the majority of these indicators can only be regarded as *epigraphic habit* from the 2nd/1st Century B.C. on, they simply do not appear in inscriptions before.

This question is also the main research concern of my dissertation "Leontopolis im Kontext – eine religionsgeschichtliche Fallstudie zur Entwicklung des ‚Judentums' in der ägyptischen Diaspora": Based on a "religionsgeschichtliche Fallstudie" on the colony and temple of Leontopolis (Inscriptions/Josephus/2Makk), the religious-historical development of Judaism in Egypt from the non-biblical, as exemplified in Elephantine, to the biblical in late Alexandria is analysed. One criterion by means of which the "identity change" of the religion of Judaism can be traced is the exclusive monotheism. Further criteria on the basis of which the change has been analyzed in terms of the implementation of the ideals of the biblical tradition in religious practice are: cult centralization (pilgrimage, longing for homecoming, temple tax, festival practice); general legal practice (marriage/mixed marriage, slavery, interest collection); Eschatology and conceptions of the Afterlife; Delimitation- or identity change-processes; Hebraization tendencies/Biblization tendencies.

For this paper, the sources, especially those extra-biblical, will be analysed, on the basis of which the religious-historical development from the non-biblical, polytheistic origins of Judaism to the radical, exclusive monotheism of biblical Judaism can be traced. The thesis is: **The testimony below shows great continuity. The *mainstream* of the Jewish religion remained the original, religious/cultic openness towards other cults and gods in the sense of non-biblical Judaism until the Hasmonean Revolution – the exception being the radical biblical-jewish groups as in Qumran or late Alexandria, who based their religious practice on biblical ideals.**

Israel (Samaria) und Judah:

- 9th Century B.C. Kuntillet Ajrud: HAE, I, p. 47-64.: Yhwh and his Asherah[3] (also iconographic representation)
- Approx. 700 B.C. Khirbet el-Qom: HAE, I, pp. 199-218: Yhwh and his Asherah
- 8th/1 Century onomasticon of the Samaria Ostraka: HAE, I, p. 79ff: Baal as theophoric element next to Yhwh
- From 9th Century on Tell Motza: figurines[4]
- Up to the 6th Century B.C.: Judean-Pillar-Figurines (Astarte/Asherah); Horse-Rider-Figurines (representation of Yhwh)[5]
- Post-exilic Samaria: e.g. "iconographic sources" such as numismatics/seals: Hellenistic gods[6]

[Remnants of the worship of other gods in the biblical texts: e.g. 1Kings 15,13; 2Kings 21,7.23,14; Dtn 32,8ff/adjustment of the onomasticon of the books of Samuel in the 3rd/2nd Century B.C. of names containing 'baal' (2Sam 11,21.23,8)]

Egypt:

- 6th - 4th Century B.C. Elephantine: e.g. TAD C 3.15; HTAT, 485: Anat-Yahu etc.[7]; Female figurines.
- From 3rd Century on Edfu: archaeological finds (Egyptian and Hellenistic mythology)[8]
- 2nd - 1st Century B.C. El-Kanais (Panaion): petroglyphs/votive inscriptions for Pan; JIGRE 121-123.124?)
- 1st Century B.C. "Jewish Names in Pagan Inscriptions": JIGRE 154-156 (Honorific dedication of shrine: Pan etc.)
- 2nd Century B.C. – 1st Century A.D. Leontopolis (inscriptions, Hellenistic mythology: Hades, Pandamator, Chronos, Moirai etc.; archaeological finds: Hellenistic goddess figurines)

[3] For Asherah: HAE II/1, pp. 91-93.

[4] Cf. Kisilevitz, S., Terracotta Figurines from the IIA Temple at Moza, Judah, Les Carnets de L'ACoSt 15 (2016).

[5] Cf. Keel, O./Uehlinger, C., Göttinnen, Götter und Gottessymbole: neue Erkenntnisse zur Religionsgeschichte Kanaans und Israels aufgrund bislang unerschlossener ikonographischer Quellen, Fribourg 2010, here: pp. 370-401.

[6] Cf. Hensel, B., Juda und Samaria: zum Verhältnis zweier nach-exilischer Jahwismen, Tübingen 2016, here: pp. 110f. Wyssmann, P., Vielfältig geprägt. Das spätperserzeitliche Samaria und seiner Münzbilder, OBO 288 (2019), pp. 1-8.215-217.

[7] Honroth, W./Rubensohn, O./Zucker, F., Bericht über die Ausgrabungen auf Elephantine in den Jahren 1906-1908, ZÄS 46 (1910), pp. 14-61, here: pp. 30ff.
Keel/Uehlinger, Göttinnen, pp. 114f.118.445.

[8] Cf. Kerkeslager, A., Jewish Pilgrimage and Jewish Identity in Hellenistic and Early Roman Egypt, in: Frankfurter, D., (Hg.), Pilgrimage and Holy Space in Late Antique Egypt, Leiden 1998, S. 99-225, here: S. 214-222. Michalowski, K., u.a. (Hg.), Fouilles Franco-Polonaises, Rapports I-III: Tell Edfou 1937, 1938, 1939, Kairo 1937, 1938, 1950.

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The exclusive monotheism as one key indicator of the change from non-biblical to biblical Judaism in the Egyptian Diaspora

-

a historical turning point late in the 2nd/1st Century B.C.?

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Abstract

"Spezifika der jüdischen Religion kommen in den Texten praktisch nicht vor: sie lassen sich noch nicht mal auf den Monotheismus festlegen."[1]

This statement can be made with a clear conscience about the Inscriptions from Leontopolis (2nd Century B.C. - 1st Century A.D.) and also corresponds to the general research opinion. But it clearly contradicts the biblical tradition, after that the exclusive monotheism has to be regarded as binding for the Jewish religion at the latest in the post-exilic period. An analysis of this Corpus of Jewish Inscriptions not only shows that the Hellenistic mythology (Hades, Moirai etc.), especially in the metrical inscriptions, is formative, but also that beside monotheism there are no other 'biblical' marker/criteria in the inscriptions, which are identified as typical characteristics of jewish grave-inscriptions as for example: explicit citation/implicit paraphrase of biblical texts; biblical-Jewish symbolism; Theonyms (El, Yhwh/Yahu); witnessing the Torah/the law; elaborate eschatological conceptions etc.[2]

– Nothing in the inscriptions indicates these kinds of biblical-Jewish influences –

How is the relation between these extra-biblical evidence and the radical demands of the biblical tradition to be determined, or how can the striking discrepancy so late be explained?

If you take a look at the history of the 'Judeans' in Egypt, you can see a "religionsgeschichtliche Parallele" to Leontopolis in the non-biblical Jewish military colony of Elephantine (6th - 4th Century B.C.). This is not only based on the fact that both colonies maintained their own Yhwh/Yahu temple even in the post-exilic period. In both colonies there is also a discrepancy between the requirements of the "exclusive monotheism" of the biblical tradition on one hand and the religious practices of the Judeans on the other hand noticeable: see 2nd commandment: "You shall have no other gods besides me. You are not supposed to make an image of a god for yourself, nor any image of what is up in heaven or what is down on earth or what is in the water under the earth." vs. TAD C 3.15; HTAT, 485 etc.: e.g. "Anat-Yahu".

Has anything changed fundamentally in the approximately 200 years that lie between the last evidence from Elephantine and the earliest evidence from Leontopolis? Has the 'religionsgeschichtlicher' background for the interpretation of the Judaism at Leontopolis to be adjusted due to new conditions?

This question is also the main research concern of my dissertation "Leontopolis im Kontext – eine religionsgeschichtliche Fallstudie zur Entwicklung des ‚Judentums' in der ägyptischen Diaspora": Based on a "religionsgeschichtliche Fallstudie" on the colony and temple of Leontopolis (Inscriptions/Josephus/2Makk), the religious-historical development of Judaism in Egypt from the non-biblical, as exemplified in Elephantine, to the biblical in late Alexandria is analysed. One criterion by means of which the "identity change" of the religion of Judaism can be traced is the exclusive monotheism. Further criteria on the basis of which the change has been

[1] Ameling, W., Die jüdische Gemeinde von Leontopolis nach den Inschriften, in: Karrer, M./Kraus, W. (Hgg.), Die Septuaginta – Texte, Kontexte, Lebenswelten: Internationale Fachtagung veranstaltet von Septuaginta Deutsch (LXX.D). Wuppertal 20.-23. Juli 2006, WUNT 219, Tübingen 2008, pp. 117-133, here: p. 126.

[2] These characteristics are used in the general research discussion as identification criteria for Jewish inscriptions in the period from the 3rd Century B.C. until the 7th Century A.D. However, as my analyses show, the majority of these indicators can only be regarded as *epigraphic habit* from the 2nd/1st Century B.C. on, they simply do not appear in inscriptions before.

analyzed in terms of the implementation of the ideals of the biblical tradition in religious practice are: cult centralization (pilgrimage, longing for homecoming, temple tax, festival practice); general legal practice (marriage/mixed marriage, slavery, interest collection); Eschatology and conceptions of the Afterlife; Delimitation- or identity change-processes; Hebraization tendencies/Biblization tendencies.

For this paper, the sources, especially those extra-biblical, will be analysed, on the basis of which the religious-historical development from the non-biblical, polytheistic origins of Judaism to the radical, exclusive monotheism of biblical Judaism can be traced. The thesis is: **The testimony below shows great continuity. The *mainstream* of the Jewish religion remained the original, religious/cultic openness towards other cults and gods in the sense of non-biblical Judaism until the Hasmonean Revolution – the exception being the radical biblical-jewish groups as in Qumran or late Alexandria, who based their religious practice on biblical ideals.**

Israel (Samaria) und Judah:

- 9th Century B.C. Kuntillet Ajrud: HAE, I, p. 47-64.: Yhwh and his Asherah[3] (also iconographic representation)
- Approx. 700 B.C. Khirbet el-Qom: HAE, I, pp. 199-218: Yhwh and his Asherah
- 8th/1 Century onomasticon of the Samaria Ostraka: HAE, I, p. 79ff: Baal as theophoric element next to Yhwh
- From 9th Century on Tell Motza: figurines[4]
- Up to the 6th Century B.C.: Judean-Pillar-Figurines (Astarte/Asherah); Horse-Rider-Figurines (representation of Yhwh)[5]
- Post-exilic Samaria: e.g. "iconographic sources" such as numismatics/seals: Hellenistic gods[6]

[Remnants of the worship of other gods in the biblical texts: e.g. 1Kings 15,13; 2Kings 21,7.23,14; Dtn 32,8ff/adjustment of the onomasticon of the books of Samuel in the 3rd/2nd Century B.C. of names containing 'baal' (2Sam 11,21.23,8)]

Egypt:

- 6th - 4th Century B.C. Elephantine: e.g. TAD C 3.15; HTAT, 485: Anat-Yahu etc.[7]; Female figurines.
- From 3rd Century on Edfu: archaeological finds (Egyptian and Hellenistic mythology)[8]
- 2nd - 1st Century B.C. El-Kanais (Panaion): petroglyphs/votive inscriptions for Pan; JIGRE 121-123.124?)
- 1st Century B.C. „Jewish Names in Pagan Inscriptions": JIGRE 154-156 (Honorific dedication of shrine: Pan etc.)
- 2nd Century B.C. - 1st Century A.D. Leontopolis (inscriptions, Hellenistic mythology: Hades, Pandamator, Chronos, Moirai etc.; archaeological finds: Hellenistic goddess figurines)

[3] For Asherah: HAE II/1, pp. 91-93.

[4] Cf. Kisilevitz, S., Terracotta Figurines from the IIA Temple at Moza, Judah, Les Carnets de L'ACoSt 15 (2016).

[5] Cf. Keel, O./Uehlinger, C., Göttinnen, Götter und Gottessymbole: neue Erkenntnisse zur Religionsgeschichte Kanaans und Israels aufgrund bislang unerschlossener ikonographischer Quellen, Fribourg 2010, here: pp. 370-401.

[6] Cf. Hensel, B., Juda und Samaria: zum Verhältnis zweier nach-exilischer Jahwismen, Tübingen 2016, here: pp. 110f. Wyssmann, P., Vielfältig geprägt. Das spätperserzeitliche Samaria und seiner Münzbilder, OBO 288 (2019), pp. 1-8.215-217.

[7] Honroth, W./Rubensohn, O./Zucker, F., Bericht über die Ausgrabungen auf Elephantine in den Jahren 1906-1908, ZÄS 46 (1910), pp. 14-61, here: pp. 30ff.
Keel/Uehlinger, Göttinnen, pp. 114f.118.445.

[8] Cf. Kerkeslager, A., Jewish Pilgrimage and Jewish Identity in Hellenistic and Early Roman Egypt, in: Frankfurter, D., (Hg.), Pilgrimage and Holy Space in Late Antique Egypt, Leiden 1998, S. 99-225, here: p. 214-222. Michalowski, K., u.a. (Hg.), Fouilles Franco-Polonaises, Rapports I-III: Tell Edfou 1937, 1938, 1939, Kairo 1937, 1938, 1950.

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Preface

The religious-historical development of the non-biblical to biblical Judaism[9] finds, in addition to cult centralization, one of its aims in the "exclusive monotheism" of the biblical tradition, which was supposed to displace the 'polytheistic' origins of "ancient Israel".[10] This monotheism evolved over time to the main specific feature of Jewish identity. The metamorphosis of the religion of Israel and Juda can still be traced in the biblical/parabiblical but especially also in the extra-biblical testimonies. Contrary to the one-sided tendentious biblical narration, there are still 'polytheistic' traits in the religion of Judaism detectable in the post-exilic period, for example in the non-biblical military colony of Elephantine in Egypt (6th - 4th centuries B.C.). But from what time and in which places did exclusive monotheism prevail in the post-exilic period and become formative for public religion and cult? When is the enforcement of the ban on images associated with the commandment of the exclusive monotheism to be proven? These are the main issues/questions of the following religious-historical analysis of the development of Jewish monotheism. They should be answered by revealing *continuities* and *discontinuities* in the religious-historical development of Judaism up to exclusive monotheism. Through this procedure, improper conditions for the interpretation of the extra-biblical sources in the "post-exilic time" can be excluded – such as the assumption of some kind of 'orthodoxy' of Judaism based in Jerusalem (immediately) after the return from exile. For the Jews in Hellenistic times in general, but also especially for Leontopolis in Egypt, the starting point of the religious-historical study of my dissertation,[11] the following question arises: Do the mythological echoes of the inscriptions and in particular the female figurines found in Leontopolis stem solely from a

[9] For these religious-historical differentiation compare the beginnings with De Wette and then especially Wellhausen and the updated remarks by Kratz:
Wellhausen, J., Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels, 6. Aufl. Berlin 1905 (Nachdruck Berlin 2001).
Ders., Israelitische und jüdische Geschichte, 7. Aufl. Berlin 1914 (Nachdruck Berlin 2004).
Kratz, R. G., Historisches und biblisches Israel. Drei Überblicke zum Alten Testament, Tübingen 2013 sowie die 2. erweiterte Auflage 2017.

[10] As religious-historical criteria for the change from non-biblical to biblical Judaism are also examined in my dissertation on the basis of the following indicators (implementation of the ideals of the biblical tradition in religious practice are): cult centralization (pilgrimage, longing for homecoming, temple tax, festival practice); general legal practice (marriage/mixed marriage, slavery, interest collection); Eschatology and conceptions of the Afterlife; Delimitation- or identity change-processes; Hebraization tendencies/Biblization tendencies.

[11] "Leontopolis im Kontext – eine religionsgeschichtliche Fallstudie zur Entwicklung des ‚Judentums' in der ägyptischen Diaspora".

'blind' adaptation to Hellenistic conventions (out of biblical Judaism)? Or do they rather reflect the continuity of an internationally and interculturally influenced religious practice of Judaism from the Babylonian to Persian times, as exemplified in Elephantine in accordance with the early circumstances that can be reconstructed from biblical tradition as well as with certain testimonies, e.g. in Kuntillet ʿAjrud or Khirbet el-Qom, who show a certain openness towards other gods and cults besides Yhwh.

Structure of the paper

In a first step, the biblical tradition[12] is outlined with regard to the development of monotheism (1), because, as already mentioned, a development towards exclusive monotheism can also be demonstrated in the biblical writings themselves. This is followed in a second step by the analysis of the extra-biblical findings (2), which are compiled in the list in my abstract.
The preliminary results (3) of the religious-historical analysis of monotheism from Kuntillet ʿAjrud to Edfu (2), taking into account the biblical tradition (1), then form the basis for the interpretation of the testimonies of Leontopolis (4).

1. The biblical tradition as a witness for the development towards exclusive monotheism

In the biblical tradition itself, the not always linear development to radical, exclusive monotheism can be traced: In texts like Ps 82 and Dtn 32,8f. the polytheistic features of "ancient Israel" can still be recognized.[13] The polytheistic dimension can also be noticed in well-known texts that are now or in popular interpretations predominantly understood as monotheistic, such as the 2nd Commandment (Ex 20,3(ff).Dtn 5,7(ff)) of the Decalogue or the "*Schema Israel*" (Dtn 6,4-5). These texts inherently presuppose the acceptance of the presence of other gods. In certain biblical texts there are special references to the worship of a goddess next to Yhwh, primarily in polemical passages against the idolatry of kings, for example in 1Kings 15,13 (erection of a statue for Asherah) or 2Kings 21,7. The prophetic tradition also condemns the service to Asherah and her 'Kultpfahl' (Jer 17,1-4[14]), presumably presupposing

[12] "Biblical tradition" means here a relatively flexible size of scriptures. In addition to the writings of the Hebrew Bible known to us today, this also includes the writings of the LXX as well as 'parabiblical' writings such as the works of Flavius Josephus.
[13] In addition to these, Weippert also finds 'monolatric' texts in the OT, e.g. Dtn 4,19f., cf. Weippert, M., Jahwe und die anderen Götter, FAT 18 (1997), here: p. 3.
[14] Verses 1-4 are missing in the LXX. According to Frevel, Aschera, pp. 406-422, verses 1-4 are to recognize as 'nachdeuteronomistisches' (post-exilic) "Kompositgebilde", that can refer either to past or current, ongoing Aschera worship. From the comparison with other Aschera references in the prophetic tradition (e.g. Mi 5,13.Isa 27,9) he draws the conclusion that it is a „nachexilischer Rückfall" into the worship of goddesses (p. 519). (Frevel, C., Aschera und der Ausschließlichkeitsanspruch YHWHs.

post-exilic conditions.[15] In addition to Asherah, the "ancient Israelites" under Solomon also worshiped Astarte (1Ki 11,5). King Solomon built temples for different gods (2Ki 23,14). The OT onomasticon, for example, testifies to the importance of Baal.[16] Saul named his sons both after the national god Yhwh 'Jehonatan' and after the god Baal 'Ischbaal'. His grandchild, Jehonatan's son, also bears a name with the theophoric element '-baal.' – his name is Meribaal (2Sam 21,7). But Baal names do not only appear in Saul's family, but also in David's family. One of his sons is called Baal-jada (1Chr 14,7). The onomasticon of the books of Samuelis was therefore even cleared in the late 3rd/early 2nd Century B.C. by a revision of such names that contain the theophore element '-baal'.[17] The LXX translation of these books supports an older tradition that still bears witness to the original. In 2Sam 23,8 for example, witnesses of the LXX tradition, here the "Lucians revision", still reveal the presumably original reading of the name *Ιεβοσθε*, namely *ιεσβααλ*; in 2Sam 11,21^{LXX} *Ιεροβααλ* here the MT offers the correction ירבשת.[18] Baal-jada becomes in 2Sam 5,16 – corresponding to the 'purification' of the onomasticon – „El-jada". R. Müller considers that this tendentious, "post-chronistic correction process" is due to the Hellenization of the Jerusalem temple cult around 167 B.C. as a result of which the cult was consecrated to the Syrian Ba'al Šāmēm.[19] The Baal names can still be found in the Chronicle, which offers parallels to Sam and which originated in the late Persian, probably more early Hellenistic, Period – a tendentious correction as in Sam is not discernible here.

As a first significant religious and cultic break the biblical tradition propagates the reform of Josiah. According to biblical narration, for example, he had the image of the god Asherah erected by his grandfather removed from the Jerusalem temple (2Ki 23,4): „... to bring gout of the temple of the Lord all the articles that were made for Baal, for Asherah, and for all the host of heaven." An increase, a definite break, experienced the development of monotheism with the return from exile – in the Presentation of the 'history' in the biblical tradition.

Beiträge zu literarischen, religionsgeschichtlichen und ikonographischen Aspekten der Ascheradiskussion, V.IRATIII-FRE (1995 = 2014)).
Cf. also: Stipp, H.-J., Das masoretische und alexandrinische Sondergut des Jeremiabuches: Textgeschichtlicher Rang, Eigenarten, Triebkräfte, Freiburg/Göttingen 1994, here: pp. 62f.

[15] 'Asherah' can be understood both personally and to designate the 'Kultpfahl'. In the Old Testament environment, Asherah was worshiped in the form of a 'Kultpfahl'.

[16] See basically on this: Noth, Noth, M., Die israelitischen Personennamen im Rahmen der gemeinsemitischen Namensgebung, Stuttgart 1928, here pp. 119ff. Here especially on the theophoric element of other gods: pp. 114-127.

[17] For the current discussion of this hypothesis see: Müller, R., Das theophore Element „-Baal" zwischen Samuel und Chronik, in: Becker, U./Bezzel, H., Rereading the relecture? The Question of (Post)chronistic Influence in the Latest Redactions of the Books of Samuel, Tübingen 2014, pp. 107-129.

[18] Vgl. Müller, Element, pp. 113ff.

[19] Vgl. Müller, Element, p. 125.
Something similar happened on the Gerizim and apparently experienced little resistance from the local elite. There the temple was dedicated to Zeus (see below). See. For this purpose Kratz, Israel², p. 245. Was this rededication recognized by the people, contrary to biblical tradition, in the sense of the "tradition of the fathers", or at least tolerated?

The exclusive monotheism of the biblical tradition, based in Ex 20,3, renewed in Dtn 6,4 and 28 as well as updated and strengthened for the exilic-post-exilic 'Israel' in Isa 45,4-7 (40-48) and in Neh, finds its climax in the martyr-ideology in 2Makk 6f. In the close context of the Egyptian diaspora at the end of the Hellenistic Period, exclusively monotheistic parabiblical writings that contradict the religious openness of non-biblical Judaism emerged: Joseph and Aseneth and in particular the third book of the Sybillin oracles. The book of wisdom addresses in chap. 13-15 the idolatry and offers an explanation for the origin of image worship and its reprehensibility (SapSal 14,15-22).

2. The extra-biblical Evidence: The long Road to exclusive Monotheism

On the basis of the extra-biblical findings, the following religious-historical development can be traced, which is to be related to the biblical story.[20]

2.1. Pre-exilic period

Since the end of the 9th century B.C. the designation 'Yhwh' as the name of the national-god or soon the main-god in Israel is evidenced by epigraphic finds (blessing formulas on pithoi and wall inscriptions) in the formulation "Yhwh of Samaria" (Kuntillet ʿAjrud).[21] In addition to Kuntillet ʿAjrud, Khirbet el-Qom (approx. 700 BC) is important for Judah[22]. Here the name Yhwh can be found in funerary inscriptions. During this time, the religious symbolism, and therefore the iconography, of both regions was shaped by international, especially Phoenician and Egyptian, religious influences. What is striking is that in both places and in different "contexts of the find", Yhwh, who at this point was presumably already dominant[23] in the "World of Gods" in the Israelite culture[24], is not mentioned alone, but together with "his

[20] For the finds from the Iron Age II with special consideration of the "Anthropomorphic Cult Statuary", C. Uehlinger offers a differentiated starting point to compare the "post-exilic" with the "pre-exilic" conditions of Judaism – from the perspective represented here, the non-biblical with the conditions of biblical Judaism, i.e. the change from the polytheistic, iconic cult of Israel to the exclusive monotheistic, aniconic: Uehlinger, C., Anthropomorphic Cult Statuary in Iron Age Palestine and the Search for Yahweh's Cult Images", in: van der Toorn, K. (Hg), The Image and the Book: Iconic Cults, Aniconism, and the Veneration of the Holy Book in Israel and the Ancient Near East. Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 21. Leuven 1997, pp. 97-156, here: pp. 120ff.

[21] HAE I, pp. 47-64.

[22] HAE, I, pp. 199-218. Z.B.: „Uriyahu, der Reiche, hat dies geschrieben:
Ein Gesegneter ist Uriyahu durch JHWH -
aus seinen Bedrängnissen hat er ihn durch Aschera gerettet.
Durch Onyahu…" (Kom(8):3).

[23] This is also reflected in the onomasticon. But here, too, other gods are still represented in the form of name components. For this see below.

[24] Cf. Schwemer, D., Das hethitische Reichspantheon. Überlegungen zu Struktur und Genese, in: Kratz, R.G./Spieckermann, H., Götterbilder – Gottesbilder – Weltbilder. Polytheismus und Monotheismus in der Welt der Antike. Bd. I: Ägypten, Mesopotamien, Kleinasien, Syrien, Palästina (FAT 2/17), Tübingen 2006, pp. 241–265, here: p. 241 Annot. 1.

Asherah".[25] It has not yet been finally clarified how exactly 'Asherah' can be identified here – but Asherah probably had her place as a female goddess at Yhwh's side[26] (see below Anat-Yahu as Yhwh's partner in Elephantine).[27] In addition to Asherah, the inscriptions contain other gods of the religion of "ancient Israel", such as El or Baal. Also the Samaria-Ostraca from the first half of the 8th Century testify to a similar situation.[28] In the onomasticon of the Northern Empire, in addition to the names containing Yhwh: Gaddiyau (Ostr. 2 etc.); Yaunatan (Ostr. 45); Abdiyau (Ostr. 50) names containing Baal are also represented to a not inconsiderable extent, in accordance with the original conditions set out above, attested by the OT before the "purification of the onomasticon": Ba´ala Son of Elisha (Ostr. 1); Meriba´al und Abiba´al (Ostr. 2); Ba'al Son of Ba´almeoni (Ostr. 27).[29] Thus, the "context of the find" shows that other gods besides Yhwh were accepted in private as well as in public space: this is shown by private blessings on Pithoi in Kuntillet ʿAjrud and public funerary inscriptions of an official character in Khirbet el-Qom as well as the names in public correspondence on the Samaria Ostraka from Samaria City.

For Israel (Samaria) and Judah, figurines of Yhwh and Asherah (Astarte?)[30] are attested in the pre-exilic period up to the 6th century B.C., in addition to the epigraphic evidence. This includes the well-known, so-called "Judean Pillar Figurines" (8th - 6th C., Astarte/Asherah. *See Fig. 1*)[31] and the Horse-Rider-Figurines (representation of Yahweh. *See Fig. 2*)[32], which are primarily in private-houses, but also in graves were found. Near the altar of the temple of Tell-Motza at the foot of the sacrificial table, the archaeologists also discovered such figurines with other cult artefacts, which are commonly classified as votive offerings. The finding-spot or -context is clearly officially cultic here – in contrast to the aforementioned figurines that were found in houses or graves. The Tell-Motza figurines are two human figurines and two Horse-Rider-Figurines (*See Fig. 3*).[33] These figurines were made on site, which has been proven petrographically, however: „The motifs exemplified in the figurines and cultic vessels are drawn

[25] Cf. Keel, O./Uehlinger, C., Göttinnen, Götter und Gottessymbole: neue Erkenntnisse zur Religionsgeschichte Kanaans und Israels aufgrund bislang unerschlossener ikonographischer Quellen, Fribourg 2010, pp. 237-241.244ff; for the inscriptions especially pp. 255-258.259ff.
[26] In the Old Testament environment, this has to be considered normal: in Ugarit 'Atirat as Els wife; Anat as „Schwester-Gattin" Baals. Anat is Els daugther.
[27] Keel/Uehlinger, Göttinnen, pp. 259ff.
[28] Cf. HAE, I, pp. 79ff.
[29] Cf. also: Noth, Personennamen, pp. 114-127. 'Baal' in the Samaria Ostraka: there pp. 119f.
[30] Cf. Keel/Uehlinger, Göttinnen, pp. 370-401.
[31] Cf. Kletter, R., The Judean Pillar Figurines and the Archaeology of Asherah, Oxford 1996.
A distinction between Anat and Astarte as well as Asherah can hardly be made without inscription "in the iconography".
[32] Uehlinger, C., Beyond 'Image Ban' and 'Aniconism': Reconfiguring Ancient Israelite and Early Jewish Religion\s in a Visual and Material Religion Perspective, in Meyer, B./Stordalen, T. (Hgg.), Figuration and Sensation of the Unseen in Judaism, Christianity and Islam: Contested Desires, London 2019, pp. 99-123, here: p. 110.
[33] Cf. Kisilevitz, S., Terracotta Figurines from the IIA Temple at Moza, Judah, Les Carnets de L'ACoSt 15 (2016).

from conventions, some prevailing since the third millennium B.C.E., prevalent in the ancient Near East; including traditions from the Aegean sphere (transmitted especially via Philistia), Phoenicia, North Syria, and possibly Transjordan."[34] The archaeological and epigraphic sources thus attest to the private as well as the public dimension of the veneration of Yhwh, on the one hand, and in particular international, religious-cultic interrelationships and influences on the other. These findings are consistent in their entirety with those reconstructed from the 'early' biblical tradition.

In the portrayal of biblical historiography, there is a "radical break" in the religious practice of Judaism as a result of the return from exile and the implementation of the cultic reforms followed by/initiating "purification-processes".

2.2. Exilic/post-exilic period

Because of this "radical break", the "'no figurines → monotheism' paradigm" by E. Stern is often used as a basis for the analysis of the post-exilic period up to the present day. This implies in simple terms that after returning from exile none of the aforementioned types of figurines can be found in Judah and that the enforcement of the monotheism based on a "Jerusalem Orthodoxy" can be derived from this. This means: According to Stern, when interpreting post-exilic, archaeological and epigraphic sources, a monotheism initiated by Jerusalem (according to biblical historiography) has to be presupposed,[35] which has completely replaced the "pagan cult in Judah"[36], veneration of Yhwh *and* e.g. Asherah.[37]

Izaak J. de Hulster[38] refutes Stern's thesis with reference to the archaeological findings in Jerusalem,[39] but the entire area of Judah.[40]

De Hulster proves that the figures continued to exist even after the period of exile. In contrast, for Stern, e.g. Elephantine, in post-exilic times, is only an exception to the rule: „To sum up: the change from many gods to one god in Judah was established by the Jews in

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[34] Cf. Kisilevitz, Figurines, paragraph 10.

[35] Cf. last: Stern, E., From Many Gods to the One God: The Archaeological Evidence, in: Kratz, R.G./Spieckermann, H., One God - One Cult - One Nation, BZAW 405, Berlin/New York 2010, pp. 395-404. For the ‚break' especially: pp. 401ff.

[36] Stern, Gods, p. 398.

[37] Enquiring Stern´s thesis as a hypothesis to be questioned: Frevel, C.,/Pyschny, K., A „Religious Revolution" in Yehûd? The Material Culture of the Persian Period as test case: Introduction, in: Frevel, C., u.a. (Hg.), A „Religious Revolution" in Yehûd? The Material Culture of the Persian Period as a Test Case, Orbist Biblicus Orientalis 267, Fribourg/Göttingen 2014, pp. 1-22.

[38] De Hulster, Figurines 2017.

[39] De Hulster considers it possible that the figures of the "David-town" found using in the Persian Period (beyond Iron Age II). Cf. De Hulster, Figurines in Achaemenid Period Yehud. Jerusalem's History of Religion and Coroplastics in the Monotheism Debate, Tübingen 2017, pp. 21-59.
In his article „Figurines from Persian period Jerusalem?", ZAW 124 (2012), pp. 73-88 De Hulster problematizes the "gap in findings" in Jerusalem (pp. 83-84). According to him, the extremely limited excavation conditions are problematic, so that a few finds can be of great importance. The 51 figurines found in the Persian stratum from the Shiloh excavation show a continuity with those from the Iron Age.

[40] De Hulster, Figurines 2017, pp. 60-71.

Babylon, and from there it was brought back to Judah."[41] There, in the Egyptian diaspora, – according to Stern – the "pagan customs" were continued.[42]

These two representations by Stern and De Hulster are opposed to each other in an antagonistic way. But the question arises: What is the exception and what is the *mainstream* in post-exilic times, if one leaves the tendentious biblical tradition aside and first of all concentrates on the primary sources and extends the view beyond Jerusalem and Judah also into later times? Is a continuity in De Hulster's sense or a discontinuity in Stern's sense to be assumed?

Beginning with Elephantine, the following analysis will prove the thesis of the continuity of the religious-cultural practices of post-exilic Judah and extend it to Egyptian Diaspora (Edfu/Leontopolis etc.) of the 3rd Century and beyond.

In Elephantine in the *transition to the post-exilic period* in the 6th/5th/4th Centuries B.C. other goddesses or gods besides the main-god Yahu are documented in the religious practice of the Judeans. The collection list TAD C 3.15 clearly testifies to the diversity of the gods: Here, Aschim-Bethel and Anat-Bethel[43] as secondary gods, as well as the main god Yahu, receive 'money' from the Judean military colony.[44] Gods such as Anat-Yahu (TAD B 7.3)[45] or Herem-Bethel (TAD B 7.2) are also mentioned in letters, contracts and oaths.

The authorities in Samaria and Judah obviously had just as little objection to this form of Yhwh veneration as to the building of a new temple in Elephantine. In addition, various female figurines made of terracotta and wood were also found in the Judean quarter of Elephantine.[46] These objects found *in situ* had already been assigned to religious practice by the first excavators. In contrast to Tell-Motza, these figurines were found in private and not in public and cultic space, but this cannot be objected to against their religious character, compared to those mentioned above. With his article "The Forgotten Female Figurines of Elephantine"[47] C. Cornell tried to revive the question of the interpretation of these figurines. However, his contribution did not trigger a sustained research discussion. What is crucial – this will be shown in more detail below – is that there is a continuity between earlier and later times in the finds of predominantly female figurines in Jewish/Judean contexts. At this point, the already

[41] Stern, Gods, p. 402.
[42] Cf. Stern, Gods, p. 401.
[43] Anat-Bethel is also documented in cuneiform documents from the 7th Century. Anat-Bethel probably has a non-Jewish origin. This in turn could also indicate the international influences on Yhwh worship: SAA 02 005. Esarhaddon's Treaty with Baal, King of Tyre (Ash pl. 3+), iv,6-7. SAA 02 006. Esarhaddon's Succession Treaty (VTE), §54A (467).
[44] HTAT, p. 485. On the gods next to Yhwh in Elephantine cf.: Kratz, Israel[2], pp. 193f.
[45] Cf. Noth, Personennamen, pp. 122ff. Anat-Yahu can probably be identified as Yahu's partner.
[46] Honroth, W./Rubensohn, O./Zucker, F., Bericht über die Ausgrabungen auf Elephantine in den Jahren 1906–1908, ZÄS 46 (1910), pp. 14-61, here: pp. 30ff.
[47] Cornell, C., The Forgotten Female Figurines of Elephantine, JANER 18 (2018), pp. 111-132. He had previously addressed the question of cult statues, see: Cornell, C., Cult Statuary in the Judean Temple at Yeb, JSJ 47(2016), pp. 291-309.

mentioned figurine finds from early Palestine as well as those mentioned below from the Judean quarter of Edfu should be pointed out:

The „Abb. 9 Tonrelief: Nackte Frau und nacktes Mädchen in Kapelle“, that was already mentioned in the first excavation report and assigned to Elephantine (*see Fig. 6*) resembles the Early Iron Age finds from Israel and Egypt (*see Fig. 5*).[48] These are identified by Uehlinger and Keel as the “naked goddess” – perhaps as Anat or Astarte;[49] in the excavation report for Elephantine Rubensohn speaks of an “oriental pair of goddesses”.[50] The in the excavation report in “Fig. 10” shown naked female figurine, is referred to as a ‘doll’ or even as a “goddess idol” (Similarity to the Egyptian culture, *see Fig. 7*).[51] Within the framework of iconographic variability, it shows similarities with the “motif of nudity” of the early terracotta figurines found in Palestine; these are also considered to be iconographic depictions of a “naked goddess”.[52] Above all, however, these figurines resemble the “pillar figurines” used in Judah in their motif of the „nackten Darstellung mit üppigen Brüsten“.[53] Whatever the case that this is the representation of a goddess, is obvious.[54] Nothing in the find-context indicates then, that the divine figurines over time have been deliberately destroyed or eliminated. Keel and Uehlinger sum up for Elephantine: „Die Religion der jüdischen Militärkolonisten von *Elephantine* in Oberägypten stellt sich [...] als eine tendenziell ‚synkretistische‘ dar. Sie schließt zwar deutlich an jahwistische El-Traditionen der EZ II C an, hat diese aber offenbar im Austausch mit Kolonisten aus dem phönizischen Raum gerade hinsichtlich der Paredros-Frage präzisiert und neben Jahwe auch eine weibliche Göttin (ʿAnat) anerkannt (s.o. § 120). Sie ist insofern nichts anderes als eine Spielart gemeinlevantinisch-‚spätkanaanäischer‘ Religion, wie

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[48] Honroth, W./Rubensohn, O./Zucker, F., Bericht, pp. 31f.
Cf. Schroer, S., Die Ikonographie Palästinas/Israels und der Alte Orient. Eine Religionsgeschichte in Bildern, Band 4: Die Eisenzeit bis zum Beginn der achämenidischen Herrschaft, Göttingen 2018, here: pp. 68.268ff.
In the inner Egyptian context similar to the representation of a „naked goddess“ in a shrine (5-4th Century), in: BM/Big number E16026; https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/W_1885-1010-29.

[49] Cf. Keel/Uehlinger, Göttinnen, pp. 110.114f.118.

[50] At least in the Hellenistic Period, Astarte and Anat can hardly be distinguished. They even merge into a goddess ‘Atargatis’ (from the 4th Century on). This in turn is repeatedly associated with Aphrodite, even equated with her.

[51] Honroth, W./Rubensohn, O./Zucker, F., Bericht, p. 33.

[52] Uehlinger, C., Anthropomorphic Cult Statuary in Iron Age Palestine and the Search for Yahweh’s Cult Images”, in: van der Toorn, K. (Hg), The Image and the Book: Iconic Cults, Aniconism, and the Veneration of the Holy Book in Israel and the Ancient Near East. Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 21, Leuven 1997, pp. 97-156, here: pp. 120ff.
Cf. also: Keel/Uehlinger, Göttinnen, pp. 226ff. These figurines of a naked goddess were found predominantly in the Philistine-Judean border area.

[53] Cf. Uehlinger, Statuary, pp. 119f.

[54] Cf. Keel/Uehlinger, Göttinnen, pp. 370-390.

sie uns auch in Ḥorvat Qitmit begegnete, d.h. mit einem kleinen Pantheon, an dessen Spitze ein Paar von Gottheiten steht."[55]

Despite the „poor finds" for Palestine at that time, both assume that the residents of Judah from the 6th century on were in continuity with the religious practices of "EZ II C" – thus similar to the conditions in Elephantine.[56]

For EZ III in Judah (post-exilic), however, Keel and Uehlinger follow Stern's „'no figurines → monotheism' paradigm", although they emphasize the lack of research of the „Hinterlassenschaften der EZ III".[57] They postulate based solely on the "biblical evidence" (§ 227) „einen Druck von oben und eine religiöse Kontrolle" – although they themselves rightly restrict the fact that there are no historical, extra-biblical findings for this.[58]
The extra-biblical findings, however, reveal a clear tendency: It is true that only a few figurines that were made in Judah have survived, in particular the production of the typical Judean Horse-Rider-Figurines remains off (De Hulster). However, the Persian Horse-Rider-Figurines[59] (*see Fig. 4*), which can be traced in Mizpah, En Gedi, Jericho or Jerusalem, apparently took over the function of the aforementioned figures well into Iron Age III (see below the continuation of the female figurines beyond the 6th century).[60] They only show the international influence on Judean culture – just as in the following period of Hellenism.[61]

The Persian Horse-Rider-Figurines may also indicate that a confrontation with other gods or goddesses, especially Asherah, in post-exilic times remains highly relevant in the biblical writings or in their editorial levels: As late as the 4th Century, the "chronistische Geschichtsdarstellung" tried to erase all traces especially of other goddesses (and gods) from the "history of Israel and Judah" – almost two centuries later than the "religious control" that began, according to biblical tradition. Astarte, but especially Asherah, were disfigured or

[55] Keel/Uehlinger, Göttinnen, p. 445.
[56] Cf. Keel/Uehlinger, Göttinnen, pp. 445f.
[57] Cf. Keel/Uehlinger, Göttinnen, pp. 450.
[58] The Holiness Code, which originated in the early post-exilic period, still obviously polemicizes against foreign gods (Lev 19,4.26,1), but changes the terminology compared to the pretext. This problematization could also reflect the historical context and not only be interpreted as retrospective. Cf. Frevel, C., Der Eine oder die Vielen?, in: Im Lesen verstehen, Berlin/Boston 2017, pp. 421-450, here: p. 429.
[59] Cf. Keel/Uehlinger, Göttinnen, p. 438.
[60] Also, further use of the earlier figures can not be excluded.
[61] The Persian figurines were probably interpreted similar to the Hellenistic in the following period in terms of their own religious practice. The international influences, of the mainstream of the respective time, on Judaism are its constitutive part. In addition to the identification of Yhwh e.g. with Zeus in particular or presumably Astarte/ Asherah /Anat with Aphrodite, this is also evident in the adaptation of the respective prevailing legal practice, e.g. in the documents from Al-Yahudu (Babylonian law), Elephantine papyri (Imperial Aramaic and Egyptian (demotic) legal traditions), "Samaria Papyri" (New Babylonian-Aramaic symbiosis) or the documents from Herakleopolis (everyday Ptolemaic civil justice). Even in the Politeuma of Herakleopolis, a self-governing organization of the Judeans, a pure use of Hellenistic law is attested, there are no "genuinely biblical-Jewish" influences to be found.

concealed by the "chronistische Redaktion" as goddesses next to Yhwh.[62] The chronicle neutralizes the „personale Bedeutungsseite", compared to its originals, to the „kultisch-objekthaften" (cf. 2Ki 21,7: "Idol of Asherah" with 2Chr 33,7: "Idol of idols").[63] The "house of the Astarte" (1Sam 31,10) is changed in 1Chr 10,10 to the "house of their God". Frevel describes the entire process as „Elimination der Göttin." This finding is particularly noticeable insofar as the Chronicle, as shown at the beginning, proceeds far more inconsistently with the "Baal names" than the "postchronistische Redaktion".[64] In the 4th/3rd Century, the worship of other gods besides Yhwh seems to continue to be a problem from the perspective of biblical tradition[65] – but above all the question of a goddess: „Die entscheidende Frage seiner Zeit [des Chronisten] war nicht mehr die allgemeine nach fremden Kulten und Göttern, eigentlich virulent war die nach der Existenz einer Göttin bzw. nach deren Status und Funktion neben Jahwe zumal in den Nachbarregionen ja die Verehrung von Göttinnen weiterhin ganz problemlos fortbestand, ja eine Göttin wie ʿAstarte/Atargatis/Aphrodite in Gaza, Aschkelon und anderen Städten mittlerweile zur Tyche und obersten Stadtgöttin avanciert war und viel bedeutendere Heiligtümer besaß als irgendeiner ihrer männlichen Kollegen."[66]

In accordance with this: Archaeologically, there is evidence of a continuity to the Iron Age IIC period for Palestine with regard to naked female figurines, which, however, like the Persian Horse-Rider-Figurines, are now more internationally influenced: Persian, Egyptian, later especially Greek. These female figurines are dated to the 6th - 5th Century, stone statuettes found even to the 4th century.[67] From then on, the Hellenistic influences dominate – at least that is to be speculated – because from this time onwards a "black hole" can actually be found in the evaluation of archaeological sources in Palestine. According to the „history of the sources", i.e. on an extra-biblical basis, a goddess cult is hardly or not at all analysed for 5th – 3rd Century B.C. Palestine.[68] Many questions remain open at this point.[69]

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[62] Cf. Keel/Uehlinger, Göttinnen, p. 451.

[63] Cf. Frevel, Aschera, p. 525. The LXX is silent on Asherah at both parallel passages.

[64] Ibid.

[65] In the post-exilic polemics against other gods, Adonis- or Osiris-cults are partly in the background, see: Isa 1,29.65,3.66,17. „Garten" or „Gärten" is the code for this. (Frevel, Aschera, p. 301). Frevel considers that these cults could also be associated with a "goddess worship", identified with Isis or Aphrodite in the *Interpretatio Graeca* (Frevel, Aschera, p. 525).

[66] Keel/Uehlinger, Göttinnen, p. 451.

Attempting a Brief Sketch of Identifying the Female "Naked Goddess": Astarte is closely related to Asherah and these in turn have connections to Anat. Astarte can be identified in the Hellenistic with Aphrodite and in Egyptian with Isis or Hathor. All share similar characteristics, they could come from a common type (war-/love-goddess). The figurines of Aphrodite from Cyprus are very similar to those of the Astarte/Aschera from Judah: https://collections.mfa.org/objects/151904 (late 7th Century B.C., Cypriote).

[67] Cf. Frevel, Aschera, pp. 528f. Keel/Uehlinger, Göttinnen, pp. 434-438.

[68] Frevel, Aschera ,p. 522.

[69] Cf. Frevel, Aschera, pp. 930f.

But one basic tendency is obvious: The ongoing biblical polemics in connection with the archaeologically verifiable continuity of the figurines suggests a accordance with the practices of the Judeans of Elephantine – an exilic-post-exilic turnaround can be seen neither with regard to iconography, an enforcement of the ban on images, nor with regard to an enforcement of monotheism. The polytheistic traits of 'Israel' were thus not immediately, completely eradicated either in Judah or in the Diaspora after the exile. Let us take this continuity as the starting point for further analysis.

In opposition to Stern, the "iconographic sources" for the province of Samaria in the post-exilic period also testify to a very similar picture as in pre-exilic Judah/Israel or among the Judeans in Elephantine in post-exilic times.[70] The religious symbolism of Samaria is strongly influenced internationally.[71] In later times Hellenistic complemented the formerly formative Phoenician, Egyptian and Persian influences.[72] This is evidenced by a number of found seals (Siegel) on which Greek gods and goddesses, half-gods and heroes can be seen: Perseus (WD 54), Nike (WD 46), Herakles (WD 11C) sowie Hermes (WD 14).[73] Similar motifs can be found on the coins: According to Wyssmann, the 'Samarian', i.e. regional-minters (Münzherren), 'adapted' and 'modified' (not 'imitated', cf. Wyssmann's introduction) the *international* models. The decisive factor in this adaptation-process is the creative identification of the foreign with one´s own tradition,[74] i.e. the Yhwh cult. Therefore the numismatic depictions of the female goddesses Aphrodite (MQ 036.037.044) or Isis-Hathor (MQ 010) are probably with Astarte/Asherah, those of the male god Zeus-Baal (MQ 013-014.040 etc.) are very likely with Yhwh, the highest regional deity, to identify.[75] A coin of the fourth minting phase (350-332 B.C.) bears an image of Zeus with the inscription of his name on one side, and a theophoric name containing Yhwh – yhwʿnh (MQ 040) on the other side.[76] On the basis of these identifications, Wyssmann summarizes on the influence of biblical norms, in this case the ban of images, which is directly related to the 'Monotheismusgebot', with regard to the numismatics of Samaria: „Die Übernahme von ‚Zeus-Baal' zur Darstellung von Jhwh scheint keinen Restriktionen unterworfen gewesen zu sein. Dies mag verwundern, doch galten solche Münzbilder erst ab dem 2. Jh. v. Chr. als Verstoß gegen das Kultbildverbot."[77] If one also

[70] Cf. Kratz, Israel[2], p. 235.
[71] Cf. Hensel, Samaria, p. 157.
[72] Cf. the new evaluation introducing the numismatics of Samaria: Wyssmann, P., Vielfältig geprägt. Das spätperserzeitliche Samaria und seine Münzbilder, OBO 288 (2019), pp. 1-8.
[73] Cf. Hensel, Samaria, pp. 110f. Wyssmann, Vielfältig, pp. 215-217.
[74] Cf. Wyssmann, Vielfältig, p. 217.
[75] Cf. Wyssmann, Vielfältig, p. 216.
[76] Cf. Wyssmann, Vielfältig, pp. 55.133.139.216.
Lemaire, A., Das Achämenidische Juda und seine Nachbarn im Lichte der Epigraphie in: Kratz, R. G., Religion und Religionskontakte im Zeitalter der Achämeniden (VWGTh 22), Gütersloh 2002, pp. 210-230, here: p. 223.
[77] Wyssmann, Vielfältig, p. 217.

includes the female representations of goddesses, a "violation of the Monotheismusgebot" can also be identified.

In the same way the coins from the province of Judah (Yehud) do not bear witness to a "biblical ban on images" *before* the Hasmonean Period.[78] A break in the iconography of coins can first be observed *in* the Hasmonean era. Subsequently the diverse, international symbolic system disappears or is deliberately left out and largely replaced by floral motifs.[79] As shown the biblical prohibition of images does not seem to have had any demonstrable effect in Judah. Against the "numismatic background" of an exemplary connection between Zeus, i.e. Hellenistic culture, with everyday objects like coins, Kratz furthermore draws the following summary for the Samarian cult: „Die spätere Umwidmung der beiden dem Gott Jhwh geweihten Tempel auf dem Garizim und in Jerusalem in ein Heiligtum für Zeus unter Antiochus IV. fiel jedenfalls in Samaria auf fruchtbaren Boden."[80] Under certain circumstances, this could also be extended to Jerusalem/Judah in particular starting with "De Hulster" and based on the assumption of a continuity of the extra-biblical evidence, a cultural continuum between Samaria and Judah and the ongoing biblical polemics.

2.3. The Egyptian Diaspora

Let us now turn specifically to the Egyptian Diaspora as the 'Nahkontext' of the military colony of Leontopolis: The community of Edfu (Apollonopolis Magna) in the Hellenistic-Roman Period from the middle of the 3rd Century onwards stands in the tradition of the above-mentioned Egyptian forerunner Elephantine (cited above as a witness for the transition from the exilic to the post-exilic period).[81] This community is attested by papyri, epigraphic and archaeological finds.[82] Since the Ptolemaic Period, the Judean inhabitants gathered in a

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A Judean coin from the 4th Century shows an image of Yhwh with the legend YHD and YHW. Cf. Uehlinger, Beyond, pp. 115f (Figure 5.3b).

[78] According to Uehlinger, the figurative representations of Yhwh are still in the 2nd Century B.C. subject of discussion. Cf. Uehlinger, Beyond, p. 120.

[79] Cf. Hensel, Samaria, pp. 127f. On Judah's numismatics, cf.: Wyssmann, P., The Coinage Imagery of Samaria and Judah in the Late Persian Period, in: Frevel, C., u.a. (Hg.), A „Religious Revolution" in Yehûd? The Material Culture of the Persian Period as a Test Case, Orbist Biblicus Orientalis 267, Fribourg/Göttingen 2014, pp. 221-266, here: pp. 242-255.

[80] Kratz, Israel², p. 235.

[81] For the archaeological and epigraphic findings, see the excavation reports: Michalowski, K., u.a. (Hg.), Fouilles Franco-Polonaises, Rapports I-III: Tell Edfou 1937, 1938, 1939, Kairo 1937, 1938, 1950.

[82] Cf. Kerkeslager, Jewish Pilgrimage, pp. 214-222.
Kasher, Jews, pp. 161-167. Kasher supposes a well-organized "Biblical (author´s choice of words) Jewish community". However, Kerkeslager can refute this with justification: Kerkeslager, Jewish Pilgrimage, p. 217, Annot. 406. Kasher derives from the title 'sophos' (CPJ I.139), which is based on an extremely uncertain reconstruction: „that is the Torah teacher of the synagogue" (162). However, this title is for the 1st Century B.C. not proven, the analogies cited by Kasher are all to be dated later. Finally, he reconstructs here from the existing letters *ἐνα...* oder *ἀνα...* the emendation *ἀνα[γνώστης]*. This is said to have acted as a 'translator': „the local Jews were not fluent in Hebrew and required a translator to read and interpret the Torah". But even this title is completely anachronistic, as Kerkeslager rightly notes. The existence of a synagogue, which is said to be documented in the inscription JIGRE 139, is not

quarter on the southern part of the Kom on the western slope. At the latest at the beginning of the Roman Period, one can speak of an exclusively Jewish/Judean quarter (Quartier Juif Greco-Romain. KS= l'extrémité Sud-Ouest du Kôm, maisons juives)[83]. The buildings from the Ptolemaic Period were used in Roman times as a 'cellar'.[84] Analogous to the figurines of the Judean colony of Elephantine, the archaeological finds from the Judean quarter of Edfu have so far been neglected. Besides the excavators of the French expedition, only A. Kerkeslager discusses these finds. The miscellaneous testimonies of the Jewish quarter show a high degree of international influences.[85] However this should not be asserted against the Jewish provenance, as Tcherikover suggested, especially if one compares this fact with the testimonies already discussed and their strongly internationalised character. In contrast to Tcherikover, it can therefore be assumed that the objects found were typical objects of the "Jewish family" (but not in the religious, biblical-Jewish sense), in the sense of continuity with the proven international influences on the 'Jewish' culture and religion. Tcherikover´s statement "no object typical of the Jewish family life was discovered" cannot be considered right.[86] Beside the ostraca of the 1st Century A.D. ithyphallic and erotic figurines were discovered in a heap of debris, which were identified as only typical for the Jewish 'Fundkontext' (Edfou I, cat. 29 is identified by the excavators as Harpokrates).[87] Egyptian and Greek influences are characteristic of the archaeological finds as a whole; with regard to their provenance, they can only be separated from the Egyptian residents by the 'Fundkontext' within Judean houses. Everyday objects, terracottas such as lamps or ceramics, decorate zoomorphic (often horses) or

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tenable either. On the extremely speculative reconstruction of the word 'Proseuxe', see the commentary in JIGRE.
Cf. also: Szántó, Z., The Jews of Ptolemaic Egypt in the Light of the Papyri, Budapest 2016, here: pp. 49ff.

[83] Michalowski, K., u.a. (Hg.), Fouilles Franco-Polonaises, Rapports I-III: Tell Edfou 1937, 1938, 1939, Kairo 1937, 1938, 1950. Für den Ort des jüdischen Quartiers (B. (KS)), cf. the plan: Edfou I, S.21.PLAN No I.III. In general pp. 19-23.

[84] Edfou III, pp. 111-118 (Ptolemaic Period).pp.123ff (Roman Period, 1. C.).pp. 141ff (Roman Period, 2. C.)

[85] The onomasticon of the Judeans, which can be analysed in great detail in the ostraca (tax lists), is particularly informative. No process of delimitation from the environment can be seen here. In each "layer" the names of the following origins are represented: Hebrew or Semitic, Greek, Egyptian and Roman. See CPJ II, p. 116ff. Further ostraca in Aramaic from the 3rd Century B.C.: TAD D 7.55-11.26 as well as two papyri TAD C 3.28.1.17 and nine grave stelae TAD D 21.7-21.16; two bilingual ostraka (salt tax) from the 3rd Century B.C. O. Mattha 134 (Mattha, G., Demotic Ostraka from the Collections at Oxford, Paris, Berlin, Vienna and Cairo (Publications de la Société Fouad I de Papyrologie. Textes et Documents 6), Kairo 1945) = Vienna, Nationalbibliothek D. O. 284 und Vienna, Nationalbibliothek D. O. 129 (Wångstedt, S.V., Demotische Ostraka aus ptolemäisch-römischer Zeit., Orientalia Suecana, 18 (1969)).
Cf. Honigman, Communities, pp. 120ff.
Kornfeld, W., Zu den aramäischen Inschriften aus Edfu, in: Wiener Zeitschrift Für die Kunde des Morgenlandes 71 (1979), pp. 49-52. Based on the dating of the grave stelae to the Persian Period, Kornfeld assumes that a Jewish community already existed at that time.
Cf. also: Kornfeld, W., Jüdisch-aramäische Grabinschriften aus Edfu, AAWW 110 (1973), pp. 123-137.

[86] CPJ II, p. 108.

[87] Edfou III, pp. 125f.

Dionysian motifs. Offering tables appear twice – one shows two vases and the stylized Hotep (Edfou I, cat. 33, Roman Period), on the second two loaves of bread and a libation vessel (34, Greek Period), both of which are typical images/characters of Egyptian Mythology in the Hellenistic Period. If these were perhaps not used 'cultically' by the Judeans, they should at least be aware of the connection to the Egyptian temple or burial cult.[88] Other gods or mythological creatures are shown on the following selected objects: The head of Hathor is depicted on a relief, who in the *Interpretatio Graeca* is equated with Aphrodite (Edfou I, cat. 27, Greek Period). Hathor was worshiped in Edfu as part of the triad of the chief-god Horus. A statuette in the form of a mask or a head of a satyr probably dates from the Ptolemaic Period (229, Ptolem.). Of importance is also a find of fragments of female figurines (Edfou I, cat. 233-236. Roman). Two of these can probably be identified as Isis (235.236) – equated in the *interpretatio graeca* with Demeter, but especially Aphrodite. The representations of Harpocrates (245.246, Roman), which can be recognized on the basis of his specific characteristics, are then more unambiguous. Finally, there is a lamp in the form of the head of Dionysus or Horus-Harpocrates (213, Roman) adorned with a wreath of grapes. Kerkeslager recapitulates regarding the 'Jews' from Edfu, whose community existed between Elephantine and Leontopolis, with reference to the 'Jewish' military colony of Elephantine and its religious profile with regard to a continuity of "non-biblical Judaism" as follows: „The evidence from the Jewish community at Apollonopolis Magna suggests that polytheistic traditions reminiscent of the older practices at Elephantine may have continued well into the Roman Period in some of the Jewish communities in Upper Egypt."[89]

Next to this well-organized community of Edfu the site of El-Kanais was located. There, a so-called 'Paneion', i.e. a temple of Pan (Egyptian Min), existed in Graeco-Roman times.[90] This temple complex is known for its petroglyphs. The variable inscriptions in Greek script testify to travelers who thanked the god Pan and asked him for protection on their further journey. The majority of these inscriptions, which, similar to the inscriptions from Leontopolis, are partly also metric inscriptions, date from the Hellenistic Period. There are just a few that can be dated to the Roman period. Only one part mentions the name of the god 'Pan', others express thanks

[88] See. For Egyptian background: Bolshakov, A.O., Art. „Offering tables", in: Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt II, Oxford 2001, pp. 572-576.
[89] Kerkeslager, Jewish Pilgrimage, p. 218. Whether the term "polytheistic traditions" at this point is aptly for the profile of the two communities remains to be seen, but the continuity is undeniable.
[90] Bernand, A., Le Paneion d'el-Kanaïs: les inscriptions grecques. Leiden 1972.
Stern, K.B., Vandals or Pilgrims? Jews, Travel Culture, Devotional Practice in the Pan Temple of Egyptian El-Kanais, in: Hodge, C.J., u.a. (Hg.), The One Who Sows Bountifully: Essays in Honor of Stanley K. Stowers, Atlanta 2013, pp. 177-188.
Mairs, R., Egyptian 'Inscriptions' and Greek 'Graffiti' at El Kanais (Egyptian Eastern Desert), in: Baird, J./Taylor, C. (Hgg.), Ancient Graffiti in Context, London 2010, pp. 153-164.

to him with the designation of his epithets 'Euodos', 'Euargos', 'Epekoos' or 'Soter',[91] others only contain the name of the traveler/visitor.

Judeans who can be identified either by naming the ethnicon or the typical names, also visited this temple and placed votive inscriptions there (JIGRE 121.122.123.124?) in the 2.-1. Century B.C. – entirely in the style of 'pagan' worship of Pan: „Writing dedicatory graffiti to Pan was a repetitive, self-reproducing practice, reinforced by constant performance. As well as the potential symbolic impact of thanking Pan for one's protection by making a very visible mark on the very landscape one needed to be protected from, making a graffito placed the writer in a long-standing tradition, where the efficacy of appealing to the divine could be proven by the numerous thanks-offerings which surrounded it."[92] The Jewish 'inscriptions' are, in content and form, completely in the tradition of pagan-Greek „Votiv-/Dankes-Inschriften". The naming of the ethnicon is nothing special, peculiar jewish, in the context of the inscriptions.[93] The only difference in content to the other inscriptions is the mention of 'God' or 'for the God'. To derive an exception from this in the sense of a special identification with Yhwh contradicts the broad spectrum of the inscriptions as well as the clear context of the Pan-worship.[94] The attempt to delimit these three inscriptions from their context is probably based on the interpretation of the word *Ἰουδαῖος* in the sense of the biblical-parabiblical tradition/identity and thus in the sense of following the commandment of monotheism. Based on the findings in Edfu in connection with the veneration of Pan in the immediate vicinity, A. Kerkeslager considers it possible that the Judeans also participated in the main cult of Horus-Apollo of Edfu. But this may be quite speculative.[95]

The inscriptions JIGRE 154.155.156 (JIGRE Appendix 3) are also often ignored when it comes to the question of the religiousness of the Judeans in Egypt. These are classified as: "Jewish Names in Pagan Inscriptions"/"Honorific dedication of shrine ".[96] In 154 the name *Ἄβραμ Ἀλωσμαθουτος* is mentioned in the list of names of a dedication-inscription for the temple of the gods "Triphis, Kolanthes, Pan and the other gods". This inscription dating back to 138-137 B.C. comes from Ptolemais. The people listed belonged to a local 'community'. JIGRE 155, the first part of a 'double-inscription', from the period between 80-69 B.C. mentions the builders of the sanctuary for "Apollo, Zeus and the other gods". The builders belonged to the garrison of Hermopolis magna. Col. II,124 contains the Greek name 'Apollodorus' with the patronym 'Zabbdelos', translated from the Hebrew/Semitic (*zbd 'el*

[91] Cf. Stern, Vandals, p. 183. Mairs, Graffiti, p. 159.
[92] Mairs, Graffiti, p. 158.
[93] Cf. Stern, Vandals, p. 180.
[94] Stern, Vandals, pp. 184f.186f. argues that the 'typical' features of the Judean inscriptions are too clearly delimited from the other inscriptions. In the same way in: Stern, K.B., Writing on the Wall. Graffiti and the forgotten Jews of Antiquity, Princeton 2018, here: pp. 61-66.
See the variability of Greek inscriptions: Mairs, Graffiti, pp. 155f.
[95] Cf. Kerkeslager, Jewish Pilgrimage, p. 218.
[96] JIGRE, pp. 246-250.

"God gave"). Apollodoros, for example, can be verified with relative certainty as a 'Jewish' name by comparison with the P.Polit.Iud.[97] In the closer context of the inscription there are other typical Greek names of the Judeans in the Egyptian diaspora: for example Dositheos, Ptolemaios, Dorotheos, Theodoros etc. The second part of this double-inscription, JIGRE 156, from the year 78 B.C., lists other builders of the temple: On the one hand, names that have a Hebrew equivalent, such as Aggion (Haggai) or Barakos (Baruch); on the other hand theophoric names like Theodoros or Theodotos. F. Zucker, the first-editor of this inscription, gives 19 other names (name of the son and / or name of the father) in which he suspects a Semitic origin.[98]

To reduce the participation of Judeans in pagan cults solely to a social 'compulsion' or 'pressure' appears to be too short in view of the continuities described above in the 'open' worship of Israel and Judah (see JIGRE in the commentary on inscription 155): „The fact that they took part in collective dedications to pagan gods, perhaps with little choice in the matter, need not exclude the possibility that they still considered themselves to be Jews."[99]

3. Preliminary results

An openness to international/intercultural influences on the Yhwh religion in Samaria, Judah[100] and the Egyptian diaspora up to the 2nd Century B.C., and partly beyond it, should have become evident after the preceding analyses of the biblical and extra-biblical findings.

At the same time, it should be emphasized that with reference to the archaeological and epigraphic sources, a "religious revolution" in the sense of E. Stern, which would have led to a comprehensive breakdown of the "fatherly traditions", cannot be proven *before* this time. To derive the manifestation of biblical norms/ideals and the enforcement of a "Jewish orthodoxy" for post-exilic Judah from the sole 'absence' of certain types of figurines (pillars and riders of Judean character) in combination with the tendentious presentation of biblical history, as Stern argues, appears in view of the continuity of the analysed testimonies of different groups of Yhwh-worshipers from Samaria, Elephantine or Edfu, as well as also from Judah, as an arbitrary selectivity based, hardly tenable *argumentum e silentio*.[101] Especially since De Hulster was also able to fill in the "Fehl-Befund" of Judah to some extent. Further archaeological research and systematization are necessary, especially for Judah, which could for example

[97] P.Polit.Iud., p. 31 and Annot. 102.
[98] JIGRE, p. 250.
[99] JIGRE, p. 248.
[100] The findings from Lachisch are not even listed, as an unequivocal assignment to Judah, due to the changing 'occupation', remains uncertain. Nevertheless, in case of doubt, these are evidence of the immediate environment: Frevel, Der Eine, pp. 441ff.
[101] Cf. Stern, Gods, p. 401.

answer the question of whether Hellenistic goddess figurines can also be detected in Judah, analogous to Edfu or Leontopolis.

On the basis of these results we now turn to the interpretation of the Judean finds of Leontopolis (2nd Century B.C. - 1st Century A.D.).

4. Leontopolis

For the Judean military colony of Leontopolis, based on the above religious-historical analysis of the development of monotheism, it cannot be excluded from the outset that this colony could be shaped by the "traditions of the fathers" in the continuity of *pre/non-biblical Judaism*.

4.1. The archaeological evidence

A terracotta figure in the form of a harnessed horse comes from the Hellenistic, more precisely Ptolemaic Period, dated to the time of the 2nd Century B.C. until the 1st Century B.C.[102] There is also a fragment of a relief inlay made of glass from this period, which represents a headdress. In the Hellenistic-Roman Period, a large number of small figurines can then be assigned to Tell el-Yehudijeh, which represent Hellenistic or Roman gods, including especially Aphrodite.[103] A round decorated patera made of steatite with the image of Aphrodite Anadyomene is to be classified as a votive offering (*see Fig. 8*).[104] An amulet from this period shows Isis nursing Harpocrates.[105] Fragments of a figure of Aphrodite (head and right hand) made of alabaster are dated to the 1st Century B.C. to the 1st Century A.D.[106] The fragments of the figure of a muse date from Roman times.[107] In Cairo, a votive figure made of calcite was acquired, which is attributed to Tell el-Yehudijeh of the Hellenistic-Roman Period. It shows a man baring his lower body (possibly like Harpocrates in Edfu?).[108] Rev. Greville John Chester found Votive offerings of plaster in the form of body parts, e.g. a left foot on a base, a left foot without a base or a fist.[109] Although these anatomical votives cannot be clearly dated, they fit into the context of the finds of the many votive offerings of the Hellenistic-Roman Period, to which this type of votive is typically assigned.[110]

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[102] British Museum, Number: 1926,0930.19. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1926-0930-19. Bailey, D.M., Ptolemaic and Roman Terracottas from Egypt, Catalogue of Terracottas in the British MuseumVol. IV, London 2008, p. 184.
[103] British Museum, Number: EA34892, EA34888.
[104] British Museum, Number: EA38514.
[105] British Museum, Number: EA11433.
[106] British Museum, Number: EA 20995.
[107] British Museum, Number: EA35061.
[108] British Museum, Number: EA90348.
[109] British Museum, Number: EA14980, EA14979, EA36137.
[110] Compare with the above mentioned finds from the Jewish quarter of Edfu.

4.2. The epigraphic evidence

"Spezifika der jüdischen Religion kommen in den Texten praktisch nicht vor: sie lassen sich noch nicht mal auf den Monotheismus festlegen."[111]

The inscriptions from Leontopolis and the nearby Demerdash, dating from the 2nd Century B.C. to the 1st Century A.D., are an extremely uniform corpus, which is particularly different from the inscriptions in its context by its appearance. These inscriptions from Leontopolis and Demerdash together take up about 2/3 of the total inscriptions of the *Jewish Inscriptions of Graeco Roman Egypt* (JIGRE). A special characteristicon both within the corpus and within the Jewish context are the metric inscriptions. These are to be distinguished from the short, simple "social inscriptions" (e.g. only stating the name and year of death). Almost all researchers who have commented on the inscriptions of Leontopolis, recognized the extent of features of Hellenistic culture and mythology in the inscriptions. The Hellenistic character[112] is particularly noticeable in the extensive metric inscriptions. The first editor of some of the inscriptions, C.C. Edgar, is therefore correct: „[…] but it shows at least how deeply this Jewish settlement in Egypt was imbued with Hellenic culture."[113]

In the inscription JIGRE 39 (Abramos-inscription) the 'Pandamator' from Hellenistic mythology appears, which can probably be identified with Chronos. Hades in personalized form appears in inscription 31. This inscription is based on the Hellenistic motif of the "Rape of Persephone", but has been individualized. The personification of Hades reflects the Hellenistic-Pagan tradition.[114] Such a personification of Hades could still be reconciled with biblical/parabiblical traditions. But not only Hades is mentioned in the inscriptions from Leontopolis as the personified deathbringer, but also the Moira[115] (33; Arsinoe and Phabeis-inscription).[116] The "death of a bride"[117] can be found as a motif in a wide variety of Greek inscriptions.

Hades as the place of the dead is attested in three inscriptions from Leontopolis (39, 34 und 38). In 34 the Hades is further characterized as: *εἰς μυχὸν αἰώνων ἐν σκοτία*. The characterization of the place as "forever dark and far away" is typically Hellenistic. Similarly, the underworld is also described in 38 as the "dark region/district of the Lethe".

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[111] Ameling, W., Die jüdische Gemeinde von Leontopolis nach den Inschriften, in: Karrer, M./Kraus, W. (Hgg.), Die Septuaginta – Texte, Kontexte, Lebenswelten: Internationale Fachtagung veranstaltet von Septuaginta Deutsch (LXX.D). Wuppertal 20.-23. Juli 2006, WUNT 219, Tübingen 2008, pp. 117-133, here: p. 126.

[112] Compare with the epigraphy of the classical period: Pfohl, G., Literarische. Epigraphik: zur poetischen Inschrift der klassischen Zeit, Archeologia Classica 25/26 (1973), pp. 539-554.

[113] Edgar, C. C., More tomb-stones from Tell el Yahoudieh, ASAE 22 (1922), p. 7-16, here: p. 8.

[114] Cf. Lattimore, Themes, pp. 147f.

[115] The only indication that the Moirai also occur in Biblical-Jewish writings is Oracula Sibyllina III (JIGRE, p. 72), whereby the origin of the book is presumably to be dated later than the inscription. See, for Hellenistic motif: Lattimore, Themes, pp. 150f.

[116] Cf. Lattimore, Themes, pp. 150f.

[117] Cf. JIGRE, p. 62.

4.3. Result

Delimiting tendencies towards other cults and cultures, in particular Hellenistic mythology or their gods, are not to be found in the Hellenistic-mythological metrical inscriptions and the other archaeological finds from Leontopolis. Contrary to M. Piotrkowski's results, there are also no indications for the "abhorrence" of the Egyptian religion and its cult.[118] The construction of the Onias Temple on or, if historical analogies are used, presumably even from the ruins of the former temple of the goddess Bastet shows that there was apparently no religious or cultic, or even 'Ritual purification' based aversion on the part of the Jews to this place. The fact that the cemetery was adjacent to the ancient Egyptian one, that some of them even ran into each other and that these graves were not destroyed or cleaned, also speaks for the previously expressed assumption. It would therefore be careless to infer that the two commandments (monotheism and image ban) have been strictly adhered to from an undetectable premise (Leontopolis = biblical Judaism), as Piotrkowski did in the latest publication on Leontopolis: „Thus, despite the fact that the Oniad community was a fairly Hellenized community, to the best of our knowledge their degree of acculturation did not undermine their monotheistic beliefs."[119]

5. Final results

In conclusion, from Elephantine to post-exilic Samaria to Edfu and probably also Leontopolis, the strict commandments and prohibitions of exclusive monotheism and the ban of images do not seem to have been known or received outside the biblical and parabiblical tradition. The exile thus evidently did not bring about a deep religious-cultural break, rather the *mainstream* in Judah, Samaria and the Egyptian diaspora was the worship of Yhwh in the "old Israelite" sense of the "tradition of the fathers" – the non-biblical Judaism. In the course of time the mode of representation of Judean Pillar figurines, Horse-Rider-Figurines, Persian Rider figurines, female figurines from Elephantine up to the Egyptian-Hellenistic representations from Edfu as well as the Hellenistic finds and inscriptions from Leontopolis changed, but the international/intercultural influences on the worship of Yhwh continued to exist. The worship of Asherah or Astarte in the earliest times, Anat-Yahu in the early post-exilic period and the adaptation of Greek gods and especially Greek goddesses in the Hellenistic Period up to the Hasmonean Period are beyond question. There is initially no trace of the radical monotheism-requirement or the strict ban on images of the biblical tradition in Leontopolis and the closer context. Rather, the biblical ideals seem at first to have been the exception. In the religious-historical development with regard to monotheism, according to the

[118] Cf. Piotrkowski, Priests, pp. 408f.
[119] Piotrkowski, Priests, p. 409.

external evidences for the majority of Jews, there is no evidence of a radical break in the old tradition *before* the Hasmonean Period. Some biblical-Jewish groups, especially through their own writings (Alexandria/Qumran/2Makk/Joseph und Aseneth/SapSal), but hardly tangible in the historical testimonies, cultivate a fight against the pre-biblical form of Yhwh veneration in continuation of the biblical polemics and correction processes. Outside of the biblical and parabiblical witnesses, there is also no evidence that *before* the Hellenization of Judaism, the biblical ideal of the ban on images and the requirement of monotheism were in force outside of the groups just mentioned, as in Qumran or in late Alexandria.

This long process of development towards exclusive monotheism corresponds to the late phase of enforcement of cult centralization in post-exilic Judaism under the Hasmoneans, that I hope was proven in my dissertation, which can be verified using the following 4 indicators: (1) centralized pilgrimage, (2) longing for homecoming and return, (3) centralized temple tax, and (4) festivals.

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Figures



Fig. 1 Judean-Pillar-Figurine; Aschera/Astarte, Iron IIB-C



Fig. 2 Judean Horse-Rider-Figurines, Iron IIB-C



Fig. 3 Horse-Rider-Figurine, Iron IIA, Tell Motza



Fig. 4 Persian Horse-Rider-Figurine, 6th-4th Century B.C., Tel Erani

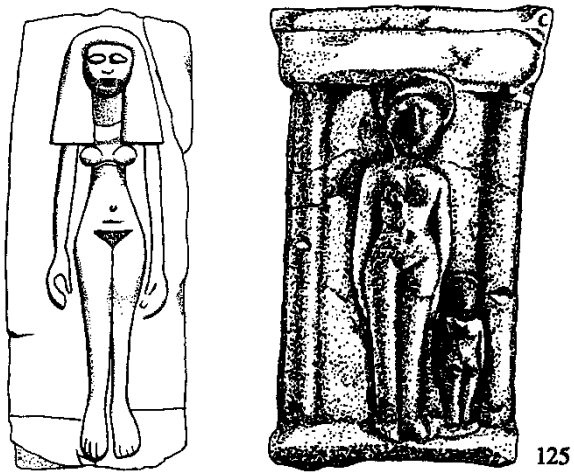


Fig. 5 „Astarte-Plaketten“/“Nackte Göttin“, Iron Age II A-B



Fig. 6 Elephantine,
„Abb. 9 Tonrelief: Nackte Frau und nacktes Mädchen in Kapelle“

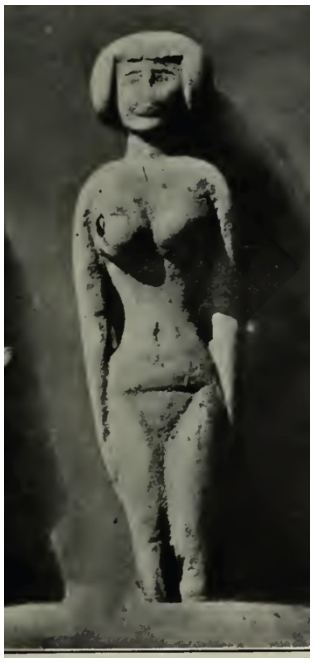


Fig. 7 Elephantine,
Göttinnen-Idol



Fig. 8 Leontopolis, Aphrodite Anadyomene, Circular steatite votive Patera

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Doctoral project-summary

"Leontopolis im Kontext – eine religionsgeschichtliche Fallstudie zur Entwicklung des ‚Judentums' in der ägyptischen Diaspora"

Based on a "religionsgeschichtliche Fallstudie" on the Judean colony and temple of Leontopolis in Lower Egypt (2nd Century B.C. - 1st Century A.D.), the religious-historical development of Judaism in Egypt from the non-biblical, as exemplified in Elephantine, to the biblical in late Alexandria is analysed in my doctoral project.

In the first of the two parts of my dissertation, the archaeological findings first and then the inscriptions from Leontopolis in connection with the much broader secondary sources, namely the writings of Josephus, the 2Makk and the rabbinical tradition, are analysed in detail. In the second part of my dissertation I try to follow up on the "development from non-biblical to biblical Judaism in the Egyptian diaspora", based on the evidence of the regional and temporal context, i.e. from Elephantine (6th - 4th Century B.C.) to Leontopolis to Alexandria. The focus here is in particular on extra-biblical, epigraphic, archaeological and literary, sources in comparison with the biblical tradition and the "biblical-Jewish" identity-markers that can be derived from it. From the beginning on the question that arises based on the testimonies of the non-biblical military colony of Elephantine in the Egyptian context compared to the clearly biblical one from Alexandria from the middle of the 2nd Century B.C. on was: At what point in the development of Judaism from non-biblical to biblical does the military colony of Leontopolis come to be?

One exclusive criterion by means of which the "identity change" of the religion of Judaism can be traced is the exclusive monotheism of the biblical tradition. Further criteria on the basis of which the change has been analysed in terms of the implementation of the ideals of the biblical tradition in religious practice are: cult centralization (pilgrimage, longing for homecoming, temple tax, festival practice); general legal practice (marriage/mixed marriage, slavery, interest collection); Eschatology and conceptions of the Afterlife; Delimitation- or identity change-processes; Hebraization tendencies/Biblization tendencies.

Paper-Summary

The exclusive monotheism as one key indicator of the change from non-biblical to biblical Judaism in the Egyptian Diaspora

-

a historical turning point late in the 2nd/1st Century B.C.?

"Spezifika der jüdischen Religion kommen in den Texten praktisch nicht vor: sie lassen sich noch nicht mal auf den Monotheismus festlegen."[1]

This statement can be made with a clear conscience about the Inscriptions from Leontopolis (2nd Century B.C. - 1st Century A.D.) and also corresponds to the general research opinion. But it clearly contradicts the biblical tradition, after that the exclusive monotheism has to be regarded as binding for the Jewish religion at the latest in the post-exilic period. An analysis of this Corpus of Jewish Inscriptions shows not only that the Hellenistic mythology (Hades, Moirai etc.), especially in the metrical inscriptions, is formative, but also that beside monotheism there are no other 'biblical' marker/criteria in the inscriptions, which are identified as typical characteristics of jewish grave-inscriptions as for example: explicit citation/implicit paraphrase of biblical texts; biblical-Jewish symbolism; Theonyms (El, Yhwh/Yahu); witnessing the Torah/the law; elaborate eschatological conceptions etc.[2] But that's not all, beside this "Fehl-Befund" of "biblical criteria" there are also other traces that are obviously violating biblical ideals, such as the fact that in post-exilic Judaism a second temple was built next to the Jerusalemite and that Hellenistic goddess figurines were found in the city of Leontopolis.

– Nothing in Leontopolis indicates any kind of biblical-Jewish influences –

How is the relation between these extra-biblical evidence and the radical demands of the biblical tradition to be determined, or how can the striking discrepancy so late be explained?

If you take a look at the history of the 'Judeans' in Egypt, you can see a "religionsgeschichtliche Parallele" to Leontopolis in the non-biblical Jewish military colony of Elephantine (6th - 4th Century B.C.). This is not only based on the fact that both colonies maintained their own Yhwh/Yahu temple even in the post-exilic period. In both colonies there is also a discrepancy between the requirements of the "exclusive monotheism" of the biblical tradition on one hand and the religious practices of the Judeans on the other hand noticeable: see 2nd commandment: "You shall have no other gods besides me. You are not supposed to make an image of a god for yourself, nor any image of what is up in heaven or what is down on

[1] Ameling, W., Die jüdische Gemeinde von Leontopolis nach den Inschriften, in: Karrer, M./Kraus, W. (Hgg.), Die Septuaginta – Texte, Kontexte, Lebenswelten: Internationale Fachtagung veranstaltet von Septuaginta Deutsch (LXX.D). Wuppertal 20.-23. Juli 2006, WUNT 219, Tübingen 2008, pp. 117-133, here: p. 126.

[2] These characteristics are used in the general research discussion as identification criteria for Jewish inscriptions in the period from the 3rd Century B.C. until the 7th Century A.D. However, as my analyses showed, the majority of these indicators can only be regarded as *epigraphic habit* from the 2nd/1st Century B.C. on, they simply do not appear in inscriptions before.

earth or what is in the water under the earth." vs. TAD C 3.15; HTAT, 485 etc.: e.g. "Anat-Yahu".

Has anything changed fundamentally in the approximately 200 years that lie between the last evidence from Elephantine and the earliest evidence from Leontopolis? Has the 'religionsgeschichtlicher' background for the interpretation of the Judaism at Leontopolis to be adjusted due to new conditions?

For this paper, the sources, especially those extra-biblical, will be analysed, on the basis of which the religious-historical development from the non-biblical, polytheistic origins of Judaism to the radical, exclusive monotheism of biblical Judaism can be traced: From 9th Century B.C. Kuntillet ʿAjrud to the 8th - 7th Century B.C. "Judean-Pillar-Figurines" (Astarte/Asherah) or the "Judean/Persian Horse-Rider-Figurines" (representation of Yhwh) to Elephantine in the transition-phase between exilic- and post-exilic times and to Edfu from the 3rd Century on. The thesis is: **The testimony of the outer-biblical sources shows great continuity. The *mainstream* of the Jewish religion remained the original, religious/cultic openness towards other cults and gods in the sense of non-biblical Judaism *until the Hasmonean Revolution* – the exception being the radical biblical-jewish groups as in Qumran or late Alexandria, who based their religious practice on biblical ideals.**

OTSEM August 2021: Abstract – Kjersti Wee

Malagasy Women and the Bible: A reading from Proverbs 31:10-31 about "the good wife".

Abstract: To what extent the text from Proverbs 31:10-31 about “the good wife” finds echoes among Madagascar women? How does this text, often read and used in African churches, can function as a contribution to increasing the understanding of oppression or liberation? These questions constitute the core of Kjersti Wee’s research. The latter placed itself within contextual hermeneutics, that focus on the ordinary reader and draw on postcolonialism, inculturation and liberation hermeneutics, including feminist and womanist hermeneutics in analysing the ways in which the Bible is relevant for contemporary African readers, believers and practitioners. In this paper Wee will present her research project, introduce the Bosadi hermeneutical approach by the African female biblical scholar, Madipoane Masenya, and share some of the findings based on interviews with Malagasy women.

OTSEM August 2021 – Digital conference

Paper: Kjersti Wee

Topic: Analysis

Deadline: 6. August 2021

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This paper focuses on the analysis process in my Ph.D. project, which still is in progress. Some parts will be included in my thesis (monograph). For more information about the project, like the chosen theories and methods (including Tabel of contents and a more extended Bibliography), please see attached documents.

1. Data analysis

After transcribing all the data files of the fourteen interviews, I got familiarized with the data by reading the text files several times. In the analysis work, I define familiarizing and coding the data as an integrated part of the analysis process. Even though some would argue that the transcribing process is a part of the analysis process or a significant phase of the analysis as “an interpretive act, I have not included transcription in the analysis process (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 87).

The most common method to use in Social science is thematical analysis, focusing on a search for themes in the text (transcribed interviews) by analyzing words and sentences (Widerberg & Bolstad, 2014, p. 137). The process of analyzing data in a thematic analysis can be described as "preparing and organizing the data for analysis" followed by dividing the data into themes through categorization before "representing the data in figures" (Cresswell & Pot, 2018, p. 183). It is also described as a "method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data (Flick, 2018, p. 474).

I found the thematic analysis to suit both my project and also possible to adapt more generally into Biblical and Old Testament studies. After considering different methods, I chose to use the Thematic Analysis (TA) developed for Psychology by Victoria Brown and Virginia Clarke (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

In the following section, I will describe my work with the analysis process so far.

1.1 Data coding

When I started the coding process, all the collected data material made me realize I had to choose how to do it. Coding is understood as either a mechanic treatment of the interviews or an integrated part of the analysis. Several choices need solving before starting the actual coding, like how to structure the coding, what to look for, how to select what to code or not, and how to identify patterns in my data collection, and I chose a line by line coding. The coding process can also be understood as an "essentially indexing or mapping data, to provide an overview of disparate data". The process of coding makes it easier for the researcher to make sense of the codes concerning the research question (Elliot, 2018, p. 2851).

I started coding all the text files in Nvivo by identifying items of potential interest and label them. In this process, I tried to find a way to structure the nodes, so it was easy to combine one node with similar nodes found in the data collection. Also, I avoided using one-word labels for the identified items since it is challenging to understand what the node is about when reading the codes separately. Instead of defining the nodes in abstract expressions, I tried to make the nodes as descriptive as possible to make it easier to organize the nodes into themes.

After coding all the text files, I ended up with a high number of nodes, 542 in total. I saw the need for reducing the high number but found this task quite challenging. Instead, I collected the nodes into different themes and ended up with approximately 20 different themes. In this process, I used some of the terms used in my already chosen theory. This kind of approach is often called a blended or abductive approach, which combines an inductive and deductive way of doing coding (Linneberg and Korsgaard, 2019, p. 14). Inductive coding can be described as "developing codes directly from the data," which I did in the initial coding (Linneberg and Korsgaard, 2019, p. 12). Deductive coding is a more theory-driven and narrow approach which I conducted for the next step in my coding when I divided the nodes into themes (Linneberg and Korsgaard, 2019, p. 13).

According to Braun and Clarke, using the interview guide with already defined topics as a structure for dividing the nodes into themes is not recommended because you can miss out on important information in the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Due to the high number of nodes in my first coding set, I started coding all over again with a more selective view, and in the time being, I have coded all the collected data material three times.

1.2 Developing themes

After the line by line coding, I collected the codes into categories at a higher level, and identified the following categories:

- About beauty and vain (Files 10 – References 38)

- About the perfect woman (Files 10 – References 74)
- Everyday life (Files 12 – References 40)
- Familiarity (Files 14 – References 58)
- Feels like failing (Files 9 – References 14)
- Feels like the good wife (Files 7 – References 15)
- How the women relate to the text (Files 14 – References 113)
- Important and valuable in the text (Files 9 – References 25)
- Interpretation of the husband in the text (Files 11 – References 42)
- Interpretation of the text (Files 13 – References 103)
- Interpretation of the woman in the text (Files 13 – References 115)
- It is hard to be or do like the good wife (Files 14 – References 99)
- Malagasy context (Files 14 – References 124)
- Malagasy proverbs (Files 5 – References 8)
- Need to be like the good wife (Files 10 – References 25)
- Not a duty only love (Files 6 – References 13)
- The man and the woman in the text (Files 10 – References 28)
- The text is liberative (Files 11 – References 30)
- The text is oppressive (Files 9 – References 27)
- The text is rules for a woman (Files 12 – References 64)
- This happens if I fail (Files 14 – References 84)
- Why should women act like the good wife (Files 13 – References 55)

The numbers in brackets refer to the number of interviews the citation is mentioned (Files), and the number of different places the citation is mentioned in total (References).

After considering these categories, I compiled and grouped the defined categories into a few major themes and grouped the initial themes found in the coded data as following:

Familiarity:

- Familiarity (Files 14 – References 58)

Interpretation:

- Interpretation of the husband in the text (Files 11 – References 42)
- Interpretation of the text (Files 13 – References 103)
- Interpretation of the woman in the text (Files 13 – References 115)
- Important and valuable in the text (Files 9 – References 25)
- The man and the woman in the text (Files 10 – References 28)
- Why should women act like the good wife (Files 13 – References 55)

Liberation:

- The text is liberative (Files 11 – References 30)
- Feels like the good wife (Files 7 – References 15)
- Not a duty only love (Files 6 – References 13)

Oppression:

- The text is oppressive (Files 9 – References 27)
- The text is rules for a woman (Files 12 – References 64)
- This happens if I fail (Files 14 – References 84)
- Feels like failing (Files 9 – References 14)
- It is hard to be or do like the good wife (Files 14 – References 99)
- Need to be like the good wife (Files 10 – References 25)
- About the perfect woman (Files 10 – References 74)

Inculturation:

- Malagasy context (Files 14 – References 124)
- Malagasy proverbs (Files 5 – References 8)
- Everyday life (Files 12 – References 40)
- How the women relate to the text (Files 14 – References 113)
- About beaty and vain (Files 10 – References 38)

2. Presentation of the themes

Due to the limitation of this paper, I have chosen to present three of the above-shown themes, Familiarity, Inculturation, Liberation, and Oppression.

2.1 Theme A - Familiarity

For the theme Familiarity (Files 14 – References 58), all the women mentioned how they felt the text was familiar. Even if one had not read the text before, they found the context of the biblical text to be something they could recognize and compared it with their local context.

Before I started my research project, I talked to several international students at my campus about the text. The female students came from the global south, most African countries. Several of them said that they knew this text quite well since the church use it when teaching in women's and youth groups. A couple of them had also used the text about the good wife when teaching in Bible groups. So my assumption before I started interviewing was that the Malagasy women well knew the text. This proved to be correct since almost all the women I interviewed knew the text before. Some of them knew the whole text, and a few only knew the last part, especially verse 30 about beauty and vain.

Anna, in her forties, working as a teacher, has three children has also heard the text before: "*Yes, I heard about it already*". She continues explaining, "*I heard it at church. And I am also part of a young people's group and in our meetings, I have heard the text already, and I also heard it from the radio, there is a radio that has preached about it already".*

Ando, in her twenties, mother of two children, studying to become a teacher, also explains how verse 30 about beauty and vain is very famous, often used in the church in sermons and women's groups. The verse is even used in decoration in homes: *"Yes, but also, like people use it in home decoration. They have Bible verses written on wood for decoration and I have seen this verse a lot used in homes for decoration and like that".*

Even if Henintsoa had not heard the text before, it is probably correct to assume that she had heard the single verse about beauty and vain since this verse is often used in secular songs and as decoration in homes, even to preach over on the radio. Looking at the transcript retrospectively, it is clear that I didn't look further into the subject if she knew this single verse or not.

Christelle, in her forties, working as a teacher, has three children, is talking about how this text was used as education in her family when she grew up: "*So, it's an experience that I have lived, the text relates to a life that I have already been living, so, for example since our childhood we were raised in a family where it was really like the text, it was, eh, we were well educated in a sense at young age when we started to wear nail polish , we were rebuked and they said we shouldn't wear that, because it's a kind of way to showing off, and when we were 14 and starting wearing makeup and things like that, we were also told, no, we should be modest rather than showing off too much of our selves".*

My assumption that many women in Madagascar are familiar with the text about the good wife seemed to be confirmed. Most of the women knew the text quite well and had heard and read it, in church or Bible groups or even in a more secular context, like decorations to use in homes or used as lyrics in songs.

2.2 Theme B - Inculturation

The focus in inculturation hermeneutics is to make Africa or the African context the main subject of investigation. All the women were asked if they can relate to the text about the good wife in Proverbs 31:10-31, and they all confirmed that they could relate to the text to a greater or lesser degree.

When I asked Hanitra what she thinks about the good wife in the text, she replies: "*it makes me realize that we women are actually like that*". According to Justin Ukpong, inculturation was developed because the traditional interpretation of biblical texts was inadequate for African readers since it excluded the African context, worldview, and life experiences (Ukpong, 1995, p.3). Hanitra reads herself into the biblical text and finds it to describe her life situation.

Tatiana explains something similar when I ask if she can identify with the good wife in the text, and she says: "*I can identify myself with reading the one about, in the verse 15, getting up to take care of the children, even if it is at night. I feel like it is me*". Her statement *"I feel like it is me"* describes how she reads herself into the bible text, finding her situation to correspond with the woman in the text when taking care of her family.

Karen adds some more tasks when she is asked if she can relate to the good wife in the texts, saying: *"…she said verse 15 that she gets up in the morning and give food to the house. And I do that. I am the first that get up. I prepare and cook rice, and after that I check the lesson for my daughter because she should get up six and I have to help her before she goes to school, and I have to get everything ready for my husband before he wakes, because he wants to eat at once when he gets up".* Madipoane Masenya and her Bosadi approach focus on grassroots women. She is not only critical to the inculturation hermeneutics for ignoring women and gender issues, but also critical to the text itself and the culture (Masenya, 2016, p.5). As we can see in Karen's statement, she has the overall responsibility for taking care of her family. She is not only providing all the meals but also preparing her child for school, making sure everything is ready before her husband wakes up since he

demands food immediately after waking up. For Karen, the Bible text about the good wife probably confirms all the work and domestic tasks she does in her everyday life. She is not critical to the text even though she is responsible for taking care of and providing for her family.

Anna emphasizes another aspect in relation to her family, the importance of being humble. She explains this when she is asked if she can relate to the text: *"Yes. I can relate myself to the text, especially the work and what I do, for example, with the relation with my husband and children, like to be humble in front of them in the relationship, yes, to know how to listen to them, and not to criticise only what they think and what they say, but be able to listen to them and maybe hear what they say and then answer like wisely. For example, if they do something wrong, I try to explain to them why this is not good, and if they are saying or doing something good, I encourage them to go ahead with that, but not say directly oh this is not good, and then you just like throw away the situation".* Anna points out the value of being humble as an important aspect of being a good wife, like the good wife in the Bible text. According to Ukpong, one of the central issues in inculturation hermeneutics is to make the Biblical text "alive and active in contemporary African societies" which is the case for the women interviewed. The women clearly identify with the good wife in the text and read themselves into the text.

When I asked Christelle if she can relate to the woman in the text, she confirms this, but not entirely: *"I think I can relate to this woman, I would say I relate to her 80%. Why I think I do that is because in a big part this woman fears the Lord, and I really think that I fear the Lord just like the woman in the text does".* Christelle points out the importance of fearing the Lord which is something she found similar to the woman in the text. She continues to explain with an example bringing a new aspect into her understanding*: "For instance, there are other men who are tempting you to be in relationship with them, but for me I stick to the vow I made before the alter, the vow I made toward God and my husband, but it's with him that I (am) committed, and I will commit to him. So, there are many kinds of opportunities and occasions that you can do bad things but because of fear of the Lord I do not do that…..And there is a Malagasy saying, don't you look at the quite field, but think of the God who is above your head. So, it means, it is not that your action can go with discretion that you will do it, but because you fear the Lord. And I think I fear the Lord".* Even if Christelle relates with text, she is hesitant to go all in and limits it to 80 %. Also, she is like several of the women using a Malagasy proverb to explain what she means. According to Masenya, this is also the case with her female informants from South Africa (Masenya, 2004). In her article, "Tamed Identities? Glimpsing her identity in Proverbs 10:1-22:26 and selected African proverbs", Masenya uses an African Proverb to deal with the topic what "constitutes acceptable definition of womanhood" (Masenya, 2018, p. 1).

When I asked Anya if she can relate to the woman in the text, she answers like this: *"What I can say is that I cannot say that my life relies on this text, of course, I try to be like this woman, but there are many situations that sometimes… that stops me or not allowing to do so, but what I really want is to be like this".* Anya compares her everyday life with the life of the good wife in the Bible text. She finds it hard to achieve doing and acting like the good wife in the text, even if she really wants to be like the good wife in the text. According to Masenya, the Bosadi approach acknowledges the Bible's authority and the vital role it posses for African women but does not uncritically classify the Bible as the word of God due to all the oppression in the past (Masenya, 2016, p. 5).

2.3 Theme C – Liberation/Oppression

After conducting the first interviews, it became clear that the concepts of the expressions "liberation and oppression" were difficult to grasps for some of the women and also translated into Malagasy. For the later interviews, the terms liberation and oppression I replaced the terms with "feeling tied up" and "feeling free".

2.3.1 Liberation

When I ask Mialy if the text made her felt free or tied up and how the text can work in a liberating way, she answers like this: *"It's true that its tying up, but if I get appreciation, from my husband, that will help a lot. That will make me free".* According to Mialy, her sense of liberation depends on her husband. If he approves of her domestic work, she will become liberated. Mialy also thinks the text can function in a liberating way if the women see their family happy and explains*: "This text can liberate women in the way that when she sees the family happy, then she can do more and she can do better. If I do something for my family, and if they are happy, they will allow me to do more…".* Masenya points out that "women become estranged from their female selves" due to the androcentric interpretation and nature of some of the biblical texts together with a patriarchal world view (Masenya, 2016, p. 2). This could be the case when Tatiana confirms that the text function in a liberating matter: *"It gives freedom. Yes, freedom*" and she continues to explain: *"…or being busy or for having a lot of responsibilities, sometimes I complain, sometimes I am down, and sometimes I am discouraged, but reading this gives me freedom, because I feel like, it's meant to be like that, I am supposed to do like that, so it's not a burden for me anymore, that's how I feel free".* Tatiana is using the text as a guide in her life, as the good wife in the text excellently performs all her tasks without complaining, Tatiana understands she needs to do the same. She feels this is the way her life and position are supposed to be, and this makes her feel liberated.

Hanitra found the question a bit hard to answer, telling me this: "*The question is clear, but the answer is difficult".* And she continues*: "So, if you view it in a different perspective, in a perspective that is not about a burden to carry but rather the fruit to be expected in the future, then it liberates you. And it says so in the text as well "give her the fruit of her hand" so if we focus, if you fix our perspective on what is ahead, then it won't feel like a burden".* I follow up and ask if it will be easier doing all these things if she looks at the future. Hanitra explains: *"Yes, it really gives me strength to go through all of these, and even if it is tough while you do it, it becomes lighter when you do it with this perspective".* When I asked Hanitra if she thought the text could function more oppressively, she refuses it telling me this: *"So, it's definitely not oppressive in that way. It is even liberation, if you open your horizon like it's not only your home, that you are expected to do it, but even outside your home, it can be liberated rather than oppressive, like you are expected to be that woman even outside your household".* When I asked if she could tell me more about this she continues: *"So, it's not oppressive in the sense, as we talked about before, but it sets the limits, and limits that it sets us is all good. There are no bad things, but all good things. And in doing the good things it shows off the goodness you have inside. So, when the good gets to be shown, it is not oppressive"*. The reluctance to find something negative in the text, like it is oppressive in a way, fits with Masenya's research and her Bosadi approach. Opposite to inculturation hermeneutics, the Bosadi approach does not uncritically classify the Bible as the word of God due to all the oppression in the apartheid period. At the same time, the Bosadi approach acknowledges the authority of the Bible and the vital role it

possesses for African women. Also, Masenya criticizes inculturation hermeneutics and Ukpong for finding Bible texts "basically benevolent" (Masenya, 2016, p. 5).

Christelle has a more nuanced view on the topic: *"So yes, for me personally, I think it can function in a liberative way, but for others it can work the other way. Because some people can think, oh, it's forbidden you to do this, from wearing such and such from doing many things but for me personally, I really think of it as a way to liberate myself, because it has taken me to a point, it has taken my family to a point where it can really thrive and blossom"*. Christelle's statement fits with Masenya's observation that the Bible is recognized both as having a liberating potential and used to suppress women (Masenya, 2015, p. 73).

Some women also found the text a blessing in their lives, and Stephanie tells me this about feeling like the good wife: *"…and I also have a situation where I felt like the good wife. Like the part when I am caring for my family, and like taking care of my family, I really feel like I am like that. And there is also this mutual trust, with my husband, he is trusting me, and my family is always blessed. And also, one good thing is to have Jesus as Lord and I always pray him and ask him for strength. And in the text, it says this, and I have my strength in Jesus, and putting all my life into his hands, and also to give him the first place in my everyday life".* Likewise, Jenny found the text about the good wife giving her an important role in the family: *"It reminds her of the fact that her presences in the family is really a blessing".* Here the text is interpreted in a very positive way in relation to the husband, the good wife "does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life" and according to Masenya, the wife is described as "the crown of her husband" (Masenya, 2018, p.4).

Also, some of the women explained how they managed to do all the things expected of them and how to cope with the heavy burden with love, and Mialy explains: *"It is a lot to do, yes, but if you do it with love, it is not a burden, but if you do it, if you take it as a service or consider it as work, then it will be really hard and it will tire you, so you have to do it with love".* Anna tells me this when I asked if she thought the domestic workload was too heavy: "*I don't really feel so, if you do all these things with love. And also, within the family you collaborate, you help each other".* Jenny also explains that she doesn't see all the work she is doing for her family as oppressive and explains that she does it for love: *"So, I really don't find the oppressive in any way, since I don't think it is about commandments, nor is it about duty nor is it about, you have to do this or this, but it is more of a willingness, a wholehearted willingness that is pressed by love, love towards your children, towards your husband that pushes this woman to do this work. So, in my opinion, it is all about love. It is love that presses, and the love pushes you to go further on those tasks".* Likewise Henintsoa explains that the text doesn't function in an oppressive way as long as the women do all the work with love*: "Like women, we should do it with love, without thinking this is an obligation you have to do, but they are an expression of your love for your family and also, we should always have a mind to live with humility in the family and also think about all the good things that will be the result of what you do for your family, that it will bring good things into your family not bad things, so thinking about that will help us to do it with love, and do it without thinking that they are oppressing you, like doing things will mean oppression".* Masenya rightly problematizes the way the role of women is portrayed in Proverbs. She refers to Fontaine's description including both the positive and negative images of women are viewed "basically from the viewpoint of what they provide for the men involved (Fontaine in Masenya, 2018, p. 4)

Linah answer my question if the text can function in a liberating way like this: *"If I compare, the life of this good woman, with a life of a person who is not married, when this person who was not married, gets married, we can say that she is free, she is free from her life with the parents, also free from the position she had in the family before, but it shows a bit that this woman now will be a bit tied up when she gets married. She will get tied up with the duty of being a mum and also of being a wife, this is a duty that she cannot deny. But this feeling of being tied up, will also bring joy and also peace because of the feeling of being a mother".* Lina is expressing a life where women their whole life depend on others, not only as young girls when they are subjugated by their parents, but also followed by subordination to her husband. According to Masenya, the African context and the African culture, including conservative interpretation of the biblical text in the church, still define "what constitutes acceptable definitions of womanhood" (Masenya, 2018, p. 1). Even if a woman never is free, first she is tied up with her parents and in her family, then she gets tied up with the duty as a wife and mother. Lina finds that this duty will bring joy and peace.

2.3.2 Oppression

As mentioned above, asking questions regarding oppression and liberation became a bit more complicated than expected. After the first couple of interviews, I changed the terms from liberation/oppression to free/tied up. Even though the questions were edited, we still experienced some difficulties regarding the terms. All of the women felt that the task of the good wife in the text was demanding and hard, but still, all of them found it important to try and act like the woman in the text. When I asked Mialy if she felt free or tied up when she was looking at the good wife in the text, she answered: *"The text is clearly tying up the woman"* and when I asked her how the text makes her feel tied up, she continues: "*It will be very difficult for you. And the, if you just take it as a service, if you just take it as work or service, it will be very difficult. And yes, it is difficult to do all the tasks, but you have to do it with love, as mentioned earlier, and also, if you get appreciation to".*

Tatiana confirmed that the text could function oppressively and explains like this: *"It can also, (function) in an oppressive way, if I read the verses 27, it's difficult to be very careful and not caught into laziness" and she continues and elaborates: "and also the verse 26, like to speak with wisdom, that's also, yes, that's like, yes it is teaching you what you can do and what you can say".* Musa Dube Shomanah addresses postcolonial and imperialistic issues and claims that the "postcolonial era must be confronted", in order to restore women's position (Dube Shomanah, 2000, p.27). Dube Shomanah also states that "decolonization and imperialistic powers" contain a "chameleonlike capacity for persistence" and therefore are decolonization and liberation not accomplished (Dube Shomanah, 2000, p. 197).

Anna doesn't agree that the text can function in a liberative way. She says: *"I personally see that it is not liberative because these things that are described in the text are already things that you know you have to do, and you do in your everyday life, so the word of God is just encouraging you in what you already are doing. So, this text is teaching how to prepare your children, how to teach them in a good way, and it is like, giving you suggestions on how to do things and how to behave. And if you do something wrong the word of God is teaching you, already, how to renew that something wrong that you did, and also giving you courage and it is teaching you and liberating you in one way".* Then, when I further ask her how the text can function in a more oppressive way that makes her feel tied

up, she continues: "*I personally don't see it in an oppressive way, because even if the things that are said here, they can be difficult, but knowing already the fact, and already knowing the word of God, and the promise God gave you, and also knowing what will happen if I behave well, within this difficulties, or if the things I have to do is difficult, but it gives me more strength to do it with love and do it well. So, it helps me and gives me strength. And also, encouraging me to do those things".* Even if Anna doesn't find the text about the good wife to be liberating, she is using it more positively as an encouragement to perform all the duties she needs to do in her everyday life. Maybe this would have been different if the decolonized and imperialistic power structure Dube Shomanah refers to was abandoned for the roles to be viewed in a more balanced way (Dube Shomanah, 2000, p. 27).

On the question, if she can identify with the woman in the text, Ando answers like this: *"Yes, but I feel like the woman in the text is perfect. And that is some things I don't complete in the things they say".* She continues to explain what she means after I have commented that the good wife in the text is doing a lot: *"Yes, I know, like yes, it's a lot perfection. I would say too much. I think we can do it, but we need some kind of commitment, so like, too be like something. If you want to be like the perfect wife and the perfect mother for you family, you have to give up something, and that I think is a challenge, like myself, I am a working woman, a wife with two sons, but I still do my studies…..".* Ando tells me how her family sometimes suffer and don't get enough love and care from her when she is too busy with her work and study. When I ask her what she thinks about that she continues: *"It is a question of choice. Like the woman in the text is the perfect woman, I don't think we can be really perfect, we should try to be perfect. But life is not exactly like that, I feel like…. I feel like life is not just meant to be the perfect wife and the perfect mother for your children, like the are other things happening".* Even if Ando labels the good wife in the text as a perfect woman, she thinks it is possible for women to act like her and explains how it is a woman's choice. Ando does not question the text or if the traditional interpretation of this text is influenced by an African patriarchal context.

Christelle is more critical to the text when I asked her if she found anything disturbing in the text, and she tells me: *"I would say it is a critique that I am addressing to the text. It seems to me that the woman is serving, in the serving sense, she is serving the man, and it seems too much, and for me, all the things she does, might lead to her forgetting herself. Like everything is about the husband. Actually, in the Malagasy culture before, the value, was really like this woman, once a man arrives at home, you will care for him, you will cook for him, you have no time to rest because you need to care for the husband. And in those days, it was possible to do so, because the wife was destined to be a housewife, because the wife had no job outside the home, so, yes, I think some people can do that, but me personally, I don't think I am this kind of woman. As I said earlier there need to be an agreement, and organization between the husband and wife, for me and my husband we leave the house at the same time, and we come home at the same time, and we need to share the tasks, so my critique towards this text maybe nowadays it's is not working anymore, because this is more intended for women who are housewives, who are in the perspective of women's serve their husband, which is not relevant, maybe, not relevant longer, for our days".* Christelle is alone amongst the women interviewed in understanding or at least expressing the text as outdated and unfitting for the present Malagasy context when women are working and have a carrier outside the home. According to Masenya, the power dynamics dominant in a patriarchal context like Africans need to be deconstructed in order to be "affirming and transformative by those on the margins" (Masenya,

2018, p.5). Dube Shomanah states something similar and claims that the need for decolonization in order to gain liberation (Dube Shomanah, 2000, p. 27).

When I ask Anya how the text can function in an oppressive manner, she points to the dressing habit as an example, saying: "*One example is the way of clothing. In the text it is written that the lady should wear dress. And I imagen that the lady should wear long, long dresses, and well covered, and I myself like to wear short skirts and short shorts, not always, not very well covered".* Anya immediately interprets the way clothes are mentioned in the text as a specific type of dress, which is well covering and, in a way, decent even though the text doesn't describe the dress in detail. This interpretation can perhaps be a result of the preaching and teaching in the church or Bible study groups performed by conservative or male church leaders and a result of a patriarchal interpretation dominated in her context. When I further ask her how the text can liberate her, she answers like this: *"I personally see that this is a kind of commandments. It is not like you do whatever you like as a woman, it is like commandments and women should follow it".* I then asked Anya if she wanted to add something about the text before we ended the interview and she tells me: *"I like the text because it is teaching us, it is teaching women to be a good woman, and to behave well".* Anya understands the text about the good wife to be not only a guidance, but commandments women should follow even if she finds it hard to follow.

3. Concluding remarks

Since I have worked a lot with coding and developing themes, I just recently started on analyzing the data. The text step will be to integrate the theories with my findings to develop my analysis and I appreciate feedback on how to proceed with my further analysis process.

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OTSEM August 2021: Summary – Kjersti Wee

In my Ph.D. project (monograph), I am reading the Biblical text of Proverbs 31:10-31 about The good wife together with female informants from Madagascar in order to understand whether and how the women (also called ordinary readers) relate to the biblical text regarding oppression and liberation. This kind of empirical Bible research is often called contextual hermeneutics or Contextual Bible Study (CBS), with a primary focus on the reader and the reader's interpretation.

My project will investigate how women in Madagascar relate to the biblical text. On the one hand, the text portrays The good wife in very positive words, describing her as hard-working and independent. The text can be read as a tribute to the diligent wife that uses all her talents and excellently manages her resources. She is portrayed as a founder and a manager with a lot of employees. She organizes her gifts and assets wisely and seems not to be restricted by her husband's rules, regulations, or commandments. However, on the other hand, she is described as "wife", which in a patriarchal society of then (text) and now (Malagasy context), can be interpreted in ways that the wife is lower in rank and belongs to the husband.

I assume this text finds an echo in the Malagasy culture, where corresponding women's ideals often are emphasized. This text has generally, in Western as well as African context, been used in a suppressive way as an unachievable model for women.

Research question:

- A good wife? How do ordinary Malagasy female readers understand the text about the good woman in Proverbs 31, in relation to liberation and oppression.

My interpretation framework is based upon post-colonialism, inculturation, and liberation hermeneutics, including feminist and womanist hermeneutics. Also, I will make use of a hermeneutical approach developed by an African female biblical scholar, Madipoane Masenya, called the Bosadi approach (Masenya, 2004).

Since my field trip to Madagascar was cancelled due to Covid-19 and the data collecting process was delayed, I had time to read more in order to find my preferences among existing theories. When I started up with my project, my aim was to use Masenya's Bosadi approach mainly, but I felt this could be a bit narrow. So, in the search for a more structured approach, I engaged with more western founded feminist theories and methods, like Intersectionality, Standpoint Theory and some classical text by Spivak, Haraway, and Emily Martin. After considering these works, I found Intersectionality quite similar to Masenya's work and ideas without mentioning the term Intersectionality. Also, I found the more western contributions to lack some of the perspectives critical in African contextual hermeneutics, like making Africans and the African context the subject of interrogation. Additionally, I found some of the western thoughts to be different and hard to use in relation to an African worldview, except for the more postcolonial contributions by Spivak and Said.

Due to this extensive search for adequate theories for my analysis, I chose to return to African hermeneutics recently, therefore not yet included in the present analysis. Still, I decided to use some of Sandra Harding's viewpoints to deal with the researcher's standpoint and reflexivity. I am, after all, a white, middle-aged, privileged female pastor educated in the west.

For further information about the chosen theories and methods for my project, see Table of Contents and Bibliography at the end of this document.

Background - Data collecting

All the women interviewed about the good wife are members of the Lutheran church in Madagascar (FLM). The church has several Bible study groups which are quite common to attend from a young age, like women's groups, youth groups, or mixed groups in the choir. Instead of inviting Bible reading women from across different church nominations, the Lutheran church was a choice in order to get a similar background for the women as possible. Exposing and preaching will differ from church to church, and I found it helpful to have a common ground in the Lutheran foundation being a Lutheran pastor myself.

The original plan was to attend two- or three women's groups to learn how they are structured and also get familiarized with the different Bible text and topics used in addition to get to know the women for a later interview. Due to the covid-19 pandemic, all the interviews were instead done by zoom. A local contact invited the women and arranged to get a stable internet connection and a translator for those who felt the need for language support.

During December 2020 and January 2021, I conducted 14 interviews with ordinary Malagasy female readers. The interviews lasted from 1hour and 30 minutes till 2 hours. All the women were offered translation services since the researcher doesn't speak Malagasy or French. Most of the women accepted to use a translator even if some of them knew English quite well. After reading the transcribed interviews, I found this to work fine, and no significant difference between the interviews done with the help of a translator and those without a translator.

Presentation of the actors

The following are a short introduction of the fourteen women interviewed:

Karen: in her forties, one child, working in the service branch.
Anya: in her thirties, two children, looking for work.
Miora: in her forties, five children, working as a civil servant.
Ando: in her thirties, two children, studying to become a teacher.
Mia: in her forties, several children and grandchildren, working as a teacher.
Jenny: in her thirties, two children, working as a teacher.
Hanitra: in her thirties, three children, working in an office.
Christelle: in her forties, three children, working as a teacher.
Heninstoa: in her twenties, one child, working as a teacher.
Mialy: in her thirties, two children, working as a needleworker.
Tatiana: in her thirties, three children, working in the service branch.
Anna: in her forties, three children, working in an orphanage.
Stephanie: in her twenties, one child, studies theology.
Lina: in her twenties, one child, working in an office

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ABSTRACT

Thesis title: *From judgment to blessing: An analysis of the function of Egypt in the rhetoric of Isaiah 19.*

This project is an analysis of the rhetoric of chapter 19 in the book of Isaiah. Isaiah 19 deals with 'Egypt' as a literary motif, and it is a text that has played and continues to play a significant role in Egyptian Christianity and theology. There is a shift in atmosphere between negative perspectives (first half of the chapter, vv. 1-17: 'Egypt' will experience judgment) and more positive perspectives (second half of the chapter, vv. 18-25: 'Egypt' will take part in a future of blessing and salvation).

The project approaches this problem from a literary perspective, and my research question is as follows: The research question to address this problem is: How can the juxtaposition of the messages of judgment (vv. 1-17) and blessing (vv. 18-25) over Egypt be understood rhetorically? In order to answer this overarching question, I ask three subsidiary questions: How does the motif Egypt function in Isaiah 19? How do the literary devices function in Isaiah 19 as a whole? How is Isaiah 19 understood within contemporary Egyptian contexts?

I will analyze the rhetoric of Isaiah 19. The work's overall analytic approach is hermeneutical, and the method applied to sort and systematize what is observed on a literary level in the text is rhetorical criticism. This method was inaugurated by the biblical scholar James Muilenburg.

I hope that an analysis of the rhetoric of Isaiah 19 can help me establish a reading of the chapter as a whole that makes sense of the text both as a historical artifact and as a contemporary source for theological reflection.

OTSEM 2021

An Analysis of the Rhetoric of Isaiah 19

Chapter One, Introduction

Medhat Youssef

VID, Stavanger

I am a contemporary Egyptian reader of the Old Testament (OT), and I am an OT scholar. In both roles, I have observed a debate over the function of Egypt motif in Isaiah 19 concerning the message of judgment (1-17) and the message of blessing (18-25), and how these two parts can be understood regarding one another. Both ordinary and trained readers of Isaiah 19 perceive that there is a shift in atmosphere between verses (vv.) 1-17 and vv. 18-25, and this thesis will pursue an analysis of the rhetoric of Isaiah 19 as a whole in order to investigate how the juxtaposition of the message of judgment and blessing can be interpreted.

In the Egyptian context, especially after the revolutions of January 25, 2011, and June 30, 2013, many Egyptian Christians have reinterpreted the OT texts that speak about Egypt as being prophecies speaking to this current generation. Isaiah 19 has especially become a topic of debate for all Christians.[1] At the beginning of the 2011 revolution in Egypt, many leaders from different dominations in Egypt became convinced Christians that this revolution would start the new age of blessing, and they used Isaiah 19:18-25 in their persuasive rhetoric regarding Egypt.[2] After the revolution, the Muslim Brotherhood ruled Egypt. It was a shock for many Christians. Some of church leaders of various denominations and individual Christians started using Isaiah 19:1-17 to

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1 Cf, Magdi Gendi, Prophecy Concerning Egypt, 2011, Unpublished Article, Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo Cairo; Mina Markos, "Christian Interpretation of Isaiah 19," *El-Bawaba News* (Cairo), 24 October 2016, https://www.albawabhnews.com/2178798.

2 For example, Ehab Shaker, "Chaos of interpretation of Isaiah 19," *Copts United* (United States), July 2011, https://www.copts-united.com/Article.php?I=747&A=31380; Ghaly, "Comment on the Article Chaos Interpretation of Isaiah 19," (n.d. (2021?)). https://drghaly.com/articles/display/12240; Nagy Yousef, "Isaiah 19 and Current Events," *El-Tareeq* (Cairo), April 2011, http://www.eltareeq.com/tareeq2010/pg_editorpage_id_r.aspx?ArID=4514; Nagy Yousef, "Cruel Master," *El-Tareeq* (Cairo), February 2012, http://www.eltareeq.com/tareeq2010/pg_editorpage_id_r.aspx?ArID=5985; Nagy Yousef, "Egypt's past, present and future in Isaiah 19," *El-Tareeq* (Cairo), May 2011, http://www.eltareeq.com/tareeq2010/pg_editorpage_ID_r.aspx?GrID=19&ArID=4629; Nagy Yousef, "Islamic Mentality and Christian Divine Texts," *El-Tareeq* (Cairo), May 2016, http://www.eltareeq.com/tareeq2010/pg_editorpage_id_r.aspx?ArID=62702.

interpret what had happened as a judgment given by God, and they suggested that the Christians in Egypt should repent. In November 2011, some church leaders from different dominations held a prayer night called "the night of prayer and going back to God."[3] Some of the church leaders and ordinary Christians saw the June 30, 2013, revolution that brought down the Muslim Brotherhood as an answer to their prayers and a sign that the age of blessings would soon, as in Isaiah 19:18-25. After this time, Egyptians were disappointed when many churches and Christian properties were destroyed in August 2013. Again, they interpreted the negative message of Isaiah 19:1-17 as fulfilled in the destruction of property. In short, when the situation is stable for Egyptian Christians, some Christian leaders and ordinary people interpret Isaiah 19:18-25 as a description of the contemporary situation, and they use "blessed be Egypt my people" as a slogan. However, when the situation is unstable, and Christians experience persecution, they interpret this as judgment as predicted in Isaiah 19:1-17.[4] Thus, Isaiah 19 is deliberately applied in the church leaders' rhetoric in order to persuade people in both situations, especially in the time of political election.[5] Recently, the debates of Isaiah 19 became more complicated. Some argue that the Nile motif in 19 is fulfilled by building the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.[6]

The dilemma that arises then is whether this thesis should be concerned about the ancient text, the current context, or both. Three possibilities can be recognized. The first is to give both text and context equal weight in one project. I think, however, this would require three theses: one where I define and develop what "an Egyptian context" is, another where I develop how this context (and experiences from Egypt in recent years) can be used in the analysis of Isaiah 19, and a third where I do an analysis of the rhetoric of the text. The second possibility is to focus strictly on either the ancient text or the current context. This, however, seems difficult to pursue in practice as long as text and context constantly interact when human beings read a text. As I am an Egyptian reader of

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3 You can watch the event: "The Night of Prayer and Going Back to God," (Egypt, 11 November 2011). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sd7KgsjtZjo.

4 For example, Philip Wissa, "An important post on how to deal with #prophecies of ruin," 12 January 2020, 2020, https://www.facebook.com/wissafamily/posts/10157952087196350.

5 For example, Safwat Adel Marzouk, "Of course, the prophet Isaiah did not prophesy about Sisi," 9 January 2015, 2015, https://www.facebook.com/safwat.marzouk.9/posts/10153044625160972; Sami Anan President of Egypt, "Al-Sisi Came to Fulfill Isaiah's Prophecy," 2018, https://www.facebook.com/398237947282320/posts/542835062822607/.

6 Such as Gamal Asad, "These are their prophecies," *el-Dastor* (Cairo), 9 June 2021 2021, https://www.dostor.org/3476016; Gerges Awad, "The Nile and Bible Prophecies," *Aharam* (Cairo), 1 June 2021 2021, https://gate.ahram.org.eg/daily/News/809627.aspx; Ayad Tharef, "Interpretation of Isaiah chapter 19_ Will the Nile River dry up?," (25 April 2021 2021). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ue0k5SoIkTU.

the text my situatedness will always influence my reading. The third possibility is then to pursue an interpretation of Isaiah 19, where my context is also taken seriously. This is what is done in this dissertation. On the one hand, I come to the text with my contextual framework. I was informed and inspired by my Egyptian context to undertake this project. The context has increased my attention to the text, and it has helped me formulate the research problem. On the other hand, I recognize that I do not want to bind the text to a specific time, place, people, and set of circumstances. I want the text to meet, speak to, and shape myself as a reader; I would not want to be bound with the continually changing contexts. Thus, I would like to concentrate the analysis on the text's rhetoric. Nevertheless, I will not neglect my contemporary Egyptian context, but do my contextual reflections in a chapter after analyzing the text's rhetoric, where I discuss: How is Isaiah 19 understood and used within contemporary Egyptian contexts? This choice nurtures my interest in the way the text is shaped rhetorically, at the same time as it recognizes my situatedness.

1.1. Research question

OT scholars have identified the problem of the juxtaposition of opposite messages (of judgment and blessing) in Isaiah 19 and tried to resolve it through historical, literary, and theological approaches. However, the problem remains unresolved, and I will investigate the text's rhetoric to see if this gives a clue to understanding how the two parts of Isaiah 19 function in the chapter as a whole. A close reading of Isaiah 19 shows not only a different atmosphere between Isaiah 19:1-17 and Isaiah 19:18-25. Moreover, it seems that there is a literary break of the form between vv. 1-15 and vv. 16-25. The research question to address this problem is: How can the juxtaposition of the statements of judgment (vv. 1-17) and blessing (vv. 18-25) over Egypt be understood rhetorically? In order to answer this overarching question, I ask three subsidiary questions: How does the motif Egypt function in Isaiah 19? How do the literary devices function in Isaiah 19 as a whole? How is Isaiah 19 understood within contemporary Egyptian contexts?

1.2. Setting of Isaiah 19

Over the last few centuries, Isaiah has been studied with a view to history and theology, and not least with a view to the question of unity.[7] Scholarly works may be categorized into three different

[7] In an effort to better understand the book of Isaiah, many scholars present introductions to the book of Isaiah: Hobart Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1968), 191-214; John Collins, *Introduction to the Hebrew Bible and Deutero-Canonical Books*, 2 ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014), 323-39; 95-414; Christopher Seitz, "Isaiah, Book of," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary : Vol. 4* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 1001-11; M. Rest, "Isaiah," in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible : Vol. 2* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962),

approaches, and this rough distinction can be summarized as follows. First, in the pre-critical approach: Isaiah was viewed traditionally as one work by one author, who is Isaiah ben Amoz (Isaiah 1:1).[8] Second, in the critical approach: Isaiah was by some studied as a book consisting of different historical voices lacking the unity of the book. By others, it was studied as a book consisting of different historical voices, but also with some sense of unity.

According to the critical approach, early OT scholars emphasized authorship. They recognized historical, theological, and literary breaks that led them to the assumption of multi-authorship. In 1145, Abraham ben Meir Ibn Ezra (1092-1167) implied that another author writes chs. 40-66 than chs. 1-39.[9] In 1778, the German Scholar Johann Benjamin Koppe, who edited, *D. Robert Lowth's Lord, Bischofs zu London ... Jesaias*, in his critical note, argues that some parts of Isaiah (15-16, 30:1-27, and 50) should not be considered as the work of the eighth century BC prophet.[10] In 1780, Johann Christoph Döderlein, *Esaias Ex Recensione Textvs Hebraei Ad Fidem Codd*, argues that chs. 40-66 should be considered the work of "an exilic anonymous prophet." In 1789 Döderlein confirm his claim in the third edition.[11] In 1783, Johann Gottfried Eichhorn confirms Koppe and Döderlein claims. Eichhorn, in his work, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament,* vol 3, argues that an exilic prophet might be written chs. 40-52.[12] Many critics use and develop Döderlein's hypothesis of the dual author of Isaiah. According to Uwe Becker, around 1800, the hypothesis that attributes chs. 40-66 to the exilic anonymous prophet can be recognized.[13]

731-46; Jacob Stromberg, *An introduction to the study of Isaiah*, T&T Clark approaches to biblical studies, (London: T&T Clark, 2011).

8 For a brief presentation of the tradition view: William Sanford LaSor et al., *Old Testament Survey : The Message, Form, and Background of the Old Testament*, 2 ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdman, 1996), 281; Walter Brueggemann, *Isaiah : 1-39* (Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 3; Oswald Allis, *The Unity of Isaiah : A Study in Prophecy* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Pub. Co., 1950), 44; Seitz, "Isaiah, Book of," 1001-11.

9 Abraham Ben Meïr Ibn Ezra and Michael Friedländer, *The Commentary of Ibn Ezra on Isaiah* (London: Pub. for the Society of Hebrew Literature, 1873), 169-71; Ulrich Berges, "The Book of Isaiah as Isaiah's Book : the Latest Developments in the Research of the Prophets," *Old testam. essays* 23, no. 3 (2010): 555; Jacob Stromberg, "The Book of Isaiah: Its Final Structure," in *The Oxford Handbook of Isaiah*, ed. Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 20-23.

10 Uwe Becker, "The Book of Isaiah: Its Composition History," in *The Oxford Handbook of Isaiah*, ed. Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 39; Berges, "The Book of Isaiah as Isaiah's Book : the Latest Developments in the Research of the Prophets," 555-56.

11 Johann Döderlein, *Esaias Ex Recensione Textvs Hebraei Ad Fidem Codd* (Norimbergae: Apud Georg. Petr. Monath, 1789); Becker, "The Book of Isaiah: Its Composition History," 39; Berges, "The Book of Isaiah as Isaiah's Book : the Latest Developments in the Research of the Prophets," 555-56.

12 Johann Gottfried Eichhorn, *Einleitung in das alte Testament. 3. 3* (Leipzig: Weidmann, 1783); Becker, "The Book of Isaiah: Its Composition History," 39.

13 Becker, "The Book of Isaiah: Its Composition History," 39.

In 1892, the German scholar Bernhard Duhm (1847-1928), in his work*, Das Buch Jesaia,* argues that the servant songs (42:1-4, 49:1-6, 50:4-9, and 52-53:12) written by the exilic anonymous prophet, who Duhm named "Deutero-Isaiah." Moreover, chs. 56–66 might combine materials return to the post-exilic period, and it should be considered the work of a later prophet, whom Duhum gave the name "Trito-Isaiah." Duhm also suggests that some parts of chs. 1-39 (Proto-Isaiah) have a long history of developments (19:1-15, 23:1-14, 24-27, and 36-39). Duhm's successors develop his hypothesis. The three-fold hypotheses (chs. 1-39; chs. 40-55; and chs. 56-66) are associated with Duhm's name and remain central argument.[14]

At the end of the nineteenth century, scholars investigated and defended the three-fold hypothesis of Duhm.[15] Critics develop various models of divisions, such as, Samuel Driver model (1-12; 13-23, 24-27, 28-33, 34-35, 36-39; and 40-66),[16] Yehuda Radday model (1-12; 13-23; 24-35; 40-48; 49-57; and 58-66),[17] John Watts model (1-33 and 34-66),[18] Marvin Sweeney model (1-39 and 40-66),[19] and Jacob Stromberg model that the author of third Isaiah chs. 56-66 was the reader and redactor of chs. 1-55.[20]

The newer approach, from the end of the twentieth century, canonical criticism was applied by Brevard S. Childs.[21] Some scholars, such as Walter Brueggemann, applied Child's approach in new perspectives.[22] This approach argues that although there are literary, theological, and

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14 I wished to study the pioneering work of Bernhard Duhm, *"Das Buch Jesaia."* As I remember, I never saw a reference to an English translation. However, many scholars present and discuss Duhm's contributions, cf. Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets*, 196; Collins, *Introduction to the Hebrew Bible and Deutero-Canonical Books*, 326-95; Becker, "The Book of Isaiah: Its Composition History," 39-40; Berges, "The Book of Isaiah as Isaiah's Book : the Latest Developments in the Research of the Prophets," 556.

15 See the more recent studies, Becker, "The Book of Isaiah: Its Composition History," 37-44; Stromberg, "The Book of Isaiah: Its Final Structure," 20-23.

16 Samuel Rolles Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (New York: C. Scribner's sons, 1892), 196.

17 Radday left out chs. 36-39 because it is a different narrative type. Yehuda T. Radday, "Isaiah and the Computer: A Preliminary Report," *Computers and the Humanities* 5, no. 2 (1970): 69.

18 John Watts, *Isaiah 1-33* vol. 24, World Biblical Commentary, (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1985); John D. W. Watts et al., *Isaiah 34-66*, vol. 25, Word biblical commentary, (1987).

19 Marvin Sweeney, *Isaiah 1-39 : With an Introduction to Prophetic Literature* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1996); Marvin A. Sweeney, *Isaiah 40-66* (Chicago: Chicago: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2016).

20 Jacob Stromberg, *Isaiah After Exile : The author of Third Isaiah as Reader and Redactor of the Book*, Oxford theological monographs, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), xiv-281.

21 Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 1-82; Brevard S. Childs, *Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context* (London: SCM Press, 1985), 6-16.

22 Brueggemann, *Isaiah : 1-39*, 1-7.

historical distinctions between the parts of Isaiah, there are also links and continuities. A paradigm shift can be recognized that focuses on the text in its final form rather than the author.[23]

Recently, Jacoup Stromberg, in his essay, "The Book of Isaiah: Its Final Structure," (2021), categorized the recent scholars' arguments into two levels, a macrostructure and a lower structure. At the macrostructure, Stromberg argues that most modern scholars recognize that Isaiah divided itself into two halves, chs. 1-39 that present pre-exilic material and chs. 40-66 that include material from exilic and post-exilic periods. At the lower structure, Isaiah consists of various subunits that were developed at long history (1-12; 13-27; 28-35; 36-39; 40-55; and 56-66) that bind together by the redaction processes.[24]

I am interested in features that bind the book together, even though I am aware that the book speaks about different phases in the history of Israel/Judah. Although questions concerning history and development are interesting, in this thesis, I will focus on Isaiah 19 in its final form rather than on its contested authorship. I will not delineate that Isaiah consists of different historical voices through various subunits that were composed at long history (1-12; 13-23; 24-27; 28-33; 34-35; 36-39, 40-55, and 56-66). These subunits bind together by the redaction processes that produced literary and theological links. These links function as a bridge to the unity of Isaiah in its final form.

Isaiah 19 is part of a section of the book that is usually classified as texts concerning the nations (chs. 13-23). In order to understand the broader and more narrow contexts of Isaiah 19, some messages need to be said about the texts concerning the nations in the OT, the texts concerning the nations in Isaiah, and the texts concerning the nations in Isaiah 13-23.

1.3. The texts concerning the nations in the Old Testament

The OT includes many texts concerning the nations and neighbors of ancient Judah/Israel. These texts are considered a genre in the OT scholarship and called "oracles against the nations."[25] I am not agreed with this name because some texts have a positive message for the nations that we can call "oracles in favor of the nations." Marvin Sweeney and Aschalew Kebede agree with my claim.

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23 Becker, "The Book of Isaiah: Its Composition History," 37-44; Stromberg, "The Book of Isaiah: Its Final Structure," 20-23; Collins, *Introduction to the Hebrew Bible and Deutero-Canonical Books*, 395-96.

24 Stromberg, "The Book of Isaiah: Its Final Structure," 19-35.

25 This genre is labeled in various ways, for example, “prophecies against foreign nations,” “oracles against foreign nations,” “oracles against the nations,” “foreign nations prophecies,” “foreign nations collections,” “the nations material,” and “foreign nations oracles”, cf. Csaba Balogh, *The Stele of YHWH in Egypt : The Prophecies of Isaiah 18-20 Concerning Egypt and Kush* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 37. For this thesis, the preferred terminology is “the texts concerning the nations.”

According to Sweeney, some texts, as Isaiah 7:7-9; 41:8-13; Jeremiah 31:2-6; and Amos 9:11-12, indicate such a positive attitude towards the nations as he called "oracles of salvation."[26] In 2002, Kebede wrote his thesis, "How Can the Concept of Universalism and Nationalism in the Book of Isaiah be Reconciled?" Kebede argues that there are some texts, as Isaiah 2:1-2; 19:16-25; 42:1-6; 45:14-19; 49:22-26; 60:1-16; 56:1-8 and 66:1-6, seek "salvation to the nations."[27] He concludes that Isaiah extends the concept of salvation to both Israel (nationalism) and nations (universalism).[28] Thus, I apply a neutral name, "texts concerning the nations." However, the following question will be sought answered here and in the following sections 1.3.1. and 1.3.2.: In what ways does the OT present the texts concerning the nations? I will then ask: How have OT scholars dealt with these texts?

According to the first question, these texts are mostly located in the prophetic books. These are, for example, Isaiah 2:1-4; 5:26-30; 7; 8:1-9; 9:1-7; 10; 11; 13-23; 25:6-12; 26; 30:1-7; 31; 34; 36; 37:21-38; 38; 39; 43:14; 46:1-2; 47:4-5; 56:3-8; 59:18-19; 60:10-17; 62; 66:12-24; Jeremiah 25:15-38; 27:1-15; 46-51; Ezekiel 25-32; 35; 38-39; Daniel; Hosea 4:1-3; 7:8-12; 9:1-6; 11; Joel 4:1-17; Amos 1:3- 2: 3; Obadiah; Jonah 1-3; Micah 1:2-4; 4:11-14; Nahum; Habakkuk 1:5-11; 2; Zephaniah 2:4-15; Haggai 2:20-22; Zachariah 9:1-8; and Malachi 1:4-5. Although the texts concerning the nations dominate the prophetic books, there is one exception: the book of Hosea does not mention any text concerning the nations. Generally speaking, these texts contain some similar characteristics. For example, the texts can be divided into negative and positive sections depending on the political relationship with Judah/Israel and the nations. These texts declare that Judah/Israel and the nations are under the sovereignty of YHWH. Both Judah/Israel and the nations are tools of YHWH's judgment.

In reviewing the history of research of texts concerning the nations in OT scholarship, it is possible to see that the texts concerning the nations have received little attention within OT research before the first half of the twentieth century. Most OT scholars' contributions to this field

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26 Sweeney, *Isaiah 1-39 : With an Introduction to Prophetic Literature*, 25.

27 Aschalew Kebede, "How can the concepts of universalism and nationalism in the Book of Isaiah be reconciled?" (New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 2002), 1-46.

28 Ibid, 244-250.

can be found in the commentaries or studies dealing with specific OT books.[29] From the 1960s, some researchers studied these texts as they thought they had one main theme.[30]

In 1964, two scholars introduced texts concerning the nations as the central theme for OT scholarship. The first scholar is John Hayes, who investigates the texts concerning the nations in his thesis, *The Oracles Against the Nations in the Old Testament: Their Usage and Theological Importance.* Hayes investigates the function of the oracles within the context of the following: the Holy war, Israel/Judah's religious cult, political relationships between nations, and the theological ideologies such as YHWH as the universal God in the eschatological visions.[31]

The second scholar is Norman Gottwald, who published his study under the title, *All the Kingdoms of the Earth: Israelite Prophecy and International Relations in the Ancient Near East*, in which he presents a historical survey of Israelite prophecy. Gottwald explores the relationship between texts concerning the nations and the prophecy of the Ancient Near East. This study shed light on the role of the international political relations between the nations and Judah/Israel for understanding these texts.[32]

However, most of these studies are dominated by historical questions as a result of applying historical-critical approaches in their OT scholarship. The number of studies that analyze the texts concerning the nations in the OT has recently increased. For example, Jakob Wöhrle, in his essay, "Israel's Identity and the Threat of the Nations in the Persian Period," 2011, examines the formation and the structure of the oracles against the nations in the Book of Twelve to investigate Israel's international identity in the Persian period. In his survey, Wöhrle argues that the nations' corpus shares some familiar features resulting from the redactions. Besides, it is against the nations as a

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29 John Harry Brangenberg, "A Reexamination of the Date, Authorship, Unity and Function of Isaiah 13-23" (Unpublished Ph.D. diss. Gateway Seminary in Phoenix, Arizona/Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, 1989), 1; Marta Høyland Lavik, *A People Tall and Smooth-Skinned : The Rhetoric of Isaiah 18* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 12.

30 Brangenberg, "A Reexamination of the Date, Authorship, Unity and Function of Isaiah 13-23," 13-4. John Brangenberg offers a good review for these studies. For example: Barry Margulis, "Studies in the Oracles Against the Nations" (Ph. D. Dissertation Brandeis University, 1967); James Smith, "The Destruction of Foreign Nations in Hebrew Prophetic Literature" (Ph. D. diss. Hebrew Union College- Jewish Institute of Religion, 1969); Gwilym Jones, "An Examination of Some Leading Motifs in the Prophetic Oracles Against Foreign Nations" (Ph. D. Diss. University College of North, Wales, 1970); John Hayes and Stuart Irvine, *Isaiah, the Eighth Century Prophet : His Times & His Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987).

31 John Hayes, "The Oracles Against the Nations in the Old Testament : Their Usage and Theological Importance" (Ph. D. diss. Princeton Theological Seminary University 1964), 1-292; John Hayes, *The Oracles Against the Nations in the Old Testament : Their Usage and Theological Importance* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Univ. Microfilms, 1981). Cf. Brangenberg, "A Reexamination of the Date, Authorship, Unity and Function of Isaiah 13-23," 4.

32 Norman Gottwald, *All the Kingdoms of the Earth : Israelite Prophecy and International Relations in the Ancient Near East* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964). Cited in, Brangenberg, "A Reexamination of the Date, Authorship, Unity and Function of Isaiah 13-23," 3-4.

whole, not against specific nations as the oracles of Isaiah 13-23. However, Wöhrle concludes that how the intention of nations corpus shows the theological foundations of Israel's international identity. The circumstances led the Israeli people to a remembrance of their transgressions. Besides, Israel's lack of power led to the expectation that YHWH acts for them and stops employing the nations as a threat.[33]

1.3.1. Texts concerning the nations in Isaiah

Texts concerning the nations, other than Judah/Israel, can be mostly found in the divisions of Isaiah (1-12; 13-27; 28-35; 36-39; 40-55; and 56-66).

Chs. 1-12 begins with a portrayal of a nation with a positive image in the eschatological text (2:2-4). In chapter five, the first negative attitude towards a nation appears (5:26-30). The texts reveal YHWH to be the God of Judah/Israel and the God who rules the nations (7:5-25; 8:4-8). Nations are tools in YHWH's hand, who uses the nations to judge Judah/Israel (7:1-25; 8:1-8; 10). The nations will be ruled under the Davidic line in his peaceful kingdom (9:6-7; 11), similar to the vision in Isaiah 2:2-4.

Chs. 13-23 are colored mostly by negative attitudes. it present twelve nations: Babylon (13:1-14:27), Assyria (14:24-27), Philistia (14:28-32), Moab (15:1-16:14), Damascus (17:1-14), Cush (18:1-7), Egypt (19:1-25), Egypt and Cush (20:1-6), Babylon (21:1-10), Edom (21:11-12), Arabia (21:13-17), Shebna (22:15-25), and Tyre (23:1-18). The reading of these texts reveals some points. A negative attitude towards the nations mostly dominates these texts, except Cush (18:1-7), Egypt (19:18-25).[34] For example, YHWH's judgment results from His anger and indignation (13:2, 5, 13; 14:6). The nations will be enslaved (14:1-2), and they will pay taxes (23:18). YHWH punishment will cover the earth and heaven as a metaphor for the comprehensiveness of punishment (13:9-16; 14:26). YHWH is stirring up the nations so that they will punish one another (13:17-22; 19:1-4; 20:1-6). These texts have a function in the context of YHWH's relationship with Judah/Israel, especially when Judah/Israel asks for protection from the military power of the nations (14:1-2; 20:3-6).

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33 Jakob Wöhrle, "Israel's Identity and the Threat of the Nations in the Persian Period," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Achaemenid Period: Negotiating Identity in an International Context*, ed. Oded Lipschits, Gary N Knoppers, and Manfred Oeming (Lewinston: University Park: Penn State University Press, 2011), 153-72.

34 In 2006, Lavik argues Isreal, not Cush, is the subject to YHWH's punishment. Lavik, *A People Tall and Smooth-Skinned : The Rhetoric of Isaiah 18*, 235-38.

Chs. 24-27 contains the so-called Isaianic apocalyptic vision. The texts concerning the nations function within this apocalyptic vision as the means through which YHWH will restore Judah/Israel and all the nations (25:6-10). The texts concerning the nations within this vision are general and positive: In that day, YHWH will bring salvation to all the people of earth (25:6-10, 26). There is only one exception to this general rule, which is contained in 25:10-12. These verses give a negative image of Moab.

Chs. 28-35 presents the political relationship between Judah/Israel and the nations and how YHWH rejects their political armies' alliances, especially with Egypt (30:1-7; 31:1-3) and Assyria (31:8-9). YHWH will judge Judah/Israel for leaving Him and asking Egypt for protection, and YHWH will judge the nations who have pride and power (28-31; 34). The text 31:1-3 declares why YHWH punishes the nations that are due to their sin of pride.

In chs. 36-39, we can see two shifts. Chs. 36-39 move from the pride of Assyria. The second shift is from the disappearance of Assyria to the rise of the power of Babylon.

Chs. 40-55 indicates the tension between negative and positive associations to foreign nations. On the one hand, YHWH trails and judge the nations because of their idolatry through some passages (41:1-42:17, 46:1-2; 47:4-5) that also claim YHWH is the only universal sovereign and universal deity for all nations. On the other hand, YHWH anointed Cyrus to carry out His purpose. The nations will know YHWH and worship Him (44:28-45:1-25). The nations will serve YHWH and Judah/Israel and be a part of His people under His covenant (55:1-13). Chs. 40-55 are unique because they extend and universalize the worship and sovereignty of YHWH and His covenant. However, Isaiah 40-55 aims to clarify that YHWH will judge the nations to save Judah/Israel and give hope among the exile by restoring Zion to bring universal peace (49:1-26). YHWH even judges Judah/Israel (43:8-44:5, 46) as the nations, but YHWH will bring His salvation after the judgment.[35]

Chs. 56-66 concern nations in general, which means no nation is mentioned by name. This section reflects the same tension between the negative and positive texts. The texts reveal that YHWH will punish the nations according to their deeds (59:18-19), and they will be under the rule of Judah/Israel to whom they will pay taxes (60; 61: 6; 66:12-20). Nevertheless, YHWH will

[35] Andrew Wilson, *The Nations in Deutero-Isaiah: A Study on Composition and Structure*, Ancient Near Eastern texts and studies, (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1986), 23-332.

restore all the nations in the future, and He will bring all the people to His house and His holy mountain Zion (56:3-8; 60:10-17; 62; 66:12-24).[36]

To conclude, there are texts in Isaiah that speak about the nations in general without offering specific names. These can be seen in Isaiah 2:1-4; 5:26-30; 25:6-9; 34; 36; 37:21-38; 56:3-8; 59:18-19; and 66:12-24. Other texts concern specific nations, such as Isaiah 7; 8:1-9; 9:1-7; 10; 11; 13-23; 25:10-12; 26; 30:1-7; 31; 36; 37:21-38; 39; 43:14; 46:1-2; and 47:4-5. Most of these texts reflect a negative view of the nations, such as Isaiah chs. 13-23. At the same time, some of these texts reflect a positive view within the prophet's eschatological vision, such as Isaiah 2:1-4; 18:7; 19:18-25; 41:8-13, 14-16; 43:1-7; 44:1-5; and 66:12-24.[37]

Isaiah reflects the tension between negative and positive images of the nations. On the one hand, Isaiah starts and ends with a positive vision about the nations such as YHWH bringing all the people to His house and His holy mountain, Zion (25:6-10, 26; 56:3-8; 60:10-17; 62; 66:12-24). On the other hand, Judah/Israel has a private relationship with YHWH, the nations will be ruled by the Davidic line in His peaceful kingdom (9:6-7; 11), and the nations will be as slaves (14:1-2; 60:10-12) and made to pay taxes (23:18; 45:14; 60:4-7; 61:6; 66:12-20). However, the previous brief presentation explains the relationship between the nations and Judah/Israel in four dimensions. From the texts, YHWH uses the nations as a tool in His hand to punish Judah/Israel for their sins and misdeeds (3; 5:8-30; 8:1-7; 9:8-21; 28; 29), and for rejecting Him and for asking for protection from the other nations through political alliances (7; 19:11-15; 28:14-22; 30:1-4; 31). Next, YHWH is described as using the nations as a tool to give salvation to Judah/Israel (37:5-13; 44:28; 45:1-7; 47). Third, YHWH uses the nations to punish each other for their sins, misdeeds, pride, and their use of power against Judah/Israel (7; 10:5-19; 13-23; 19:11-15; 28:14-22; 30:1-4; 31:1-3). Lastly, YHWH himself will punish the nations for all the previous reasons given (7:17-25; 13:1-16; 14:24-27; 15-17; 19:5-10; 24; 34; 37:36-38). All these dimensions can be understood in three contexts: the context of YHWH's holiness (4:16; 6; 30:27-33; 40:18-26), the context of His relationship with Judah/Israel, and the context of YHWH as a ruler of all the nations (7:5-25; 8:4-8; 40:18-26; 45:20-24).[38]

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36 Cf., Lavik, *A People Tall and Smooth-Skinned : The Rhetoric of Isaiah 18*, 3-4.

37 Cf.,Sweeney, *Isaiah 1-39 : With an Introduction to Prophetic Literature*, 25; Lavik, *A People Tall and Smooth-Skinned : The Rhetoric of Isaiah 18*, 3-4; 13.

38 Cf., Ibid, 4-5.

How have OT scholars dealt with these texts? Most studies analyze the texts concerning the nations in Isaiah chs. 13-23, as the following section, will present. Some scholars study the text concerning the nations in Isaiah apart from Isaiah chs. 13-23.

In 1986, Andrew Wilson, in his study, *The Nations in Deutero-Isaiah: A Study on Composition and Structure*, analyses the texts concerning the nations in Isaiah 40-55 by applying what he called compositional analysis that combines two methods: rhetorical criticism and form criticism.[39] He discusses the place and the function of the text concern the nations in Isaiah 40-50 through four perspectives: "as parties to and audience at the trial speeches, as the subject of polemics against idolatry, envisioned as serving Yahweh and Israel at the restored Zion, and in relation to the servant."[40] Wilson argues that texts concerning the nations are colored by the idea of YHWH's universal sovereignty. The nations acknowledge YHWH as the sole universal God, will resulting in a rejection of their idolatry. The nations will serve YHWH and Judah/Israel to restore Zion. YHWH will bring peace and salvation for all people under His covenant. According to Wilson, Isaiah 40-50 universalized YHWH's sovereignty to the nation. He universalized the Mosaic and Davidic covenants. Wilson argues that Isaiah 40-50 was concerned to give hope to his audience in exile by highlighting the nations' fate by YHWH. Thus, the people in exile should believe in their savior and redeemer. Wilson's study is interesting because he brings out and analyses the relationship between these texts studied separately. [41] As Wilson has done, I want to bring out and analyze the juxtaposition of the message of judgment and blessing concerning Egypt in Isaiah 19 that have been mainly studied separately as Isaiah 19:1-17 reflects one period in history, and 18-25 another.

1.3.2. Texts concerning the nations in Isaiah chapters 13-23

As mentioned, texts concerning the nations in Isaiah chs. 13-23 present messages of judgment concern specific twelve nations. They start with a משא ("an oracle") attached to the specific nation name. The formula משא function as a key introductory superscription for a message of judgment that occurs ten times in chs. 13-23 (13:1; 14:28; 15:1; 17:1; 19:1; 21:1, 11, 13; 22:1; and 23:1). The exceptions to this are Cush (18:1-7), Jerusalem (22:1-14), and Shebna (22:15-25).

39 Wilson, *The Nations in Deutero-Isaiah: A Study on Composition and Structure*, 1-21; 321-25.
40 Ibid, 325.
41 Ibid, 1-21; 320-332.

According to the scholarship of Isaiah chs. 13-23, before the second half of the last century, there was a lack of attention given to these chapters. As Hans Wildberger explains, "these chapters are not given the same focus as is given to the study of the first part of Isaiah."[42] Wildberger discusses the reasons for the lack of attention that these texts have a complicated history of development. Thus, the questions about date and authorship are challenging to solve. Also, these texts' theological setting is problematic because it is related to many historical, social, and religious contexts.[43] Recently, there is an increase in the studies that give attention to Isaiah chs. 13-23, mostly in theses.

The first study that explored Isaiah chs. 13-23 was Seth Erlandsson's work from 1970 entitled, *The Burden of Babylon: A Study of Isaiah 13:2-14:23*. Erlandsson investigates the texts concerning Babylon with a focus on the text, context, and contents.[44] After ten years, Andrew Macintosh published his study, *Isaiah XXI: A Palimpsest,* in 1980. Macintosh's extensive study of chapter 21 explores the oracles that concern the nations through the textual and linguistic problems with studying the text's historical context literary genres.[45]

The first thesis, which explores Isaiah chs. 13-23, is John Harry Brangenberg's thesis from 1989 entitled "A Reexamination of the Date, Authorship, Unity and Function of Isaiah 13-23." Brangenberg investigates Isaiah chs. 13-23 through textual criticism and discusses the historical questions with these texts' theological functions. According to Isaiah 19, Brangenberg finds that there is no conflict between vv. 1-15 and vv. 16-25, and there is no reason to consider that vv. 16-25 are composed late. Brangenberg argues that vv. 16-25 keep the theology and message of Isaiah. vv. 1-15 reveals YHWH plan and action, while vv. 16-26 offer the missing elements in vv. 1-15 that is how the people will respond to YHWH plan. In contrast to some scholars, whom argue that the formula "in that day" is a literary sign for a different passage, Brangenberg claims that the formula "in that day" functions as a link between the two passages.[46]

In 2002, Kebede wrote his thesis, "How Can the Concept of Universalism and Nationalism in the Book of Isaiah be Reconciled?" In contrast to some scholars, who limit the universalism

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42 Hans Wildberger, *Isaiah 13-27* vol. 23b, Continental Commentaries, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), vii.

43 Ibid.

44 Seth Erlandsson, *The Burden of Babylon : A Study of Isaiah 13:2-14:23*, vol. 4, Coniectanea Biblica, (Lund: Gleerup, 1970), 1-12.

45 Andrew Macintosh, *Isaiah XXI : A Palimpsest* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

46 Brangenberg, "A Reexamination of the Date, Authorship, Unity and Function of Isaiah 13-23," 49-54; 123-30; 244-47; 306-09.

idea of salvation to chs. 40-55, Kebede brings out and investigate texts from various sections of Isaiah, as Isaiah 2:1-2; 19:16-25; 42:1-6; 45:14-19; 49:22-26; 60:1-16; 56:1-8 and 66:1-6, that seek "salvation to the nations."[47]According to Isaiah 19, he concludes that "although this passage [Isaiah 19:16-25] is syntactically independent, the phrase "in that day" links [Isaiah] 19:16-25 to the previous material."[48]

In 2004, Marta Høyland Lavik's thesis, "A People Tall and Smooth-Skinned: The Rhetoric of Isaiah 18," analyzed the rhetoric of Isaiah 18, and her dissertation was published in 2007. Lavik concludes that Kush is not disparaged in Isaiah 18; instead, Judah is subject to YHWH's punishment.[49]

In 2011, Csaba Balogh published his thesis, *The Stele of YHWH in Egypt: The Prophecies of Isaiah 18-20 Concerning Egypt and Kush*. Balogh approaches Isaiah 18-20 from three angles the literary, the historical, and the theological. His main conclusions are:

> Although written on different occasions, Isa. 19:1–15 and 19:16–25 must be regarded as related. Vv. 16–25 obviously elaborate vv. 1–15, and they were never supposed to function independently from the latter. The structure of judgment followed by salvation, also appears in Isa. 15:1–16:5; 23:1–18 and possibly 17:1–8.[50]

In 2021, Hyun Chul Paul Kim, in his study, "The Oracles against the Nations," presents analyses of the oracle of Isaiah chs. 13-23. He argues that these texts are produced through a long history of complex editorial developments that are extended from the eighth century BC until the exilic and the post-exilic periods. Kim argues that these oracles, chs. 13-23, are not isolated but function in their location. chs. 13-23 offer expansions of chs. 1-12, and they have thematic and linguistic connections to chs. 24-66. Kim also highlights that the genre of these oracles is not unique but is used in other prophetic books. Finally, Kim proposes a dual key message for these oracles based on their location role: judgment and hope. YHWH will judge the nations for their empty pride to save Judah/Israel. Besides, YHWH, in His universal sovereignty role, will bring hope for all people.[51]

To conclude, Isaiah chs. 13-23 combines many texts concerning the nations composed in one section. Chs. 18-19 are interesting to me as an Egyptian scholar because they deal with the two

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47 Kebede, "How can the concepts of universalism and nationalism in the Book of Isaiah be reconciled?," 1-46.
48 Ibid, 75.
49 Lavik, *A People Tall and Smooth-Skinned : The Rhetoric of Isaiah 18*, 235-38.
50 Balogh, *The Stele of YHWH in Egypt : The Prophecies of Isaiah 18-20 Concerning Egypt and Kush*, 340.
51 Hyun Chul Paul Kim, "The Oracles against the Nations," in *The Oxford Handbook of Isaiah*, ed. Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 59-78.

kingdoms of the Nile, Cush and Egypt, which represent Africa in the OT. For this thesis, Isaiah 19 is particularly interesting because it deals with Egypt. In examining chapter 19, this study will focus on how the message of judgment and blessing functions in this chapter. As already said, this is a question that intrigues and baffles both academic and ordinary readers.

1.4. Studies of Isaiah 19

Isaiah 19 bears the title משא מצרים ("an oracle concerning Egypt").[52] As already mentioned, chapter 19 seems to consist of two main parts: vv. 1-17 and vv. 18-25. There are several contributions to the understanding of Isaiah 19. My main concern is how the scholars identify and discuss the complexity of the thematic shift of Isaiah 19. Scholars' contributions can be roughly divided into two groups: traditional approaches and newer approaches.

1.4.1. Traditional approaches

During the last two centuries, scholars were mainly interested in the text's historical questions, as this was the era when historical-critical methods were developed and dominated biblical scholarship.

The German OT scholar Hans Wildberger is a good representative of the traditional approach. In his work, *Isaiah 13-27,* Wildberger identifies that although Isaiah 19 addresses the same theme, "Egypt," it has literary and theological breaks. Wildberger explains that there is a literary break in verse 15, and a shift from poetry to prose in verse 16. He also states that theologically, there is also a break in Isaiah's thought in vv. 1-15 with a different theological setting than vv. 16-25. He argues that vv. 1-15 reflects a different historical political setting in Egypt than in vv. vv. 16-25.[53] He argues that "without a doubt, however, the present form of this chapter does not consist of one unified piece."[54] In order to discuss these breaks, he divides Isaiah 19 into two parts or messages. The first part, Isaiah 19:1-15, is the earlier prophecies composed sequentially of three distinguishing units that reflect the historical settings with a divine judgment against Egypt. The second part, Isaiah 19:16-25, is composed of later prophecies composed sequentially of five distinguishing units that reflect the other historical circumstances with positive developments of the relationship between Judah/Israel and Egypt. Wildberger tries to highlight these breaks, arguing that the two parts of Isaiah 19, including their units, were composed by multiple author(s) and

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52 Cf., Isaiah 20:1-6; Jeremiah 46; Ezekiel 29-32; and Zechariah 14:18-19.
53 Wildberger, *Isaiah 13-27* 23b, 233-59; 60-82.
54 Ibid, 233.

written in different times and were modified by a later redactor(s). Each unit reflects its historical settings and shows its attitude towards Egypt. At the end of each part, vv. 19:1-15, Wildberger reveals questions concerning the connection with chs. 40-55. In the first part, he portrays YHWH as governing over Egypt and its gods, which is a central theme in chs. 40-55. In the second part, Wildberger asks about the theological themes that have similarities with chs. 40-55, such as the universalism of YHWH, the uniqueness of Israel, and the cultic language. Wildberger closes his discussion by revealing these questions, but he hardly discusses them.[55] I believe that what Wildberger starts to ask, needs more examinations. As Wildberger does not conclude, these ideas inspired me to ask questions, such as why are the two parts in juxtaposition in Isaiah 19, and why are some units that seem to reflect the theological and historical settings of chs. 40-55 are located in Isaiah 19?

Another example is the American scholar Joseph Blenkinsopp's commentary, *Isaiah 1-39*. Blenkinsopp's critical study is impressive because he applies historical-critical approaches combined with other perspectives: textual, literary, form, structure, and theological perspectives. He addressed the question of whether there are any connections between Isaiah 19:1-17 and 19:18-25? Blenkinsopp distinguishes between vv. 1-15 and vv. 16-25 on a literary and historical basis. He argues that the five formula of ביום ההוא of vv. 16-25 have been attached sequentially according to the context of each strophe.[56] Blenkinsopp also argues that "the remaining four "on that day" additions [vv. 16-25] have nothing in common with 19:1-17 apart from speaking about Egypt."[57] Blenkinsopp's comments imply that the two parts' tension was produced from political and historical developments. According to Blenkinsopp, the only sense for juxtaposing two contradictory passages that "have nothing in common" is that they "speak about Egypt." Blenkinsopp's assumption might be vital if Isaiah 19 is the only text to speak about Egypt within Isaiah's tradition. Therefore, the motif of Egypt is widely occurring in Isaiah. I wish that he could have discussed more of these questions: Why Isaiah 19 exactly? What about vv. 16-25 that reflect the theological aspects of chs. 40-55? What is the function of vv. 16-25 within the texts that concern the nation Isaiah chs. 13-23?

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55 Ibid, 228-282.

56 Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39 : a new translation with introduction and commentary*, vol. 19, Bibelen, (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 312-20.

57 Ibid, 317.

1.4.2. Newer approaches

At the end of the twentieth century, new approaches were developed to study the Bible. What are the newer approaches to the juxtaposition of messages of judgment and blessing in Isaiah 19?

The first example is John Watts's work, *Isaiah 1-33*, in 1985. In contrast to many scholars, Watts divided Isaiah into two main sections, Isaiah 1-33 and Isaiah 34-66. Watts shows how Isaiah 19 is a visionary text, which speaks about YHWH's plan. Watts distinguishes between YHWH's plan in vv. 1-17 and the consequence of this plan in vv. 18-25. According to Watts, YHWH plans to punish Egypt because of its pride in political power and its foolish leaders and rulers. Watts connects the text with the historical setting of 716-715 BC (the 25th Dynasty). Watts distinguishes between five results of the Egyptian pride in vv. 18-25 begins with the formula "in that day" to show what YHWH is doing. This visionary text ends with YHWH's presence and influence covering Egypt, Assyria, and Judah/Israel.[58]

In 1993, Christopher Seitz, in his book, *Isaiah 1-39*, focuses mainly on the theological and literary aspects of the text. According to the tension of the two passages of Isaiah 19, Seitz argues that Isaiah 19 should be understood in the light of chs. 18-20, which concerns Egypt and Cush; chs. 30-31, which concern Egypt; and chs. 36-37, which concerns Assyria. Seitz argues that Judah/Israel trusts in Egypt and Kush's political alliance and fails to recognize that YHWH controls the destiny of all nations. Seitz argues that although there is judgment over Egypt in vv. 1-15, it shifts to the blessing in the future in vv. 16-25, which are designated by the phrase "on the one day." For Seitz, this shift is not odd because it is a part of YHWH's plan. YHWH planned to judge the whole earth (14:26), but in the future, He will also reach out in love to the whole earth (45:22).[59]

In 1997, John Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 1–39*. Oswalt argues that we should understand Isaiah 19 in the light of the main topic of Isaiah as a whole, that is, the conflict between human pride and divine glory in which human pride brings self-destruction and YHWH's judgment while there is also the grace of God that will bring all people to Him. This is in the light of Judah/Israel's trust in the nations and the nations' self-pride within chs. 13-23, and in the light of Judah's trust in Egypt in chs. 19-20.[60] He explains that "whatever we trust in place of God will

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58 Watts, *Isaiah 1-33* 24, 248-62.

59 Christopher Seitz, *Isaiah 1-39*, Interpretation : A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching, (Louisville, Ky: John Knox Press, 1993), 149-56.

60 John Oswalt and Frederick Bruce, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament : The Book of Isaiah Chapters 40-66* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 3, 366-81.

eventually turn on us and destroy us."[61] Oswalt argues that vv. 1-15 and vv. 16-25 are held together by a central unifying theme, "trust of Egypt." Why would Judah/Israel trust Egypt? Vv. 1-15 negated all the Egyptian power to help Judah/Israel since Egypt cannot save herself. Vv. 16-25 shows the foolishness of Judah/Israel to seek the help of Egypt since Egypt will one day return to YHWH and worship Him with Judah/Israel and Assyria. Chapter 20 shows Egypt will betray Judah/Israel (Isaiah 20). On the one hand, I agree with Oswalt that the two passages seem to share the same motif, "Egypt." On the other hand, Oswalt's assumption of the unifying theme in chs. 19-20 would make sense if Isaiah 19:16-25 was located after Isaiah 20 or attached to it. Based on Oswalt's ideas, the questions he does not answer arise here: How can we understand the tension of the atmosphere of two passages that share a unified motif with internal breaks? Do the two passages share literary devices resulting from composing processes of various literary units in one unified theme? Do they share theological aspects with other later texts of Isaiah?

In 1998, Walter Brueggemann and his commentary, *Isaiah 1-39,* should be mentioned. Brueggemann studies Isaiah in its final form with a particular focus on biblical theology aspects. In his discussion about Isaiah 19, Brueggemann reflects on the political background of the relationship between Egypt and Israel/Judah that he describes as "refuge and goad."[62] He divides Isaiah 19 into two parts, vv.1-15, and vv. 16-25. Brueggemann argues that the God who strikes Egypt for its plans in 19:1-15 is also the God who delivers and heals all nations for His large plan of chosen people, including Egypt vv. 16-25.[63]

In 2006, Daniel L. Kim published a thesis, "Isaiah 19: a Rhetorical, Historical, and Theological Study." Kim undertakes his study from three approaches: rhetorical, historical, and theological.[64] Kim distinguishes two portions of Isaiah 19, the poetic portion vv. 1-15 and the prose portion vv.16-25. Kim argues that there is no problem between the two portions. Historically, they go back to the twenty-fifth dynasty or before the twenty-fifth dynasty. Theologically, Kim argues that YHWH strikes in vv. 1-15 to heal and redeem in vv. 16-25.[65] Rhetorically, he concludes:

> both the poetic [vv. 1-15] and prose [vv. 16-25] sections employ similar rhetorical devices to covey its message…. It appears to be very unlikely that authors from different generations or

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61 Ibid, 366.
62 Brueggemann, *Isaiah : 1-39*, 155.
63 Ibid, 155-166.
64 Daniel Kim, "Isaiah 19 : A Rhetorical, Historical, and Theological Study" (Ph. D. diss. Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2006), iv-v; 220-30.
65 Ibid, 27-29;131-132; 227-229.

> even centuries would be sensitive enough to employ such similar devices to present its unified message.[66]

I wished Kim would discuss that if the two sections of Isaiah 19 employ similar literary devices, how can we distinguish between poetry and prose?

In 2007, Hilary Marlow published an essay, "The Lament over the River Nile—Isaiah xix 5-10 in Its Wider Context." This is a comparison study between Isaiah 19:5-10 and an ancient Egyptian prophecy called the Prophecy of Neferti.[67] Marlow's essay presents and discusses the various literary and historical parallelism between the two texts. Based on Marlow, the Prophecy of Neferti reflect a shift from judgment to salvation as Isaiah 19.

In 2015, Shawn Aster published "Isaiah 19: The "Burden of Egypt" and Neo-Assyrian Imperial Policy." The essay focuses on the historical-political background of 19:19-25, and its theological implications. It also compares Isaiah 19 with material from Exodus 1-15.[68] Aster argues that "the behavior of the Egyptians in vv. 20-22 provokes the unique theological messages of vv. 23-25, in which Egypt and Assyria join Israel in the triad blessed through the universal sovereignty of YHWH."[69]

1.5. Significance of a literary reading of Isaiah 19

The literary review above shows that all scholars presented observe that Isaiah 19 consists of two rather different parts, and each part composes various units. Scholars could be divided into two groups corresponding to how they deal with the juxtaposition of messages of judgment and blessing in Isaiah 19. First, Scholars perceive an opposition in relating to the question: why are the two parts of Isaiah 19 put together? The answer has to do with different political relationships with Israel/Judah. It reflects on the historical solution that Isaiah 19:1-17 going back to a period in history, and 18-25 another. This explanation is probably seen by scholars working historical-critical, for instance, Wildberger and Blenkinsopp. The historical answer is one plausible explanation to the juxtaposition, but it comes up with questions, which is good and opens the door to more discussion. Another can be what I find out through the analysis of the rhetoric of the text. In my opinion, historical and literary explanations can together deepen our insight into something

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66 Ibid, 225-226.

67 Hilary Marlow, "The Lament over the River Nile—Isaiah xix 5-10 in Its Wider Context," *Vetus Testamentum* 57 (2007): 229-42.

68 Shawn Aster, "Isaiah 19: The "Burden of Egypt" and Neo-Assyrian Imperial Policy," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 135 (2015): 453-70.

69 Ibid, 453.

we do not understand straight away. In contrast, Brangenberg, Kebede, Oswalt, Seitz, Brueggemann, Balogh, Aster, and Kim argue that there is no problem with the juxtaposition. The judgment message is transformed gradually into a salvation message in 18-25. This explanation is observed by scholars applying newer approaches that mainly focus on biblical theology aspects that do not challenge them to discuss the historical and literary questions about Isaiah 19.

The literary review above also shows that Isaiah's 19 literary aspects were subject to investigation to a lesser extent. Balogh and Kim opened the door to study Isaiah 19 from a literary perspective. Therefore, there is a need for a detailed literary analysis of the rhetoric of Isaiah 19 because Balogh and Kim's literary contributions are limited through applying different approaches simultaneously. Besides, there are questions in the research literature that should be discussed from a literary perspective as the scholars discuss it from historical and theological approaches.

Although Isaiah 19 has received more attention recently, the review above shows that scholars ask questions about the juxtaposition of the two parts of Isaiah 19, but hardly answered these questions. Some challenges should be addressed. For example, how can we understand the positive attitude towards the nations in Isaiah 19:18-25 in the light of chs. 13-23 that present the OT genre "oracles against the nations,"? Isaiah 19:18-25, with the other positive texts in the OT, can be highlighted on another genre in OT studies "oracles in favor of the nations."

As an Egyptian reader, I can recognize how the two parts of Isaiah 19 distress and inspire the audience in the contemporary time, and both parts of the text have created many debates in the contemporary Egyptian contexts. The function of Isaiah 19 in the Egyptian contexts is interesting. How can the message of judgment and blessing in Isaiah 19 function in the same context? Do the texts' rhetorically power and internal logic –or lack of such– play a unique role in inspiring the Egyptian reader by two contradictory messages? Are the two parts of the text designed to function rhetorically, or are they located side by side at random, only connected by sharing the same motif?

Isaiah 19 contains various textual and translation problems that remain unresolved. Basically, the textual and the translation problems are literary problems that should be resolved in the literary analyses.

In Hebrew texts, it is not easy to distinguish between poetry and prose. Scholars claim Isaiah 19 is interesting because it contains a literary shift, from poetry in Isaiah 19:1-15 into prose in Isaiah 19:16-25. I want to investigate the reasons that lay behind divided the division of Isaiah into two forms by asking: what criteria do scholars apply to decide which parts are is poetry or prose?

When a biblical text is read, three worlds meet, the world behind the text, the world of the text, and the world in front of the text. The world behind the text deals with the author's world; the text's world deals with the biblical text as a piece of literature; the world in front of the text deals with the reader's world. [70] For a long time, studies of Isaiah 19 focused on the worlds behind the text, and the world in the text and in front of the text were to a lesser extent subject to investigation. Here, I study the world in the text of Isaiah 19 by analyzing the final form of Isaiah 19 as a piece of literature. This does not mean that rhetorical criticism divorces the text from the other worlds, but the main focus is on the world of the text. As I will explain in chapter two, rhetorical criticism focuses mainly on the text, but is also aware of the two other worlds.

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[70] Cf. John Hayes and Carl Roark Holladay, *Biblical Exegesis : A Beginner's Handbook* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 53-54. Karl Möller, "Rhetorical Criticism," in *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*, ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer et al. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 689. Teresa David, "Women, Teaching and Leadership in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 : A Rhetorical-Critical Study, with Reference to Angola" (Master Stellenbosch University, 2019), 6.

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A brief summary of my Ph.D. project

Thesis title: *From judgment to blessing: An analysis of the function of Egypt in the rhetoric of Isaiah 19.*

This project is an analysis of the rhetoric of Isaiah 19. It deals with 'Egypt' as a literary motif, and it is a text that has played and continues to play a significant role in Egyptian Christianity and theology. There is a shift in atmosphere between a negative message (first half of the chapter, vv. 1-17: 'Egypt' will experience judgment) and a positive message (second half of the chapter, vv. 18-25: 'Egypt' will take part in a future of blessing and salvation).

The project approaches this problem from a literary perspective, and my research question is as follows: The research question to address this problem is: How can the juxtaposition of the messages of judgment (vv. 1-17) and blessing (vv. 18-25) over Egypt be understood rhetorically?

The overall analytic approach of the work is hermeneutical. My project's theoretical framework is inspired by the thinking of the German philosopher Hans-George Gadamer (1900-2002). Gadamer's hermeneutical philosophy became the theoretical framework for research in various fields, such as within biblical studies, since he published his well-known book, *Wahrheit und Methode (Truth and Method)*, in 1960. *Truth and Method* combines the history of hermeneutics' philosophical developments with Gadamer's knowledge and experience of hermeneutics that is beneficial in his theory of a "fusion of horizons." Gadamer's hermeneutics is the basis of my project's theoretical framework.

The method applied to sort out and systematize what is observed on a literary level in the text is "rhetorical criticism" – a method which was inaugurated by the American biblical scholar James Muilenburg (1896-1974). Rhetorical criticism of the Old Testament was reborn when Muilenburg gave his presidential address at the Society of Biblical Literature's annual meeting in 1968. In his paper "Form Criticism and Beyond," he introduces rhetorical criticism as a method to analyze Old Testament texts. Muilenburg became a pioneer in rhetorical criticism of the Old Testament, and his contribution inspired many scholars, including me, to keep digging more into the text's literary devices and how they function. In addition, as I am a Semitic Arabic reader of the OT, I would like to use insights from Arabic rhetoric to see if these can also shed light on how to understand the Hebrew rhetoric of Isaiah 19.

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